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⇒ **BIG MONEY PAID TO AGENTS IN THE UK!**

Just how much have Premier League clubs in the UK relied on agents? It has been revealed for the first time, that the cost to the clubs is around a staggering £70 million was paid to middlemen in one year.

That is almost equivalent to the transfer value of one Cristiano Ronaldo, three Didier Drogbas- or the club record turnover of Everton in the last financial year.

Between October 1st 2008 and September 30th 2009, not so surprisingly, Manchester City spent the most on agents- a staggering £12,874,283- one fifth of the total, but hardly a shock given the spending spree that followed since their takeover by Sheikh Mansour.

Their signings included Carlos Tivez, (£47 million), Emmanuel Adebayor (£25 million) and Joleon Lescott (£22 million).

Manchester City were followed by their predecessors as the cash-rich kings Chelsea, with an outlay of £9,562,223, and Liverpool, who despite their financial problems, spent £6,657,305.

Of greater surprise is that Manchester United spent a relatively modest £1,517,393. Burnley, the Barclays Premier League new boys, are bottom of the table with agents' fees of £468,398.

Some doubt was cast on the accuracy of the figures last night when Hull City claimed that the amount paid by them was £1,820,250, about £220,000 more than the total given.

The figures include all fees paid to agents with regard to player purchases, sales and contract negotiations, covering 803 transactions over a 12-month period. Although averaging less than £100,000 per transaction, many of the fees were considerably higher, which will inevitably lead to criticism of the huge sums of money leaving the game.

The publication of agents' earnings will be broadly welcomed by fans concerned that large sums are being wasted. It follows a change in FA rules in 2007, which was fully supported by the Premier League clubs.

"We are pleased that through these new requirements, clubs are bringing greater transparency to the domestic transfer market," an FA spokesman said. "For the first time there will be a game-wide picture of the level of spending on agents."

The Football League has published agents' fees for the past five years, when they have declined considerably.

In the last set of figures, published in August, the total was £8.8 million, a £2.3 million reduction from the previous season. Lord Mawhinney, the Football League chairman, believes that the move towards greater transparency in the Premier League will have a similar effect.

Agent fees:

Manchester City	£12,874,283
Chelsea	£9,562,223
Liverpool	£6,657,305
Tottenham Hotspur	£6,066,935
West Ham United	£5,527,548
Arsenal	£4,760,241
Wigan Athletic	£3,576,972
Portsmouth	£3,184,725
Bolton Wanderers	£3,166,611
Everton	£2,008,407
Sunderland	£2,007,040
Aston Villa	£1,708,374
Blackburn Rovers	£1,610,885
Hull City	£1,599,188
Manchester United	£1,517,393
Fulham	£1,469,258
Wolverhampton Wanderers	£1,235,703
Birmingham City	£974,982
Stoke City	£716,042
Burnley	£468,398

Total (803 transactions) £70,692,513

⇒ **HYUNDAI A-LEAGUE: ROUND 20**

Round 20 kicks off on tonight with Adelaide United back at Hindmarsh Stadium, following their 1-0 win over Brisbane Roar, facing Wellington Phoenix.

On Saturday, Central Coast Mariners take on Brisbane Roar at Bluetongue Stadium. Then it's down to Etihad Stadium and the blockbuster clash between top-of-the-table Mel-



With LAKIS KONISTIS

Sports World

bourne Victory against 2nd placed Sydney FC. Melbourne and Sydney will continue their rivalry in the Hyundai A-League - to add even more fuel to the fire that burns deep between the Victory and Sky Blue fans is that this match will also mark the 500th national league appearance for Melbourne Victory captain Kevin Muscat.

On Sunday, Newcastle Jets host North Queensland Fury at EnergyAustralia Stadium before we head north to the Gold Coast where the boys from the glitter strip meet the lads from the west coast, Perth Glory. After dropping out of 5th spot for the first time in seven weeks Perth will be looking to assert their finals aspirations against Gold Coast and get within a point of the home side. Gold Coast will be tough to beat at home having won their past two matches at Skilled Park and with the addition of former Brisbane Roar playmaker Charlie Miller will be tough opponents for Burns and his Glory boys.

