

EUROPEAN SUPERLEAGUE



*"European Superleague was designed
and developed for CDS Software by
Matrix Developments."*

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INTRODUCTION

European Superleague is designed to be simply the best football game around. It provides a detailed simulation of the challenges faced by the people at the top of one of the toughest professions it is possible to imagine.

To succeed, you will have to think and act quickly, trying to balance training schedules, tactical planning, squad morale, boardroom politics, fickle press coverage AND contend with the seven computer driven managers of the other Superleague teams, all of whom play an experienced and tactically sound game of football.

Each club has a first team squad of 20 players. All eight club's players are treated as individuals and their characteristics and abilities change constantly as the season progresses, with the ravages of time and poor (or good!) management taking it's toll on the performance of the team.

The aim of the game is a simple one - take your team to the Championship of the Superleague. Achieving it, however will not prove easy, even for the most experienced game players amongst you. The game is played as a simulation, in which you assume

the role of the team boss and take the decisions that the manager would take. You must choose the team and decide who and when to buy, but the less glamorous decisions are often the ones which determine success or failure - setting the training schedules for example, can have a major impact on the teams results and hence on your own standing.

Keeping up the teams morale and fitness and making a shrewd choice of tactics come match-day will take you to the top, if the chairman leaves you alone to get on with it and you don't get too many postponed matches and your best players don't apply for transfers and your squad doesn't get decimated by injury and . . . you get the picture?

LOADING THE GAME

The loading instructions appear on the label of your disk or cassette.

LEVELS

European Superleague provides three different levels of gameplay. The following is intended as a rough guide to the different characteristics of each.

LEVEL ONE: No Mid week matches, no injuries, transfer market quiet, difficult to lose money, no pitch problems and a patient Chairman.

LEVEL TWO: Injury problems, transfer market buoyant, postponement of some matches, pitch problems and the Chairman is becoming more impatient.

LEVEL THREE: Mid week matches, injury problems more persistent, transfer market frantic, postponment of matches hectic, more pitch problems and the Chairman is very intolerant!

CONTROLLING YOUR ACTIONS

All the functions of the game are menu driven. The menus list out your given choice at any point in the game and are obtained by clicking on the item you wish to use - file, door, telephone, intercom etc. Use the joystick/mouse to place the cursor onto your selected action, which is then highlighted,

and press the left mouse button, or fire on the joystick, to select.

To save the game position after a match, hit F1 and follow the on-screen prompts.

QUICK KICK-OFF

For those who can never be bothered to read manuals and who insist on playing before they are ready, here is an instant intro to get you in and playing. PLEASE READ IT!

When the game has loaded, you will be asked to select which language you wish to play in, which club you want to run and at what level. Follow the on-screen prompts through to the first game screen proper, which is the boardroom, with the chairman facing you. He will give you two files to read, your team and the financial state of the club. Click on them to read through.

Once you finish you will be switched to a shot of your office seen from behind the desk. Locate the telephone, intercom and filing cabinet and note the team photo and results chart on the wall. They all play a part in controlling the game.

The telephone and intercom do exactly what you would expect and you can use them to communicate with the world outside the office walls. The phone connects to the other managers, the press and the training ground. Whatever you say over the phone will have some effect on the game, so be careful. Your first lesson as manager is not to engage your mouth until your brain is in gear, as so many former league managers could testify.

The intercom connects you to the rest of your club and will put you in touch with your secretary, the chairman, coach, groundsman and chief scout.

As with all actions in Superleague, your options on either the phone or intercom are menu driven. Click on the item you want to use to get the menu. Highlight the option you want with the cursor and click on that to action it.

The filing cabinet gives you access to the details on the other teams, the state of your own and other information you might need. Treat the files like icons to read them.

There are some things you **MUST** do in a week and others you **SHOULD** do. Read your diary to find out what's on and listen to your secretary if she interrupts you to remind you to go somewhere, or call someone. She **HAS** read the manual and she knows more about the game than you do.

Keep your players at maximum fitness by balancing the training and read up on the opposition before a match to find out what tactics might have a chance against them. Don't be too pushy with the chairman unless you are doing really well and he might leave you in the job long enough to lose it all by yourself! Do what you are told at board meetings and you might survive the season.

