

50 years of Fergie – is that all?

Posted by [Stephen Hall](#)

Saturday 15th November saw the day young 16 year old Ferguson made his playing and scoring debut for Scotland's Queen's Park. Fifty years later we know so much more about him, but we don't know it all, yet.

One of his early dreams was to play for Glasgow Rangers. He achieved this for a short while scoring 44 goals in 57 games before falling out with the club. This scoring record stands him ahead of the players he currently manages, so I guess they'll listen to him on the subject of finishing, with or without the famous hairdryer for company.

His story is of course, legend. As a player his career took him into pub management before football management appeared a better meal. He took Aberdeen to local and European triumph. He turned down offers to move to Arsenal or Tottenham and finally chose Manchester United.

Since taking the hot seat in 1986, he has won 10 premier league titles, 5 F.A.Cups, 2 league cups, the champion's league twice and various other world titles. We all know he nearly lost his job just a short while before going on to European success, although the United chief of those days denies this. However, his 60% win ratio leaves all others standing.

If he's fallen out with a player, they're moved on without sympathy; the club always comes first. Just ask Gordon Stracken, Paul McGrath, Paul Ince, Jaap Stam, Dwight Yorke, David Beckham, Rudd van Nistelrooy and recently, Gabriel Heinze.

He has proved time and time again that bringing through a youth academy works well in the long run; the Beckham, Butt, Giggs, Neville brothers and Robbie Savage kids proved his diligence with persistence. Wes Brown shows the system still works.

While it's easy to have a go at the manager who made some poor purchases, Klebeson and Veron come to mind, there's going to be some misses when you buy so many players over 20+ years. On the opposite side of that scale he brought in, often way below market value, Peter Schmeichel, possibly the world's best ever goalkeeper; Eric Cantona, held on a par with George Best at Old Trafford; Teddy Sheringham to make a bridge between midfield and goals; and a young chap called Ronaldo, world footballer of the year (again.)

He's never been afraid to say what he thinks about referees and reserves a great political skill with his fellow managers. He's seen off the special one by taking the premiership title back; Keven Keegan when he looked like he might topple Sir Alex and Arsenal's Wenger regularly through a long period of back and forth, but Ferguson always comes out on top. Ferguson can see his players' faults, where Wenger can't.

The 1999 European triumph was the most unbelievable of all. He took off his two masters Cole and Yorke, replaced them with Sheringham and Solskaer and history was made. At the time Ferguson told us it was 'football, bloody football,' but days later he deservedly was knighted for his services to the game.

Recently, when he'd been written off yet again, his team came back to win titles and cups all over the place. Sir Alex Ferguson; despite all your bad press, we salute you. We don't want to like you, but we wish you'd manage our team. With fifty on the clock, just when will you give up and give other teams a chance?