

**QUAL~SOFT**

**LEAGUE  
DIVISION  
ONE**

**REV. 1**

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## INTRODUCTION

LEAGUE DIVISION ONE is a REALISTIC soccer management simulation. It has been designed to fully test the sophisticated player of strategy games, while, at the same time, satisfying the enthusiastic teenage soccer fan's wish for excitement and involvement. We've even found from our letters that primary school youngsters can get a deal of "fun" out of the game. We emphasise the word REALISTIC, and this is why:

We see the soccer manager's job as organising players' skills into a skillful TEAM. He begins with an idea of what makes a successful team. He picks the players that will give him the right skills and plays them in a formation which will blend the individuals into something approaching his idea of a Championship side. Of course he's usually limited by his squad and often has to compromise, but in his long term strategy he will bring along the youngsters with the skill he needs, and use the transfer market to reduce the limitations. It's all about players, their skills, team formations and blending. In LEAGUE DIVISION ONE that is how you will develop your team; no "points for strength" or "points for energy", but blending a group of players into a successful squad. That is what we mean by REALISTIC.

This means that we have had to develop a "football match" in which the players' skills and the particular blend will determine how the match goes, and that the opposition teams have their own blend which reflects their playing record. Of course, there are upsets; it wouldn't be REAL without them, but over a

## **INTRODUCTION (cont.)**

full season your team will perform as it deserves to, and that is up to you as manager. How we achieve this is described in detail under the heading "INSIGHTS INTO THE MATCH" on Page 6.

Before we released the original version of LEAGUE DIVISION ONE we carried out several hundred hours of testing to sort out the "DATA" on players and teams and many of the "constants" which determine the running of the game. Since then, something like 100,000 hours of the game have been played by our customers. Through numerous letters and telephone conversations we've learned of their experiences of the game and have been able to modify some of the figures and statistics to ensure realistic results under all conditions. We are now able to release a multi-level game which will behave realistically (we can't get away from that word) at all levels. This means that each game-player can use the level which not only gives him a challenge but also a reasonable chance to succeed. We think that this is the most important revision to the game, although perhaps not the most spectacular.

We invited suggestions for enhancements to the game and, boy, did we get them. The version for the ICL 2980 will be coming out soon. We've introduced some of these enhancements until we have hit the stops on the 32k Beeb. The next section deals with them specifically, we'll just say here that we hope they will make the matches more interesting and that they will provide you with more information, in an easily understood way, than you had before.

LEAGUE DIVISION ONE:REV1, is a sensible evolution of the original concept. All the information in the original booklet is still relevant; all the original features have been retained. New users can go ahead and play unhindered by prejudice, but those who have upgraded may have to forget some of their ideas about certain players and teams (and drop some of their tricks). We hope you enjoy playing the game as much as we have enjoyed developing it.

## ENHANCEMENTS

The enhancements, 22 we count in all, fall into 3 categories:

- a) Those which are visible to the player.
- b) Those which affect performance but otherwise invisible.
- c) A tightening of some aspects of the game, including the elimination of "cheating".

Let's try and speed our way through them.

**Penalties.** Probably the time of greatest tension in a match, how can any game be without them? These now fall to both your own side and the opposition. In the former case you will have to choose your penalty "king", and then hit the spacebar for him to take it. If a goal is important you'll be surprised at your apprehension as you're poised over the spacebar.

**Scorers.** The most requested of the enhancements, the naming of the goal scorers. This will reflect something of the abilities of your players when it comes to putting the ball into the net.

**Season's Scorers.** A new information screen that can be looked at after a match. A record of your scorers for the whole season is displayed. Watch it build up as the season progresses.

**Injuries information.** Another new information screen that can be looked at after each match, listing all your injured and suspended players, along with the number of matches until they become available for selection again. This number will "count down" as matches go by.

**Transfer List.** Yet another information screen which is shown when you choose to buy a player. A complete list of available players with their playing positions. Players that you sell will of course appear in the list as well (you may want to buy them back).

**Transfer of Injured Players.** I'm not sure if this comes under a) or c), but injured or suspended players will receive no bids. That stops you temporarily selling players and replacing them with fit ones only to buy them back when they are available for selection again (that means YOU Jan-Eirik).

**Choice of Action.** After the match "statistics", this screen allows you to choose your next action. It can be entry into the transfer market, access to scoring records, access to the injuries/suspension list, to SAVE a game, or to Continue to the next match.