Most of all experiment. This is a very friendly game and it won't mind at all if you try things out to see what works and what doesn't.

Transfers are possible and you might be able to make a deal with the other manager for just about anyone. Ring up and try it! During the matches, you get the chance at half time to make changes to your tactics or team. Use it sparingly and only change what absolutely needs to be changed. Meddling, like everything else in the game, has an effect on all the players. It might not be the effect you want.

The game will ensure that you carry out your mandatory duties, so experiment to see what effect different actions have on your teams performances. You will have to react to many of the phone calls etc. that hit you in a week, but exactly how you do so is the whole crux of the problem . . . Have fun.

MACHINE VARIATIONS

The manual description applies to all formats in relation to the gameplay. Due to the differing capabilities of the machines, however, there will be some variations in the presentation and implementation of that gameplay. The paragraphs below list out what to expect and on what to expect it!

128k Spectrum/Amstrad

In order to fit in as much of the graphics and features as possible, some small changes have been made to the minor areas of the

game. These will not affect the play. For example, your salary is based upon your performance in the preceding period and instead of a bonus per week, your salary will vary as an indicator of how well you are managing.

The filing cabinet also stores less files than in the sixteen bit versions - ring the scout for information on the other teams. Your interface with the Chairman is operated slightly differently, in that it will be limited to the weekly board meeting, where you are given the feedback which tells you how much longer you have got in the job!

Graphically, the icons are replaced in most cases with simple words, their function being unchanged. (The diary however still uses the page turning icons.) The "game save" option is not available on these systems.

48k Spectrum/Amstrad/Commodore 64

The game play is identical to that on the larger memory machines. The only difference is that due to the restricted amount of free memory in this smaller format, the game will not have all the graphics present in the better endowed machines!

GETTING THE FEEL OF THE BALL

European Superleague is in effect a complex logic structure, in which all the elements effect each other. Change one element and it has consequences for all the rest. Just as in a real life situation, your actions can trigger results you did not expect - and probably will!

To meet your aim of winning the Championship you need to preserve your squad of players at their absolute maximum efficiency for as long as possible. The important factors here are the players confidence and fitness. The latter is effected in many ways:- a bad game, a telling off from the manager, being dropped for example all have negative implications. Awarding a rise in salary, however, might get that last 10% out a player when it is needed most. (You will have to explain it to the chairman, however.)

The game plays in turns which represent the days of the week. The clock in your office

marks the passing of the hours and once the day is over, so is that turn. During the week you have a number of tasks which you must complete, such as team selection, tactical talk before a game, attending the board meeting and setting the training schedules for the players. These the game system will not let you shirk and your secretary is there to ensure you carry them out. Aside from these, you have a very free hand to manage things as you see fit.

There is a great deal of depth to Superleague and a large number of options at any stage of the game. Take your time to explore the possibilities and it will pay off later in results. Don't be in a hurry to make decisions - you're here to enjoy yourself, not get an ulcer! As realistic a role player as this is, it's not THAT good!

This manual has two main purposes, to explain the program mechanics and offer some hints on how to play the game. It does not offer a detailed list of all the possibilities within Superleague - there are too many - they are for you to explore. Use the icon based layout to find the section you want to look up, or refer to the index.

The later sections on tactics work through the footballing possibilities and how best to use them against your opponents. This is the real aim of the game and all else is simply preparation for the moment when your team takes the field against Europe's best. Have you prepared them as well as you might, or are there weaknesses still there to be exploited? Chances are the opposition will find them if there are! Take care of the planning properly during the week and match-day will be a much more enjoyable experience.

THE WORKING WEEK

The task of running the club will fully occupy your work days in the week and at higher levels of play, where matches occur in midweek AND are postponed more often, it becomes a real balancing act to ensure that all things needing to be done get done. The diary keeps you in touch with the important things as the game progresses and should be

consulted often. At Level 1, the week is simply laid out, with the tasks spaced to make them more easily handled:-

MONDAY: AM; review match reports and set training schedules

PM; attend board meeting - this is where you find out how you are doing in the job. Board meetings are attended from the second week onwards.

TUESDAY/WEDNESDAY: Nothing you must do - but plenty you should!

THURSDAY Select the team for Saturday

FRIDAY: AM; tactic selection for the game.

