

# THIS IS FOOTBALL™ –

## Q & A

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**Q: Football is one of the most popular genres on PlayStation, how does This is Football move the goalposts? What sets it apart from other football games?**

A: We've really tried to improve on other football games in all aspects: graphically, technically, content and gameplay wise. Attention to detail is one of the key qualities we've tried to bring to the football genre. We've laboured long and hard to make the animations look very realistic. With THIS IS FOOTBALL you get a sense of really performing the moves, this attention to detail becomes really evident in the replays, which we feel are pretty revolutionary.

One of the things we really wanted to try and capture in THIS IS FOOTBALL is the atmosphere and sense of occasion that comes with the big exciting games. We spent a lot of effort creating impressive looking stadia, that have a real sense of scale and grandeur - together with the animating flags and camera flashes they create a totally authentic environment. The game is further enhanced by the impeccable commentary delivered by respected International commentators including Clive Tyldesley and Bruno Longhi.

We went back to the drawing board when it came to designing the gameplay and control system. We examined exhaustively all of the options and possibilities available to us, before building a unique, but accessible game engine - The primary concern was to create moves that not only worked within the gameplay, but were also instinctive to execute on the controller.

An example of this is the 'dribble knock-ahead', which allows the player to push the ball ahead of him, as he surges down field, timing the move to go past opposition players (this is achieved by simply holding and releasing the button bash speed button.) The 'chip-through' ball, adds artful flexibility to the already comprehensive passing system and players can also perform 'step-overs', 'body swerve shimmys', and can even try to block long aerial passes by flinging their bodies into the ball's path as the ball is struck! - THIS IS FOOTBALL also offer 4 different types of tackle, each suited to specific gameplay situations.

THIS IS FOOTBALL allows each player to express their own unique style of play by providing a huge variety of moves. The game also offers enormous potential to customise options within the game. For example, the player can: create any type of competition, create a team from scratch, choose player appearance, abilities, kit designs, and even the flags which fly in the stadia. We envisage that football fans will recreate 70's and 80's versions of their favourite teams - along with

Moustaches and big hair, and play them off against their modern counterparts !, or perhaps create detailed versions of their school, or Sunday league team. Opportunities are endless when there are over 7000 players and over 20 tournaments and Leagues already featured in the game.

We've also included loads of fun, hidden options all of which are unlocked by winning tournaments - This gives players an unusually strong gameplay structure for a football game, it encourages players to play in each of the competitions, at different difficulty settings, rewarding him with treats such as an option to play matches on the beach or in his local park, control matches with micro sized players (but normal sized ball!) or captain a team with a 25 foot tall central defender!

**Q: How passionate are the team about football? Do they play? Who's the best player?**

A: Everyone on the team loves football, and several members of the team play regularly - whether it be a kick about in the park, five-a-side, or Sunday League. Ben Fawcett looks like he might be a contender for Best Player, although Vince and Paul both seem to be pretty talented. Others like Dominic and Jim are passionate and knowledgeable armchair fans of the sport, preferring the Lager, rather than isotonic approach!

**Q: Who have you used for the commentary in This is Football in the various country versions?**

A: For the UK we used Clive Tyldesley, who is one of the best respected and best known voices in British football, and we wanted to find people of a similarly high standard for the other European territories - we feel we have achieved this by using the likes of France's Thierry Roland & Jean Michel Larque (TF1); Germany's Rheinhold Beckmann; Spain's Angel Gonzalez Ucelay ; Italy's Bruno Longhi; and the Netherland's Evert Ten Napels.

**Q: How does This is Football simulate real football?**

A: By trying to encapsulate the essence of what makes real football fun to play and watch.