**Multi-Level Games.** At the beginning of a game you are given the choice of 4 levels of play:

- 4) Apprentice.
- 3) Competent.
- 2) Expert.
- 1) Move Over Bobby!

You cannot change during a game, so no building up your funds at level 4 then moving to level 1. The level that best reflects the real game is 2, Expert. Level 1 is a "Vindaloo" version for masochists.

**In Play Adjustments.** The game allows you 2 adjustments of players during a match, intended for injury, dismissal, or substitution situations. You can now use them purely as tactical adjustments at any point during the game.

**Substitutions.** Interesting change this. One young man has used the substitution and adjustment facilities in a very interesting and effective way. The instant response to the substitution call has been removed to simulate that annoying wait whilst the referee responds to your substitution request. You must now hold down the "S" key until he responds. No more substitutions on the fly exactly when you want them. (It's an interesting point for programmers how BBC BASIC responds to two consecutive "IF GET\$." statements. We found it by accident, but like it in this case.)

**Transfer Offers.** The computer has always been a little devious during the transfer deals. It's got worse!

**Dummy Player.** This player, with zero skill in any position, can now be used in two situations (he can be used at ANY time if you're daft enough). When you wish to swap around two players on the team sheet, you have previously had the problem that the computer will not allow you to place one player in 2 positions. This "dummy" player can be put in the place of one and then the swap made. Secondly, should you be able to field 12 players then the "dummy" can be used as a last resort. He gives nothing to the skill of your team. He can in fact be used in as many positions as you find necessary. The player is designated "\*\*\*\*" and appears on the team sheet as "\*". We chose not to use a blank, produced just by hitting the [RETURN] key as this leads too easily to mistakes, and in testing we have played 10 men too often as a result. The "\*" is very easily seen where a blank is missed. It is in fact "no player", so if you do have to use it in your team "he" will not score, become injured, be sent off, and cannot be involved in any substitution or adjustment.

Now quickly through some of the invisible enhancements. We have mentioned the changes of parameters to player skills, team skills (opposition that is) and to certain "constants". This has an effect which will not be observed by new users but users of the original game will need to forget some of the things they have learned. However two things worth mentioning are the changes to opposition tactics and to the effect in the season after you have won the Championship. Just as you may consider different tactics for different teams then so will the opposition. In particular you may find differences between the home and away tactics of some of the teams, particularly at the lower end of the league table. This can reduce your overall accumulation of points through the season unless you answer their tactics with something to overcome them. If you win the Championship then the following season will be a tough one indeed, as the other 1st Division sides are out to take points off the "Champions". So winning the title is not the end, winning it the following season will be doubly difficult.

## INSIGHTS INTO THE MATCH

In the introduction we stressed that soccer management is about players, skills, and the blending of these into a successful team. We also said that if the computer game is to follow the real game then we must produce a "football match" where the result will depend on the blend of player skills, and the distribution of these skills throughout the team. It must also be possible for you as manager, to control the balance of skills by your team and formation selections, although of course you will be compromised by the limitations of the squad of players you have available. Then it will be up to you to reduce these limitations by bringing along the young players that you need and by intelligently using the transfer market. You must be master of your own destiny if you are truly to be a manager. So how does LEAGUE DIVISION ONE allow this?

**The Football Match.** Any real football match is a sequence of "conflicts" or "competitions" between players of the two sides, and the result of one "competition" logically leads onto the next. Two players challenge for a 50-50 ball in midfield, that's the 1st "competition". The side that wins will then try to move the ball forward into an attacking position either by running it, or more often by a pass or sequence of passes, whilst the other side will attempt to dispossess the first by interception or tackle. That is the second "competition". If the attacking side wins that, then they will try to create an opening for an attempt on goal, but if dispossession occurs then the defensive side will try to work the ball forward out of defence. The result of one "competition" will determine what the next one will be. That's what we mean by the "logical sequence" of these "competitions". The whole match is a long sequence of these "competitions", and not so obvious is that a side will have to win at least 4 of these in succession to score.

We've split the game up into 5 "skills" or "abilities".

1) Most team ballgames are about possession of the ball. In the game of football most of the fight for possession takes place within the area 30 yards either side of the half-way line.

If your team can't win and retain possession in this "midfield" area then it won't win many matches. So this is the 1st skill, to win and retain possession of the ball in midfield.

2) But you don't score goals from this area, despite some of the football commentators who exaggeratedly say that a goal scored from 2 yards outside the 18 yard box (20 yards by my calculation) was scored from 35 yards. The ball must be moved into attacking area of the field, in or around the penalty area, if a team is to stand any chance of scoring. This is the 2nd skill; to move the ball forward from midfield and to retain possession despite the challenges of the defenders.