PM; travel if away, rest if home!

SATURDAY: MATCH DAY

Obviously with a midweek match thrown in, things get a little tight for time, and in particular time to train is reduced, thereby making it more difficult to maintain the squad at maximum efficiency. On higher levels check the diary carefully at the start of each week and plan out how you intend to run things.

Life would be relatively simple if you had all week to plan and plot the downfall of your next opponents. However as anyone who has ever set foot in an office will tell you, finding the time to work is the most difficult thing of all to do. Things happen around you all the time, phones ring, people arrange meetings, others want to talk things over and in general the busier the office the less time is spent on the things that matter! A football managers office is BUSY. You will be distracted constantly by events taking place that you did not expect or initiate. How you respond to them will, to a large extent, determine your success or otherwise in the game.

The telephone and intercom will ring.

Whether you answer it or not is up to you. It could be something totally trivial, or it could be the Chairman - who is never trivial! All responses are again menu driven and all have an effect on the outcome of the game. Make a wrong comment to the press and team confidence could be shaken. Choose a wrong date for a rearranged match and you

increase the pressure on training and fitness.

During the week your aim is to attend the board meeting for the progress report on how you are faring - and get out without more trouble with the Chairman and make sure your team is properly prepared for the match. Just that. All else is a digression which could have beneficial effects or lead to disaster. Use your time well as you have precious little of it!

OPENING MOVES

Once the program has loaded, you will be asked to select in which language you wish the text displayed, your level of play and which club you want to manage. Follow the on-screen prompts and click on your choices, using the mouse/joystick to control the cursor.

The opening screen of the game proper is the boardroom, with the club Chairman - your boss - sitting opposite you. He will welcome you to the club and give you two files to read, a team/squad dossier and a financial synopsis of the clubs situation. The team folder gives you a full run down of your players attributes. The financial data lists the bank balance available to the club and also tells you your salary level and how much you may spend on a player without consulting the chairman. You will not be allowed to exceed this without asking first. Your weekly bonus is a measure of how you're doing in the game. It will go up and down as you progress through the season. Both these files will be available during the game from your filing cabinet.

To examine the files, move the cursor over them in turn and click on one, using the left mouse button or fire on the joystick. Then click right mouse button to proceed to your office.

DESK JOCKEY

Each of the major items in the room plays a part in controlling the game. Just try moving the cursor around and clicking on them. Menus appear for most things and information for others. This is the main gameplay screen from which you will decide the course of the season. Make yourself

familiar with it.

The diary on your desk is central to how you play, in that it lists out what is due for the day, in addition to fixtures and appointments made for you. Treat it as a menu to what is on your plate!

Let's take the important items one by one:-

(1) **THE DIARY:** lists all mandatory actions for that day - these are the things you must do to continue the game - and also shows any appointments you may make. Fixtures are also shown. (See the notes on the working week for a list of 'must do' items)

Click on the diary to open it, use the icons in the corner of the screen to turn the pages in either direction.

(2) **TELEPHONE:** your communication with other clubs, the press and the ground. Clicking on it brings up a menu of possible people to call and clicking on the icon next to the one you want to talk to dials the number. Just like the real thing, however, it might not work first time, so leaving those important calls until the last minute could get you into a lot of trouble! Keep trying.

Talking to:- Other Managers:



the reasons for doing this are either to inform them that the match is postponed and set a new date, or to try to do a transfer deal of some sort.

Once your call connects, you will be greeted and a menu of possible comments appear, simply click on the one you want to make. Briefly the two options run like this:

POSTPONED MATCH: here you will have to think fast, since the other guy will want to set a new date which suits him more than you. Think it out before you call, and choose quickly!

TRANSFER DEALINGS: in either direction. You will be offered a list of the squad of either your own players if you're selling or his if you're trying to buy. Choose by clicking on the player of interest. Barter carefully!

Making silly offers or asking silly prices will get you nowhere except insulted! All the

dealings are done via the menus, enter your offer when prompted to do so. The negotiations ARE logical, it's up to you to figure out how to get the best deals.

Talking to:- The Press:



dangerous this, but potentially very useful indeed if handled correctly. Read the list of possible comments and choose your words very carefully! Watch for the

headlines in the papers to see how your comments are interpreted. The players may well believe you as to what you MEANT to say, but the Chairman probably won't!