Adelaide United (10) v Wellington Phoenix (7):

Having scored 148 Hyundai A-League goals to date, Adelaide United are two goal goals away from scoring 150 goals in the Hyundai A-League.

Central Coast Mariners (5) v Brisbane Roar (9):

Central Coast Mariners' defender Nigel Boogaard is set to make his 50th Australian national league appearance - Boogaard made one appearance in the old national league with Newcastle United and has so far made 48 Hyundai A-League appearances for the Mariners

Melbourne Victory (1) v Sydney FC (2):

Melbourne Victory captain Kevin

Muscat is set to make his 500th appearance at national league level. This would make Muscat just the second Australian to reach 500 games at the national league level. Leading in to Round 19 of the 2009/10 Hyundai A-League season, the top five league appearances for Australians stands at: 522 Alex Tobin, 499 Kevin Muscat, 497 Mark Schwarzer, 490 Aurelio Vidmar, 482 Carl Veart

Newcastle Jets (4) v North Queensland Fury (8):

Newcastle Jets striker Sasho Petrovski is set to make his 100th Hyundai A-League appearance and North Queensland Fury striker Daniel McBreen his 200th.

Gold Coast United (3) v Perth Glory (6):

Perth Glory coach David Mitchell is set to coach his 50th Hyundai A-League match - Mitchell commenced his head coaching career at the Perth Glory in November 2007.

⇒ **WOMEN'S WORLD CUP EXPANDS TO 24**

FIFA has decided to expand the women's World Cup from 16 to 24 teams in 2015.

Although the 2011 tournament in Germany will stay at 16 teams, FIFA secretary general Jerome Valcke said that women's soccer had advanced so much it made sense to add teams.

⇒ **SAME FORMAT FOR U/23's**

FIFA has further turned down calls to restrict the Olympic men's soccer tournament to players 21 and under.

It will stick with an under-23 format plus three over-age players for the 2012 London Games.

European governing body UEFA wanted the change to ensure that top players stay with their clubs during pre-season training. But FIFA's executive committee decided to retain the existing format for the next Olympics.

Η θανατική ποινή περιμένει τους 12 παίκτες της Ερυθραίας ως τιμωρία, εάν επιστρέψουν στην πατρίδα τους, σύμφωνα με τα λεγόμενα ανώτατου αξιωματούχου της αφρικανικής χώρας! Οι Αφρικανοί παίκτες αυτομόλησαν ύστερα από τουρνουά που διεξήχθη στην Κέννα και ζήτησαν πολιτικό άσυλο στη χώρα.

Οι παίκτες προκειμένου να πάρουν την άδεια να ταξιδέψουν, είχαν ορκιστεί πως θα επέστρεφαν στη χώρα. Δεν είναι η πρώτη φορά που συμβαίνει αντίστοιχο περιστατικό, μια και στο παρελθόν αθλητές έχουν εγκαταλείψει τη χώρα τους, γι' αυτό το λόγο το καθεστώς της Ερυθραίας λαμβάνει αυτά τα μέτρα. Το αίτημά τους για παροχή πολιτικού ασύλου θα συζητηθεί το προσε-

Απειλή θανάτου!

χές διάστημα, αλλά η διαδικασία είναι ιδιαίτερα χρονοβόρα και η απόφαση αναμένεται να εκδοθεί μετά από περίπου τρεις μήνες.

Ο πρόεδρος της Ερυθραίας, Ησαΐας Αφεβέρκι, είχε οδηγήσει το 1993 τη χώρα του στην ανεξαρτησία από την κηδεμονία της Αιθιοπίας, αλλά στη συνέχεια ανδείχτηκε σε ισόβιος πρόεδρος της χώρας, επιβάλλοντας ουσιαστικά δικτατορία. Ο αυστηρός κρατικός έλεγχος στην οικονομία, στον τύπο και στα θρησκευτικά ζητήματα, έχει αναγκάσει περισσότερους από 5 εκ. ανθρώπους



να εγκαταλείψουν την Ερυθραία τα τελευταία χρόνια.