



# Fans in shock

THE GUARDIAN

It is often said that Manchester United's fans are more likely to hail from Surrey or Szechuan than round the corner in Stretford. But the club looms large over the redbrick terraces of this working-class area of Greater Manchester.

"I can't believe it!" wailed postwoman Lisa Walker, born and bred minutes from Old Trafford. "People keep rushing out of their houses, hands on their heads in disbelief asking me if I've heard the news," said the 32-year-old as she delivered letters in Gorse Hill.

"We're in shock. There's kids round here, 20 years old, they've never known a world without Alex Ferguson managing Manchester United. Being a red, I've lived with glory my whole life."

Felcjan Krause, 92, became a red 63 years ago when he emigrated from Poland. He used to go to the games – "Half a crown it would cost me in the Busby era" – but not any more: "I can't afford it, and my sight isn't what it was." Krause remembered when Ferguson took over. "He'd not been here a year and they were about to sack him. But they won the game and that was that."

In Tattitude on Chester Road, five minutes' walk from the ground, the tattoo artist Jordon Davis-Campbell, 24, reflected on what he called the "end of an era". He grew up in Moss Side, in a house he says was

equidistant from Old Trafford and Maine Road, but chose United when he was six, largely because "I liked the colour of the shirts better".

He got hooked in 1996, "when Giggs, Beckham, Cantona, Schmeichel were playing", and as a young lad would train in the Manchester United soccer schools. Tattitude occasionally brands United fans for life, said Davis-Campbell, though "getting a tattoo of the badge has gone out of fashion. Now we do bespoke designs for people, like a red devil fighting with the moon."

Choosing United has shaped his life. "Football is a massive thing in Manchester. You meet someone, first thing you ask is: are you a red or a blue? City fans say we're not a Manchester club because we're based in Trafford [a borough of Greater Manchester rather than the city itself]. We say they're from Stockport."

It is common to hear grumbles that United lost its heart when the Glazers bought the club, saddling it with debt and listing it on the New York stock exchange. Davis-Campbell says he was sad when the shirts stopped saying "football club" on the front, but he is proud of United's international appeal. "City fans are always saying: 'Your fans are all Londoners or Chinese people or the Irish,' but I think it just shows how big United is."

"And look at what City are trying to do now – exactly the same thing."

## FAMOUS FERGIE quotes

**"Football, bloody hell."**  
after United's dramatic come-from-behind win over Bayern Munich in the 1999 Champions League final.

**"My greatest challenge is not what's happening at the moment, my greatest challenge was knocking Liverpool right off their f\*\*\*ing perch. And you can print that."**  
looking back to his appointment as United manager in 1986 during an interview with The Guardian in 2002.

**"They say he's an intelligent man, right? Speaks five languages. I've got a 15-year-old boy from the Ivory Coast who speaks five languages!"**

on Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger.  
**"It was a freakish incident. If I tried it 100 or a million times it couldn't happen again. If I could I would have carried on playing!"**  
on the infamous incident when he accidentally struck David Beckham after kicking a stray boot.

**"I remember the first time I saw him. He was 13 and just floated over the ground like a cocker spaniel chasing a piece of silver paper in the wind."**  
on seeing Ryan Giggs as a schoolboy.

**"The decision to retire is one that I have thought a great deal about and one that I have not taken lightly. It is the right time."**  
on retirement.

## Money on Moyes

AGENCIES, Undated

David Moyes will be announced as Manchester United's new manager within the next 24 hours as the Premier League champions aim to move quickly to appoint Sir Alex Ferguson's successor at Old Trafford.

The announcement of Ferguson's retirement has prompted a frenzy of money being placed on the Everton manager to succeed the 71-year-old.

And it is understood that Moyes, whose contract at Goodison Park expires at the end of the season, has already been identified as Ferguson's successor and will be confirmed before United's next game, on Sunday, against Swansea.

Despite long-term speculation linking Jose Mourinho with the manager's job at Old Trafford in the event of Ferguson's retirement, the former Chelsea manager lacks support among the higher echelons of the United hierarchy.

Moyes's record at Everton since arriving from Preston North End in March 2002 lacks a trophy, or experience of Champions League football beyond the qualifying rounds, but the Scot's readiness to build teams and promote youth is understood to be central to United's decision to recruit the 50-year-old.

Ferguson's elevation to a position on the United board ensures that the two men will be in a regular contact at Old Trafford, but the pair's strong relationship, which saw Moyes offered the job as Ferguson's assistant in 1999-2000, is likely to prevent friction between the manager's office and the boardroom.

Everton have yet to confirm any United interest in Moyes, but the manager's dwindling contract ensures that he could leave the club in two weeks' time without compensation. The key issue now is the timing of Moyes's departure.

## Offsprings against it

REUTERS, Madrid

Real Madrid great Alfredo Di Stefano's five children have filed an injunction to prevent their 86-year-old father marrying a Costa Rican woman 50 years his junior.