Talking to:- Training ground:



you can set your training schedules by telephone, but it has a big disadvantage in that the players don't receive the managers personal attention. Better to go there

in person, but it is quicker by phone... At any time in the week you can review the schedules, once set, in this way too.

(3) **THE DOOR:** clicking on the door brings up a menu of options as to where you can go. When it is time to attend a meeting, for example, it will be added to the menu and may be selected.

Usually the possible destinations are;



Home: at the end of a long day, no better place to go. Watch out if you try and leave before you finish your work, however!!!



Boardroom: either for the weekly board meeting, or if you are summoned to see the Chairman, or are foolish enough to arrange a meeting yourself.



Match: only on match-day and only at the right time. Starts the match sequence.



Training Ground: to set up or review the schedules for the players. Going to the ground is a Good Thing and will have a beneficial effect on player attributes.



Coach: this takes you to away matches.



Tactics Room: to choose or change the team tactics for the next match. Must go here when indicated in the diary.

(4) **INTERCOM:** this gives you contact with key people within your club.



Chairman: speak to secretary to make appointment to see him, with a view to reviewing finances.



Secretary: allows you to interview players or skive off for a while!



Coach: provides information on injury problems with either your or opponents players.



Scout: a useful source of intelligence on all other squads in the league. Especially useful if you are planning to dabble in the transfer market.



Groundsman: informs you of pitch problems.

(5) **WALL-CHART:** gives results of last group of fixtures played.

(6) **FILING CABINET:** keeps the records of your team, the others in the league and the finances folder from the opening sequence. All the files are accessed by clicking on them, when the contents will appear on screen.

(7) **FURNITURE:** other things around the office may be of use to you in your role as busy executive. Try clicking on items of interest to see what happens! Experiment.

(8) **TEAM PHOTO:** this gives detailed information of your complete squad.

DEALING WITH PEOPLE

The other characters in the game all behave as people in their roles are supposed to, in that they will go about their tasks whatever you do. The other managers manage, the secretary is constantly, well, secretarial really - and the Chairman is a continual pain in the rear view mirror. It is up to you to interact with them to gain the advantages you need to win the league.

The interaction takes place primarily whilst fulfilling your tasks for the week, in that most of these require that you do something to someone or for someone! Dealing with people in Superleague requires all the same skills as it does face to face.

About the only difference is that you can be rude without suffering the possible physical effects of a violent reaction!

The mandatory tasks for the week are:-

1. **BOARD MEETING:** this occurs every Monday and is important to the game. It provides feedback as to how you're being viewed by the boss, and is also the place directives are issued (by the Chairman). These are direct orders to the manager which can be ignored only at your own peril. It could be an order to sell a player, for instance, if the team has had a bad result the week before. Whatever the "request" ignoring it could get you fired; - or make you a hero. You must weigh up the situation carefully and decide if you can remedy the problem without taking the drastic action indicated, if you can, fine. If not, duck at the

next board meeting as something large and heavy will be coming at you!

This is largely a non-interactive sequence. You sit and listen whilst nasty things are said! Later you can request an interview with the chairman and have your say, if you feel that way inclined. (Lemmings have been known to survive the jump, after all . . .)

2. TRAINING SCHEDULES: these can be set either by telephone, or in person at the training ground. Choose the relevant icon from either the door or phone menu to access the sequence.

You will be offered a squad file, with the current number of hours training in each of three areas (S - Shooting, D - Dribbling, T - Tackling) for each player shown on his file card. You can adjust the time the player spends on each individual subject per day, by clicking on the bars shown on the graphs. There is a maximum of 20 hrs available per player (maximum of four hours per day), assuming that there are no midweek games, when the time to train will be reduced and the players unable to maintain their ratings as easily.

Choose the type of work to be done based on the individual concerned. Build up the weaknesses and don't overdo one particular aspect of the game, or else performance and confidence will suffer. Remember even players are people and respond better if treated like it!

