

Did you know: Fantasy Football – The Real Thing

Fantasy Football – The Real Thing

Fantasy football is a popular ‘sport’ that requires plenty of skill and knowledge... and a little bit of luck. Do you know what it is or how to play it? Maybe you belong to a fantasy football league where you live?

Fantasy Football is a game where you buy an imaginary team of real players and score points based on your players real performance in each real game they play. If your chosen striker scores a goal in real life, you get points for your fantasy team.

Why not have a look at this website to find out more? <http://fantasy.premierleague.com/>

Read this article and complete the exercises and you will:

- Read about a Fantasy Football champion and answer questions to test your understanding of this text
- Learn about some different kinds of adverbs
- Learn some vocabulary connected to taking risks
- Write about your experience of fantasy football



Before you read

Read these sentences and decide if they are true or false.

1. Barclays Fantasy Football is a competition you play online.
2. You choose players for your team that are imaginary (or not real footballers).
3. You buy the players for your team and you can spend as much money as you like.
4. In Barclays Fantasy Football, you can buy and sell players at the start of the season and in the January transfer window.
5. If one of your players is injured in real life, he can still play in your fantasy football team and score goals.

Read the article

Jon Reeson of Bedford in the UK, one of the recent champions in the Barclays Premier League Fantasy Football, beat 2.3 million others to win this famous competition.

It is meant to be as realistic as possible with January transfers included.

Rule Changes

Jon said "Previously, players had only one chance all season to make big changes. This gives people the chance to switch things around if they make a bad start but with the security of knowing they can still sign plenty of new players in the New Year.

"It should make the game even better although it is already excellent. It is easy to see why it is the world's biggest fantasy football game and, in my opinion, the best.

"It is not just the fact it is free - although that is a big bonus. It is the fact it is so well set up and it has evolved so well. The transfer values are spot on to the

point where there are many occasions where you are just 0.1m short. It can be so frustrating, but that is also part of the skill and the fun."

Reeson still finds it hard to believe he beat so many other managers to top the Fantasy Premier League, winning a VIP trip to a Barclays Premier League match, hotel accommodation and £250 spending money.

He added: "I was top for the whole of the last three months of the season so the pressure was on me going into the final gameweek even though I had more points than anyone else.

"I hardly slept the night before the deadline as I thought about every decision to make sure I did not mess it up.

"But it all went well and I was thrilled when the points were confirmed and I saw my name still at the top.

"It feels quite strange to know I beat almost two and a half million people across the globe. But after leading

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for so long, it was more a feeling of relief than anything else.

"I ended up getting quite a lot of attention on various internet forums where people were talking about me. One person even pretended to be me and was giving people advice so in the end I had to register for the forum and tell people what was going on. He disappeared quite soon afterwards."

Extra Research

So what are the secrets of success for the real Jon Reeson?

He said: "I have been playing this game for years and I stick to the same formula consistently."

"I get cheap defenders and goalkeepers and I move them around them according to their club fixtures and I save my money for the big-name players I really want such as Frank Lampard, Wayne Rooney and Cesc Fabregas."



"I had Lampard as captain most weeks and I was fortunate that the weeks I changed him were usually the ones where he had a low score and the person I picked in his place seemed to do well."

Jon, a West Ham fan said, "I always try to avoid picking Steven Gerrard. He is a great player but I have not forgiven him for almost single-handedly helping Liverpool beat West Ham in the 2006 FA Cup final."

Well, that game was definitely reality!

This article was adapted from an article on PremierLeague.com

Comprehension check

1. In the text, if you make a bad start with your team...
 - a. you cannot make changes.
 - b. you can buy and sell players anytime.
 - c. you can buy and sell players after the New Year.

2. Jon says the Barclays Fantasy Football league is not only well organised, but also...
 - a. easy to score goals.
 - b. the costs of players are realistic.
 - c. you can buy players anytime you like.

3. The night before the competition deadline, Jon...
 - a. celebrated.
 - b. didn't sleep much.
 - c. watched a football match.

4. Jon says that the reason he is successful in Barclays Fantasy Football is...
 - a. is very lucky.
 - b. keeps the same strategy.
 - c. knows a lot about real football.

5. According to Jon, Steven Gerrard...
 - a. is always in his Fantasy football team.
 - b. is sometimes in his fantasy football team.
 - c. is never in his fantasy football team.

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Language Practice: Adverbs

In the text, Jon used some adverbs to say how he did things. Look at these examples and think how adverbs modify other words.

I **hardly** slept the night before the deadline.

Reeson **still** finds it hard to believe he beat so many other managers.

The adverbs in the examples are changing, or modifying the meaning of the underlined verbs and adjectives but they all explain 'how' we do something or 'how' we feel.

To find out more about adverbs, visit the English Grammar page on adverbs on Learn English.

Sentence Adverbs

Jon said he sticks to the same formula consistently, which means he always uses the same process when choosing players for his team. 'Consistently' is a sentence adverb. Sentence adverbs are a great way of saying how we feel about something. They usually go at the beginning or at the end of a sentence:

Luckily, we got there on time.

We missed the train, **unfortunately**.

Fill in the gaps

Complete the sentences using the adverbs from the box.

eventually

ideally

apparently

actually

obviously

- I haven't met her yet, but _____ she is very nice. (I know this from other people's opinion of her)
- We thought he was Irish, but _____ he's Welsh! (This is the real situation, not what we thought before)
- The train was 2 hours late and the traffic was terrible, but _____ we arrived at our hotel tired and hungry! (After a long time we finally succeeded)
- The weather forecast said it would be sunny, but _____ they were wrong - it is cloudy and really windy! (We all know or expect it to be wrong)
- I work as a referee at the moment, but _____ I'd like to be a football player. (This is the perfect situation for me)

Find the words

Can you find the right words in the text to complete these sentences?

- If things don't go well at the beginning of something, you _____ a bad start.
- When an activity is organised in a good way, we say it is well _____ up.
- A football team which is in first place in a league is _____ the top.
- A system that works does not need changing so you should _____ to the same formula.

Time to chat

Tell us your fantasy football experiences!

Write to us and let us know what you like about fantasy football. Maybe ask a question or offer some advice.

We'd love to hear from you!

Answers

Comprehension check: 1 – c, 2 – b, 3 – b, 4 – b, 5 – c

Before you read: 1 – true, 2 – false, 3 – false, 4 – true, 5 – false

Fill in the gaps: 1 – apparently, 2 – actually, 3 – eventually, 4 – obviously, 5 – ideally

Find the words: 1 – make, 2 – set, 3 – at, 4 – stick