

BAKUMAN: *Manga about manga*

ANIME REVIEW

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Bakuman is a seventy-five episode, three-season long anime series based on the manga of the same name by writer Tsugumi Ohba and artist Takeshi Obata. Off the bat, you might recognise the duo as the same team behind Death Note. But don't expect anything similar to that series though, Bakuman is different and unique. And that's largely in a good way.

Bakuman follows the story of teenagers Mashiro Morikata and Akito Takagi, a duo who set out to become successful Mangaka in Japan's thriving but ferociously competitive Manga industry. Mashiro's own uncle was a Mangaka who worked himself to death, something that made Mashiro hesitant about setting out on this path. But a promise made to his long-time crush Miho Azuki gives Mashiro renewed confidence and he sets his sight on making a manga that will go onto have its own anime series in which Miho will work as a voice actor. At this point you realise this is an anime based on a manga about making a manga that would get made into an anime. If there was ever a time for those Inception jokes, this is now.



Using the pseudonym of Ashirogi Muto, the team of Mashiro the artist, and Akito the writer, start on their journey to make it in the manga world. They get a lucky break as their early demos are picked up by an editor from Shuisha's Weekly Shonen Jump, the biggest manga

magazine in the country. But while the start is easy for them, the quest from that point on becomes more and more difficult. Struggling to figure out just what kind of manga would give them lasting popularity and success, the duo go through various ideas and genres.

The story is very colourful and part of that is thanks to the vast assortment of characters on show, most of whom are young manga artists themselves. Ashirogi Muto's main rival is Neiji Izuma, a prodigy who gets his own big time manga series despite still being in school. Neiji is eccentric and probably a bit clichéd too but he is an entertaining presence nonetheless. There are other young mangaka who are all struggling to make their name and the arsenal of characters will give you an interesting and largely amusing look into the lives of urban Japanese youth.

The downside to the story is that after a while, it gets repetitive. The story itself was a novel concept but watching the duo go through ups and downs over and over again can get a bit boring after a while. But the manga's successful 150+ chapter run meant that any anime adaptation would be pretty long itself. Even if the story does run into a few plateaus, the characters remain vibrant enough to keep you interested.

The ending is more or less predictable. But the journey itself is quite enjoyable. If you want a casual slice of life story that actually has purpose, give Bakuman a go.

Tweaking the Rules of the Game

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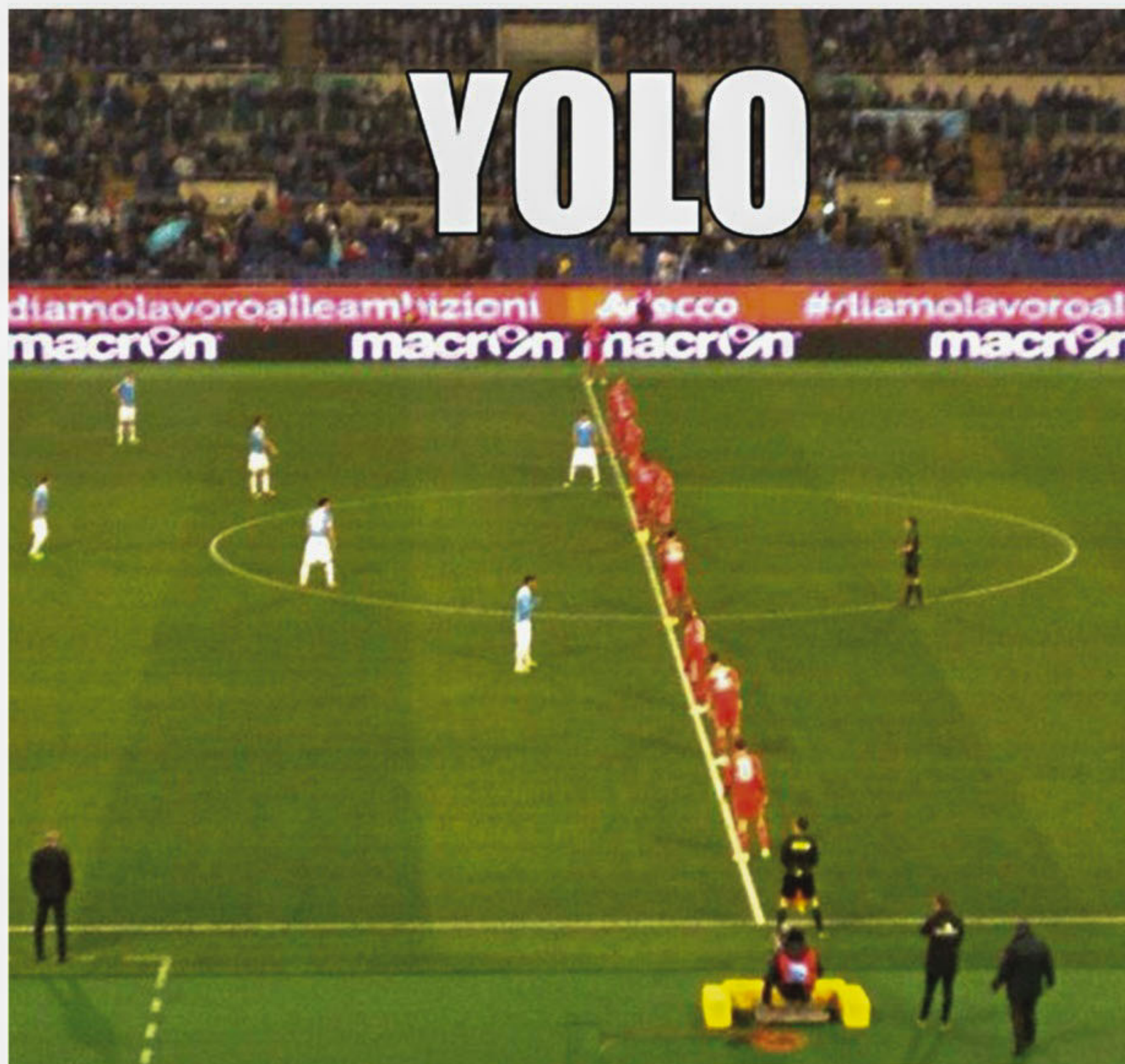
The International Football Association Board, or IFAB, announced a few "revolutionary" (?) changes to the rules of the beautiful game, which will come into effect starting the 2016/2017 season.