3. TACTICS MEETING: before the match you must have had your team talk and assigned the tactics for your team to use. Follow the on screen prompts to select from the play book, by paging through and clicking in the plays you want. Five selections being the maximum. Your choice here dramatically affects the teams chances. Choose very carefully, taking into account the strengths of the opposition. For example, having your sweeper run at the opposition adds to your attack but weakens the defence, especially if the other side has fast (high mobility) strikers. Setting up the midfield to mark man for man might be a way to stifle the opposition

creativity, but if their players have higher ball skills than yours, it could get embarrassing with the markers being continually beaten and your defence put under pressure.

Consult the tactical notes later in this manual for a fuller discussion of how the choices work in practice.

4. PICK THE TEAM: well, you can't play a match without one. Call up the squad file (from filing cabinet) to change the first team selections, or if you leave it to the last minute the sequence will initiate on match day, giving you the latest possible moment to complete the work.

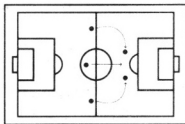
Chairmen tend to get very upset with managers who shirk this particular duty too often, so don't leave it until the eleventh hour every week, or board meetings will become uncomfortable in the extreme!

Changes you make in the team will obviously affect the players so it would be advisable to consider the personnel implications and maybe talk to the people concerned, rather than just drop half the team and let them read it in the papers . . .

TALKING TACTICALLY

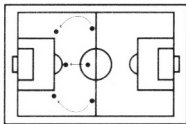
What follows is a run down of the tactical options open to you as manager. They really divide into two categories, midfield and the rest! How you deploy your men in the vital area in the centre of the park will determine your relative strengths in both attack and defence and is thus the single most important tactical decision to be made:

1. MIDFIELD PLAYS UP BEHIND STRIKERS
WHENEVER POSSIBLE: this effectively turns your creative department into an out and out addition to your attack. Great if the opposition plan to play a defensive, containing game. But it is not difficult to imagine what will happen if the opposition have two excellent strikers who can use the extra space this will give them.



Usually this is how a team would deploy if it was playing at home, against a known defensive opponent. Could also be useful if your team is behind at half time and you are looking for a way to shake up the other sides rhythm. In all cases however, you need to have the players who can operate the plan. Look for good ball-skills.

2. DROP MIDFIELD BACK TO SUPPORT DEFENCE: the opposite of option 1. Adds greatly to your ability to resist the opposition strike force, but leaves your own pretty much isolated. If you have world class forwards, this might not matter. If not look to provide some support if you are trying to win the game, although plenty of titles have been won primarily on the ability to close down another team. Makes for low scoring matches, but is a valid defensive tactic.

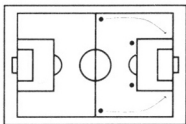


3. EMPLOY WIDE MIDFIELD PLAYERS AS OUT AND OUT WINGERS: a bold tactic, designed to add directly to the forward line.

Needs

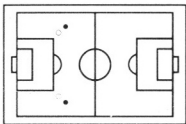
players with the classic wing skills of speed and ballplay, but then what doesn't in

this game? Again will allow the opposition more chance to attack you but greatly improve your teams chances of getting on the score sheet.



4. MARK OPPOSITION MAN-TO-MAN IN MIDFIELD:

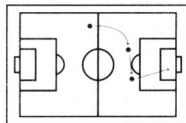
spoiling tactics designed to frustrate the other side and perhaps level up a



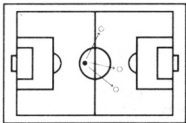
situation in which you feel your men are outclassed by the opponents players in this particular department. Effectively splits up your midfield strength between attack and defence and is the safe option in most cases (but boring . . .)

5. MIDFIELD GOES UP TO SUPPORT ATTACK FOR SET PIECES: doesn't leave the strikers

totally alone and provides some extra skills and muscle for corners etc. Watch for counter-attacks, however, especially if the other team have fast men in their front line.



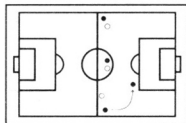
6. MIDFIELD COVERS OPPOSITION BREAKAWAYS FOR SET PIECES . . ., and this is what to do if you are worried about it!



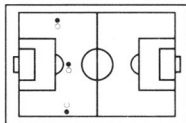
7. MIDFIELD LOOK TO PUT HIGH BALLS INTO SPACE BEHIND DEFENDERS: if your strikers are fit and faster than their markers this is a good

way to open up an otherwise sound defence. If they're not, they are

going to do a lot of running around for little return. Bound to make you popular in the dressing room that is!

