

# 41 Competitive football

## A The championship

### THE PREMIER LEAGUE

As the championship **reaches** its **climax**, Manchester City and Liverpool are still challenging for the **title**. Man City's next **opponents** are Fulham, **at home**, which looks to be a **relatively** easy game. Liverpool, however, face much **tougher opposition**, **away** at Arsenal. The manager is not **underestimating** the difficulty of the task. 'Arsenal are a quality side and still **contenders** for a place in the top four, so our **priority** is just that one game, and not to think about the championship title.'

#### GLOSSARY

|                         |                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>league</b>           | a group of sports clubs that compete with each other for a prize                                                                                                  |
| <b>climax</b>           | the most important and exciting part of a book, film, game, etc.: <b>reach a climax</b>                                                                           |
| <b>title</b>            | the position of being the winner in a competition, especially in sport: <i>She has three world <b>titles</b> in cycling.</i>                                      |
| <b>opponent</b>         | (in sports or competitions) a person/team who plays against sb                                                                                                    |
| <b>at home</b>          | If a team plays <b>at home</b> , they play in their own stadium. <b>OPP away</b> (at Arsenal, etc.); <b>home adj</b> , <b>away adj</b> : <b>an away/home game</b> |
| <b>relatively</b>       | to quite a large degree, especially when compared with others                                                                                                     |
| <b>tough</b>            | difficult                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>(the) opposition</b> | the person or team you compete against in sport                                                                                                                   |
| <b>underestimate</b>    | think that sb/sth is not as strong, good, etc. as they really are <b>OPP overestimate</b>                                                                         |
| <b>contender</b>        | a person or team with a chance of winning a competition                                                                                                           |
| <b>priority</b>         | sth that is more important or you must do before anything else: <b>a top priority</b>                                                                             |

#### 1 Underline the main stress on these words. Use the **APP** to help you.

|            |               |            |              |
|------------|---------------|------------|--------------|
| climax     | underestimate | opponent   | contender    |
| relatively | priority      | opposition | overestimate |

#### 2 Answer the questions.

- If something is **relatively** easy, is it quite easy or extremely easy? .....
- If it's a **tough** game, is it a very physical game, or a difficult game? .....
- Is the **opposition**, a team you are playing against or a team you don't like? .....
- In a competition, is a **contender** the team who is going to win it? .....
- If something is a **priority**, is it quite important or very important? .....
- If you've observed the opposition carefully, are you likely to **underestimate** them, **overestimate** them, or judge them well? .....
- Does a **climax** come at the beginning or the end? .....
- Does a **league** involve one team or many teams? .....

#### 3 Complete the sentences.

- Our ..... in the next game are a team that have won two championships, so it will be a very ..... match.
- After his injury, Brown's top ..... now is to get back to full fitness.
- There are no weak teams in the League, so you should never ..... the opposition.
- There are 20 teams in the Premier .....
- Last week's game was ..... easy, but the next match will be much tougher.
- Inter Milan are playing well, so they will be ..... again for the championship.
- We are at ..... this week to Spurs, and ..... at Liverpool the following week.
- With just one round of games to go, the championship is now ..... a climax.
- Chelsea have now won three premierships ..... in recent years.



#### TEST YOURSELF



## B What do football supporters think?

### CHELSEA

We lack a bit of **consistency** and the manager is **under pressure**. However, I still think we have a **real chance** of being in the top four and **qualifying** for The Champions League.

### SPURS

We have a habit of **dominating** the opposition, then we **throw it away** at the end. Last week's **defeat** was a bad one, but I still think we **stand a chance** of getting into the top four.

### MANCHESTER UNITED

The new manager has **transformed** our season, and getting players back from injury has been a **real boost**. We had **no chance** of qualifying for Europe at Christmas, but now it's a possibility.

### ARSENAL

We've **sorted out** one or two problems off the **pitch**, but after three defeats **in a row**, there may only be an **outside chance** of making the top four.

### GLOSSARY

|                          |                                                                                                                                       |                       |                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>consistency</b>       | the quality of always behaving in the same way or having the same standard, etc. <b>consistent</b> <i>adj</i> <b>OPP inconsistent</b> | <b>dominate</b>       | be more powerful, important or noticeable than others <b>domination</b> <i>n</i> ; <b>dominant</b> <i>adj</i> |
| <b>under pressure</b>    | in an anxious situation, often because sb is forcing you to do sth in a certain way                                                   | <b>throw sth away</b> | waste or not use an opportunity                                                                               |
| <b>qualify (for sth)</b> | win the right to enter a competition or continue to the next stage of it <b>qualification</b> <i>n</i>                                | <b>defeat</b>         | an occasion when sb fails to win or be successful against sb else <b>OPP victory</b>                          |
| <b>transform</b>         | change sth completely, usually in a positive way <b>transformation</b> <i>n</i>                                                       | <b>sort sth out</b>   | find a solution to a problem                                                                                  |
| <b>boost</b>             | sth that helps or encourages sb/sth                                                                                                   | <b>pitch</b>          | an area of ground where you play certain sports: <b>a football/rugby pitch</b>                                |
|                          |                                                                                                                                       | <b>in a row</b>       | one after another, without a break                                                                            |

### SPOTLIGHT *chance*

**Chance** is used in many phrases.

- There's **no chance** that we will reach Sydney before night.
- We've only got an **outside chance** of promotion to the Premier League. (= a very small chance) **OPP a real/good chance**
- Do you think we **stand a chance** of winning? (= have a possibility of winning)
- This season could be my **big chance**. (= opportunity for success) He's retiring soon, so this is his **last chance** to lead the team. (= final opportunity)

#### 4 Complete the sentences.

- The noun from qualify is .....
- The opposite of defeat is .....
- The opposite of consistent is .....
- The noun from dominate is .....
- The noun from transform is .....
- The noun from consistent is .....

#### 5 Positive or negative? Write P or N.

- It's been a real boost. ....
- We've sorted it out. ....
- Another defeat. ....
- He transformed the team. ....
- We're inconsistent. ....
- Three victories in a row. ....
- I threw it away. ....
- I've been under pressure. ....
- We've got a real chance. ....
- We were dominant. ....

#### 6 Complete the sentences.

- Next season could be my last ..... of winning the championship.
- The ..... is in bad condition because of the heavy rain.
- If we win the next two games, it will be a ..... for the players and supporters.
- One more victory and it will be three wins in a .....
- We just ..... away games that we really should win easily.
- One week we play well, the next we're rubbish; we lack .....
- If we win on Saturday, we will ..... for the next round in the competition.
- I know the team is under ....., but they have to ..... out their problems.
- Unfortunately, in our last four games, we've had one victory and three .....
- I don't think we ..... a ..... of winning the title.

#### 7 ABOUT YOU Do you support a team? If so, how have they been playing recently? Write sentences using vocabulary from above, or tell a partner.



#### TEST YOURSELF