One of the greatest players of all time, Argentina-born Di Stefano told El Mundo newspaper at the weekend he planned to wed 36-year-old Gina Gonzalez "because I want to and I have been a widower for eight years".

Di Stefano, now honorary Real president, acknowledged his children might be against the marriage and they have filed papers at a Madrid court to have him declared mentally and physically incapable.

They also want to protect his assets, according to a statement from the five children carried in local media.

"We believe his current state of vulnerability, together with his obvious media profile, could result in abusive conduct towards him," the statement said.

Di Stefano has had his share of health problems in recent years and is often seen in public in a wheelchair.

## Swansea turn it around

### RESULTS

**Manchester City 1** (Dzeko 35) **West Bromwich Albion 0**  
**Wigan Athletic 2** (Espinoza 45+1, McCarthy 53) **Swansea City 3** (Rangel 50, Shechter 59, Tiendalli 76)

AFP, London

Wigan Athletic face an uphill battle to avoid relegation from the Premier League after twice relinquishing the lead in an agonising 3-2 loss at home to Swansea City on Tuesday.

Wigan, who tackle Manchester City in the FA Cup final on Saturday, could have moved out of the bottom three with victory, but instead they find themselves three points from safety with only two games to play.

After the Wembley clash with City, who warmed up with a 1-0 win at home to West Bromwich Albion, Roberto Martinez's side visit fourth-



place Arsenal before hosting Aston Villa on the season's final day. Wigan began the game in enterprising fashion at the DW Stadium and made the breakthrough in first-half injury time.

Swansea goalkeeper Michel Vorm did not get enough distance on a punch and from the edge of the box, Roger Espinoza arrowed a left-foot volley into the bottom-left corner for his first Wigan goal.

Martinez celebrated jubilantly, but Angel Rangel brought Wigan down to earth early in the second half when he met Wayne Routledge's cross with a crisp volley that found the net via the left-hand upright.

The hosts re-established their lead within three minutes,

James McCarthy bursting through and beating Vorm with a low shot, and James McArthur then failed to make telling contact with an inviting cross from Arouna Kone.

It was to prove a costly miss as, in the 59th minute, Swansea equalised again. Recalled Wigan captain Gary Caldwell gave the ball away to Leon Britton and from his pass, on-loan Kaiserslautern striker Itay Shechter beat Joel Robles with the aid of a deflection off Emmerson Boyce.

Eager to atone, Caldwell saw a thumping header brilliantly touched over the bar by Vorm.

McArthur and Shaun Maloney got in a muddle as they tried to clear a Pablo Hernandez cross and Dwight Tiendalli pounced to slide a shot past the exposed Robles.



Manchester City striker Edin Dzeko scores the all-important goal against West Bromwich Albion on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Chievo stun Roma

AFP, Milan



Frenchman Cyril Thereau scored a 90th-minute volley for Serie A minnows Chievo to secure a 1-0 win over Roma and upset the capital club's hopes of Europa League football next season.

Roma remain in fifth place on 58 points but risk being overtaken by Udinese (57) if the northerners win at Palermo on Wednesday when Lazio, in seventh on 55, will look to draw level with their city foes.

Roma had a number of changes to contend with before bidding to boost their lead over their Europa League rivals ahead of the rest of the 36th matchday on Wednesday.

Reserve keeper Bogdan Lobont started despite fracturing his nose in the 1-0 away win to Fiorentina on Saturday because number one Maarten Stekelenburg is still injured.

Coach Aurelio Andreazzoli, meanwhile, left some regulars on the bench, including striker Erik Lamela and American midfielder Michael Bradley, as he tested a 3-4-1-2 system and a new front pairing of Pablo Osvaldo and Mattia Destro.

Chievo, who were looking to pull away from the relegation zone, came out on top, at least in defensive terms, after a fairly balanced first half in which Roma shaded the visitors for the few real scoring chances created.

Chievo keeper Cristian Puggioni was alert to prevent a threatening cross from reaching Destro, while Ivan Piris's cut-back from the by-line following Francesco Totti's smart through-ball set up Osvaldo, only for Puggioni to get low to smother the striker's snap shot.

In the dying seconds of the half Totti sent a free-kick through a hole in the defensive wall to force Puggioni to block.

Thereau came close for the visitors moments after the restart, but it was Roma who were most frustrated after missing a hatful of chances.

Destro showed great control on the edge of the area by avoiding two tackles, but Puggioni did well to collect the striker's shot.

## PSG duo punished

AFP, Paris

Paris Saint-Germain sporting director Leonardo was suspended until further notice on Tuesday by the French Football League's disciplinary committee, while Thiago Silva received a two-match ban following altercations with referee Alexandre Castro in Sunday's 1-1 draw with Valenciennes.

Silva was sent off by Castro in the 43rd minute at the Parc des Princes after placing his hands on the official's chest, a decision which drew the ire of Leonardo, who appeared to deliberately shoulder-charge Castro in the tunnel after the match.



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