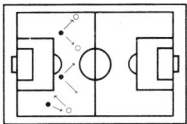


8. DEFENCE MARKS OPPOSITION STRIKERS MAN TO MAN: will put the



clamps on most teams scoring ambitions if carried out successfully. The danger inherent in the play is revealed when the strikers being marked have greater ball skills than those trying to mark them . . .

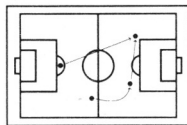
9. DEFENCE MARKS SPACE PICKS UP ATTACK FOR SET PIECES: if your defenders can't match their opponents for ball skill, they could stand off, let the men run at them and rely on greater mobility and good solid tackling.



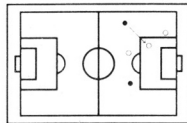
Better hope those strikers aren't TOO fast, else there could be nothing there to tackle . . .

10. CENTRAL DEFENDERS JOIN ATTACK FOR SET PIECES: adds some height and muscle for

corners, free kicks etc. and always unsettles a defence. It does leave you exposed to the quick break-away, so be careful with your other deployments.

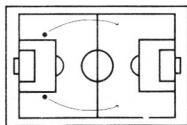


11. SWEEPER RUNS AT OPPOSITION WHENEVER POSSIBLE: adds in the option of the run from deep, which can be effective at creating openings in a defence, as it is difficult to defend against an extra man suddenly running into the attack. Again watch the consequences if the opposition have a strong attack themselves.

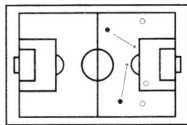


12. FULL BACKS ATTACK DOWN FLANKS WHENEVER POSSIBLE: if your backs are good attackers, it makes sense to have them add width to your strike force, in that it will leave more room for the strikers to operate

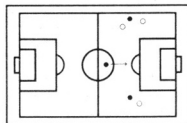
effectively. Spreading their duties will of course make them less than 100% efficient at defending.



13. ATTACKERS CARRY BALL, RUN AT DEFENCE: study the opposition and if your men have the ability to take on and defeat their opposite numbers, this makes a lot of sense. If they haven't, then your attacks will stall in the last third of the field.

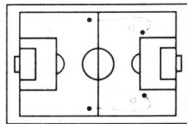


14. ATTACKERS LAY OFF BALL, RUN INTO SPACE FOR PASSES: when co-ordinated with the activities of the mid-field, this is an excellent way of getting by a good back four. Some



speed is called for, however and a high level of fitness. How good has your training been?

15. STRIKERS PULL DEFENCE OUT FOR RUNS FROM DEEP: use the strikers as lay off men and decoys to allow the mid-field to make runs at the



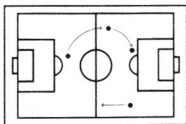
defenders, who are thus put under considerable pressure. Works well if the people making the runs are good ballplayers and especially if the defence marks your strikers man to man.

16. STRIKERS COVER BACK FOR SET PIECES

If your strikers are highly mobile, they can be a useful addition to the defensive ranks for corners etc.

Adds to your ability to respond to opposition plays, but puts physical pressure on

your strikers. They need to be fast and fit. A midfield playing intelligent balls forward can help too.



As you might expect all the options have good and bad points to consider. What you must do as manager is to weigh up the team you are facing and decide which five of the above would best add to your chances of putting the ball in the back of their net as often as possible!

Simple huh?

THE OPPOSITION

Each of the other teams in the league has their own way of playing the game. Each has a preferred set of tactics, which are adjusted to meet the changing situations in a match, much as you will need to fine-tune as you go along. The key to winning Superleague is to know your enemy and what he will

PROBABLY do, there are no certainties in football. The following sketches of each of the clubs competing against you might help in evaluating the situation.

Note that if you choose to rename the teams, they will still play to their plan - there is no way for the game to know that you have switched Liverpool and Rangers and renamed Munich as Hartlepool!

MARSEILLES: Play a fairly adventurous home game, as do most of the teams, tending to advance the midfield in particular. Look for a tough battle in the centre of the park on your own ground, and some close marking.

A C MILAN: Known to experiment with a sweeper from time to time, otherwise drop everyone back when threatened. Can be lethal on the break. Good markers and not

afraid to take on people going forward.