One of the most notable animosities in English football was that between Patrick Vieira and Roy Keane, a rivalry which culminated into a tunnel bust-up between the two midfielders, before kick-off for a match at Highbury, back in '05. Back then, referee Graham Poll could do nothing but stand between the two warring captains and ask them to calm down. As unlikely as it sounds, if Rooney and Arteta were to try anything of the sort next season, the referee would be able to send them off. Yes, back to the showers even before the game starts.

The new IFAB rules allow referees to send off a player or club staff (even managers), prior to kick-off. This extension of power means we may see many crucial and intense derbies next season played out as nine, eight or even seven-a-sides.

Kick-off rules themselves have been changed, and the new rules allow the ball to move in any direction from the start, rather than only move forward.

Southampton tried to pull off an eccentric kick-off routine earlier this season with all ten outfield players positioned at the half-way line, during the whistle. While we won't necessarily see crazy kick-off formations as such, we could expect to see



teams kicking off with only one player instead of two, or even shots on goal at the very first whistle!

A major improvement to the rules is the change in sending-off and cautioning for fouls committed inside the box. The "triple punishment" rule currently in effect

means that if a player were to commit a foul in the box, he would:

1. Give away a penalty
2. Be sent off
3. Be suspended (for 1 or 3 games)

This rule has been relaxed, and players who'll commit fouls to deny goal-scoring

opportunities won't be automatically sent off, but only cautioned. This only applies to accidental fouls, where there is an attempt to play the ball. Deliberate fouls still hand you a red. That means holding, pushing, pulling, tackles with no intent of playing the ball, violent conduct and deliberate handballs and you're rightfully sent packing.

The IFAB, which decides on alterations to the games' laws, announced the changes following an 18-month long review, led by former EPL ref David Elleray. Besides these, a player can now receive quick treatment for any injury on the pitch, instead of having to go off to the sidelines, thus ensuring the team aren't a man down for the next few moments.

IFAB have also approved the use of video technology, on a two-year trial period, for the following situations: if a goal has been scored, red cards, penalty decisions and mistaken identity.

The Italian Football Federation will be trialling the new video replay technology, the results of which will stay private at first, and then move to a pilot phase for live matches by the 2017/2018 season. As Melanie C sang it, football will "never be the same again", especially if referees can use replays to now distinguish between Oxlade-Chamberlain and Gibbs.

P.S. Take it home, Foxes!

Nibras loves blood and gore, and hopes to be surgeon because it's the only profession where he can legally cut people up. DM him gruesome photos @niibzzz.