3) If a team is to avoid giving away goals then the first line of defence is to dispossess the attacking side as it attempts to work the ball forward. So this is the 3rd skill; to dispossess the attacking side as it attempts to move within scoring distance. Skills 2) of one side and skill 3) of the other obviously come into conflict or "competition".

4) Having retained possession in an attacking position, then comes the really difficult skill of creating openings. So many teams have really lots of possession but just can't create anything worthwhile when it comes to attempts on goal. Skill number 4) is that most difficult of skills, creating reasonable chances to score.

5) The defence isn't going to let you do that, not if it is a competent defence. Skill number 5) is to make sure that attempts on goal don't finish up in the back of the net.

It isn't difficult to see where the competitions take place is it? Between 1) of either side, between 2) of one side and 3) of the other and vice-versa, and between 4) of one and 5) of the other (and again vice-versa). In fact between 4) and 5), to score, a side must win two competitions, to create a chance and then to defeat the attempts of the defence, particularly the goalkeeper, to keep the ball out. The computer will run a simulated "football match" in which the "competitions" take place and it will ensure that the sequence is logical.

**Team Skills.** At the moment everything is very random and there is no reason why one team should beat another except through luck. Each team must therefore be given skill levels in the 5 described, and the result of the “competitions” has to depend on the relative skills of the two teams. This doesn’t mean that the stronger team in any “competition” always wins, but it is to be expected that, ON AVERAGE, the stronger team will win out. In fact, the greater the difference in skill levels the greater the chances of that side winning the “competitions”.

We must therefore give each team skill levels in all 5 skills we have described. But not only need the level change but also the BALANCE. In other words, one team may be superior in skill 1) but inferior in skill 4); which means it has a superior midfield but isn’t as good at putting the ball into the net. So you can see that the “style” of play of the team can be defined by the balance of skills. In the 23 teams you play (21 of the 1st Division and 2 “friendlies”) then each side will have different characteristics which will reflect their League position and playing record. Earlier we mentioned the teams using more sophisticated “tactics” by which we mean that they will employ different balances of skill at home and away.

It is not difficult to see then that every match you play will face you with new problems as no two of your opposition teams will play the same way. So you may choose to modify your own tactics according to the team you’re playing.

**Player Skills.** So how do you establish your own tactics? Each player has a “correct” position. Take Steve Allen for example. He is a central defender which means that his abilities are greater in skills 3) and 5) than 1), 2) and 4). That’s what we mean when we call him a defender. If you choose to play him in midfield or attack then obviously his game will suffer and so will your team’s. This is true for each player in his own way. So to establish your own blend of skills, to determine your own tactics, you must select the playing formation you want and then pick the right players in the right positions. Your overall team

skills will be calculated by the computer and your teams style and overall ability will be determined by your selections.

At first you have a limited choice of players and therefore a limitation on the team you can field, but the players have been deliberately chosen to allow you to put a similar quality side in whatever formation you prefer. From there on it is up to you to bring along the right youngsters and to buy the players that will allow you to put out your idea of a good team. It takes time, remember you have 5 seasons so don't be surprised if you're fighting to survive relegation early on.

**Graphics Simulation.** How does a manager decide whether his side is performing the way he wants? He watches and "reads" the game. If things are not going as they should, then it's only by seeing the WHOLE game that he can determine what is wrong. This poses a problem for our computer simulation. It's quite impossible to use matchstick men running around a 3D pitch to show a 90 minute match. To begin with, if the players are to move at lifelike speed then the match would take 90 minutes to complete, if not it would become ridiculous. It is possible to show "edited highlights", but only an armchair football fan thinks he can "read" a game from seeing highlights (especially if there are only 3 minutes of them). We have thought hard and long about the best way to give the manager a view of the whole match.

If we think back to the "competitions" that make up the game then what the manager needs to know is how many, and which, of these he wins and loses. We have therefore used a "bird's eye" view of the game which shows the whole pitch, and represented the players with symbols in appropriate colours (red for Man utd, blue for Everton, and so on). Your own team plays in all yellow strip. Whenever a "competition" takes place then the winner of that "competition" is shown by displaying the winning symbols in the appropriate area of the field. As the play moves back and forth then the symbols show you who has the ball and where. In this way the manager can see the entire match, and exactly where his team plays well and where they go wrong. This is exactly what he wants to know.