LIVERPOOL/ARSENAL: Also known to drop someone back behind the back four, usually away from home, but without weakening their ability to come forward very fast, with numbers. Expert at the passing game - watch for quick runs down the flanks from any of the wide players.

REAL MADRID: Pretty fixed in their ways, not prone to experiment over much. Have a tendency to bypass midfield, leaving their mobile and effective strike force to chase and harry the defence and to plug the gaps which develop. Makes them good on attack, but maybe weaker than some defensively.

PSV EINDHOVEN: One of the two habitual users of the sweeper system in the league. Difficult for strikers to run through this set-up, have to look for space to work in, possibly in front of the back four. One method of attack is to bring up men from the midfield to 'swamp' the defence in the hope of a man getting free in a shooting position.

RANGERS: Renowned for a good home record and will play to try and improve it. Away they are very difficult to score against, but not so hot at putting away the goals themselves. Look for tight matches on your own ground, but don't leave your defence weakened away, it could be expensive.

BAYERN MUNICH: The other sweeper team of the bunch, and the most cautious of all in their approach. Difficult to break down at any time and keep all the men behind the ball when ever threatened. If they play their fast strikers, however, they can destroy you on the break.

Generally a team will have at best two rehearsed options to play with. The more you can counter these, the more you put them under pressure. Look for changes in gameplan at half time if there is more than a goal or two in it either away, or if the more cautious sides are leading away from home.

ASSESSING THE RESULTS

The match is over, you have won/been thrashed/humiliated/thrown away the points, or whatever and now you must face the chairman on Monday morning to explain either why you can't do that every week, or what went wrong this time that won't ever ever go wrong again . . .

In order to learn from the experience, try to assess what it was in your tactics that caused the effects that won/lost the day. Don't forget also to consider your players levels of confidence and fitness and the effect that had on their effectiveness on the day. Their attributes on paper may not be what they took onto the field.

As each team in the game has its own style of play, you should be able to learn how best to deal with them after a while, but remember that they will have a number of variations on the basic style and that your approach should be as flexible as possible.

One aspect of the problem you cannot really control is the press. Be as nice to them as you can stand, given the number of times they will drop you in it. If you say nothing, they will still print something, so it may be better to TRY to have a say in what appears.

HINTS AND TIPS

European Superleague has been designed to be as lifelike as possible in that anything that can go wrong, will go wrong - and with the worst possible results.

The controls of the game are very intuitive, but beware! Club chairmen are very unforgiving and will not accept inexperience as an excuse for failure! It is wise, therefore, to spend a little time familiarising yourself with the controls before starting in earnest.

We suggest that you immerse yourself in your team for the first season. Try to experiment with as many training schedules as you can, this will go further than anything in giving you the best working knowledge of the complexities of the game. The training schedule we have given you to begin with is just to keep the boys ticking over - it won't turn any of them into Superleague winning heroes.

Try to frame the schedule to fit each players own requirements and you will see their confidence, teamwork and fitness rocket towards the magic 100% (or at least not plummet towards 0%).

Managers must realise the power of the personal touch, take note of the confidence and teamwork ratings of your players if you set the schedule by phone! Also remember that everything you 'say' in Superleague will be held against you at some point in the game.

Possibly the most useful device in the game is the opposition file (the scout on AMSTRAD and SPECTRUM) as this gives detailed information on the team you are going to massacre next. Try to decide which of his squad members your opposite number is going to field and try to pick your own team with the right strength and skill to match.

Use the tactics sequence as wisely as possible - read the section titled 'Talking Tactically': home matches usually warrant a more aggressive style than away fixtures. You will need to experiment to see how different clubs react to different tactics and formations. Don't forget that no matter how well trained the boys are, they will only play as well as your tactical plan allows.

European Superleague has a very buoyant transfer market - especially in levels two and three - the other managers will constantly pester you to buy and sell. Our advice would be only participate if you desperately need that new striker or goalie; the other managers in the game are far better at this than you and will carve you up at every opportunity.

You will notice a whisky bottle on your desk - a temptation to which many managers succumb in order to ease the pressure. Keep an eye on the clock though when clicking the whisky bottle open or you may find that the pressures are worse, not better.

Above all play methodically and carefully and who knows! You may last more than two matches . . .