**Q: Some of the team were involved in the Total NBA series. How did that experience benefit the development of This is Football?**

A: Yes, it helped massively. Many of the key people on the project learned a lot of invaluable stuff about 3D sports graphics and 3D sports gameplay when they developed Total NBA '96 and '97. T.I.F was written completely from scratch, but there are definite echoes of the best bits of Total NBA throughout the game

**Q: What tournaments and match options are available in the game? How many stadia are available in the game? How does the weather affect gameplay?**

A: In total there are over 20 different competitions in the game ranging from The World Cup through to the European domestic Leagues, and each one is playable in 3 difficulty modes, in addition you can create and name any additional competitions you require - We have a total of 13 World famous stadia lovingly recreated in high detail, plus several other less famous locations in which to play footie.

**Q: Will you be able to play in multi-player mode?**

A: Oh yes, up to 8 people on one screen, in any configuration - and yes, 8 players *is* sheer bedlam!

**Q: What's special about the replay system?**

A: It's simply far more flexible, smoother, more detailed and more TV-like than anything else offered by the competition. It's really becomes a big feature of the game for football 'afficianados,' as they can examine all of the action in-game really appreciating the authenticity of the movement. Of course, it's also useful for rubbing your opponent's nose in it when you score a great goal or for checking to see whether or not the opponent pulled off a deliberate dive!

The other great thing about our replay system is that you can save your best goals (or fouls!) to memory card and take them around to your friend to load them up on his PlayStation to illustrate your genius.

**Q: Playing football is all about being aware of where your players and the opposition are on the pitch, how does this work in This is Football?**

A: We have a flexible radar system, but most of the team tend to rely more on the special passing marker system that we've implemented. This system highlights the direction and position of team mates, who are out of sight, this effectively doubles the players' passing options at any one time - it works really well in opening up the gameplay.

**Q: Football is an intuitive game, how do the controls give you a natural feel for the ball?**

A: We really made it our priority to ensure that the game was both intuitive and easy to play, whilst offering additional layers of complexity for long term players. Where possible we doubled up functionality on single buttons to keep things simple for example 1 tap - short pass, 2 taps - one two, tap, hold, and release - give and go, we found that this kind of system is easily learned and instinctive.

As we built more and more moves into the game however, we had to find additional functionality on the controller - we did this by introducing a special function button (R1). Holding down the R1 button effectively re-maps the buttons, adding features like 'through-ball', deliberate foul, and 'aftertouch' to the standard roster of moves. The game is perfectly playable using just the standard buttons, but it moves into another gear as users start to experiment with the controller - offering depth and longevity.

**Q: How detailed are the players? Do they have individual statistics, appearances and playing attributes?**

A: Each player is completely unique, consisting of 26 variable attributes (from obvious qualities like height and weight through to more esoteric values such as passing vision, injury resistance and grace under pressure.)

The player's faces and bodies are constructed using a system which allows for over 5000 different individual appearances, the actual in-game player models consist of 300 polygons each and are fully skinned.

**Q: Is there a widescreen option?**

A: Yes, this is beneficial for two reasons. Firstly, people can play the game on Widescreen TV's in 16:9 mode without the players being distorted, this is possible as the team has effectively created an 'anamorphic' version of the game which stretches the images to their correct proportions. Secondly, in this mode the player can see more of the pitch, and therefore can see even more players than normal, which makes it easy to plan and create complex passing moves.

**Q: What frame rate does the game run at?**

A: A constant 25 frames per second, this is one of the reason that our animations look so impressive.

**Q: What customisable options are there in This is Football?**

A: Loads..... you can customise players, teams, kits, competitions, flags, quick game teams and speed settings for both the players and ball

**Q: How do the animations give the impression of real players on the pitch?**

A: We Motion-Captured over 250 individual moves, with several professional Footballers, and then painstakingly reconstructed the data to retain the integrity of the Motion-Capture quality. The results can look uncannily realistic, and certainly add to the sense of playing a game of 'real' football.

**Q: How did you feel about Manchester United winning the Triple?**

A: Undoubtedly Good PR for British football, But sickening for most of us all the same!

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<b>Developer:</b> Sony Computer Entertainment Europe <b>Genre:</b> Football Simulation <b>No. of Players:</b> 1-8 <b>Peripherals:</b> Multi Tap, Analog Controller (DUAL SHOCK), Memory Card
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