## TACTICS AND STRATEGY

It's not for us to tell you what tactics or strategy to employ. There is no such thing as A WINNING STRATEGY. You can build many different Championship winning sides, with different styles and different squads; it's not a question of finding a particular set of players. Each game-player will have his own idea of what a winning side needs, and he should decide that from the start and then try to build up the best side he can to play in the style he's chosen. If he's wrong then there's always another game. But we do want to point out some of the tactical and strategic possibilities.

Some players will believe that a team should be capable of modifying its tactics according to the opposition. We've explained how you can control the tactics by choosing your side, but said nothing yet about the tactics you can employ DURING a match. Tactics are accomplished by changing the balance of your side. If you mean that you will win or lose more matches but you will reduce the chances of the opposition team scoring and also your own. What else would you expect? But fewer goals tend to mean more drawn matches and in certain cases that may be your choice. But more importantly, if during a game you succeed in going a goal ahead in a match you didn't expect to win, then by changing your formation you can give yourself a better chance of preserving your lead. The game allows you to make that change in two ways.

You can at any time during a match, by hitting the "A" (for "adjustment") key, reposition up to 2 players. If you wish to preserve a lead then you can bring an attacker back into midfield or defence. Two attackers in fact. You may of course go the other way and move defenders forward if you're chasing a goal. The computer will recalculate the strength of the 5 skills and so you will have changed formation. You can theoretically produce a 6-4-0 or 6-3-1 formation, or the other way a 2-2-6 or 2-3-5 formation. We would suggest that you only carry out such drastic changes close to the end of a match.

The problem with changing the formation as above is that the players you have moved are now in unfamiliar positions and will not give of their best. Of course, if you set out to do this before the match then you could pick the appropriate player in the team-sheet. So if during the match you wish to be very defensive, then choose a 4-4-2 formation and position a defender in attack, and as soon as the game starts move that defender into defence. You will then have a 5-4-1 formation with the players in their correct positions. So you see you are not restricted to the 3 formations originally chosen, there are many possibilities if you think about it.

A better way of changing formations without playing players out of position is to use your substitute. Sometimes it seems that your choice of substitute is the most important choice that you make. You can do all that we've mentioned above and more because you still have the "adjustments" available to you. So if you make a change and then want to go back to your original formation then, providing you don't use up all your changes at once, you may. As an example: if, having achieved a 1 goal lead, you then decide to "go defensive" as described above, then the opposition scores twice and you need to go on the offensive, providing you still have "adjustments" left, or haven't yet used your substitute, then you may be able to re-form your team a little. The computer will keep track and adjust your skill levels with each change.

A word about strategy. Right from the start you should be thinking about the sort of team you want to build up. You won't win anything with the squad you begin with (but be careful about that statement because over several seasons the skill levels of some of your players will change). For the first two seasons you may find yourself struggling to avoid relegation, and your first priority is to stay in the 1st Division. But you must prepare for the future if you are eventually to succeed. We've said above that there are many different squads that can take the Championship, and if you choose to play an attacking game, a counter-attacking game, a "mid-fieldsteamroller" type of game or a game of tactics (where you change your style according to the opposition), then you can win the Championship with the right

players. Obviously the "right" players will depend on your style. But we have given you a set of players that is "neutral" to begin with, so that whatever style you choose you have a fair chance to win the Championship. So we emphasise; from the start set your strategy in your own mind and slowly work towards building a squad that will take you to that Championship.

Believe it or not but there is a great deal more to the game than we have told you so far, but the rest is for you to find out. As we said at the beginning, we have tried to produce a game which gives you the chance to try the excitement and frustrations of being a 1st Division soccer manager. The letters that we have received about the original game have referred to the game in very complementary terms, describing it as "excellent", "brilliant", "superb", "addictive", "great", and even "the best game for the BBC I've played." We hope that we have made the game even more interesting by the many enhancements we've made, and we look forward to hearing from our new customers, as well as our old, about this revised version.

Unfortunately, we have reached the limit of the BBC Micro's memory (within 100 Bytes) and future enhancements will have to be made in the form of a "modular" game. This can be done to good effect on a disc based system but will take a great deal of thought if we are to achieve a tape game which is not too cumbersome to use. But we have a number of "thoughtful" people at our disposal, so don't rule out significant expansions to the game. We would be very pleased to hear from you about the sort of expansion you would like to see. We are available on the phone at all normal business hours and we are very pleased to read your letters. We must stress that we cannot hope to answer all the letters we receive, but we will of course answer those who are having problems. We hope there aren't too many of you that do.

So GOOD LUCK and enjoy the game!

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