

## Cup Finalists City Cannot Afford Slip-Up

Despite reaching their first cup final for 30 years, Manchester City supporters will be slightly disappointed with a season that promised so much back in August.

Tipped by many experts at the start of the season to be challenging Chelsea, Arsenal and neighbours Manchester United for the Premier League crown, City have slipped away from the pack over the last few months, as they find themselves eight points adrift of the London clubs above them, and 14 away from the Red Devils in first.

City's season has been littered with uneven match form, in-fighting and unsettled players. Despite some impressive home wins against Liverpool (23<sup>rd</sup> August) and Chelsea (25<sup>th</sup> September), City have, at times, faltered away from home, including dropping points at Sunderland (29<sup>th</sup> August) and Wolves (30<sup>th</sup> October). Their last six away league games have only produced two points, which included a 3-0 thumping at Anfield earlier this month.

Roberto Mancini, completing his first season in charge of the Blues, remains positive for the remaining games and for the long-term future of the blue half of Manchester. They are still on course for their highest Premier League finish, which will see them net a lucrative Champions League place for next season.

Rumours still surround the club as to the strikers who will be featuring in a blue shirt next season: Craig Bellamy has spent the season out on loan at Championship club Cardiff, and is expected to make the move more permanent should the Bluebirds achieve promotion. Emmanuel Adebayor has spent this year with Jose Mourinho at Real Madrid, and could also leave Eastlands in the summer.

Mario Balotelli may also be tempted to move back to Italy should a lucrative offer present itself.

Perhaps the biggest shock though would be the departure of club captain Carlos Tevez. The leading goalscorer of the season handed in a transfer request in December, reported to be deeply unhappy in Manchester. Despite the request being denied, reports this weekend suggested City would contemplate offers of around £40m for the Argentinean international.

Tevez has completed 2344 minutes of action this season, with 19 goals, close to the 2869 minutes and 23 goals he completed in the last campaign.

City's remaining games include crucial ties against Everton and Bolton, but the stand-out fixture is the home fixture against Spurs, which could easily see the winning club secure that vital 4<sup>th</sup> spot.

### **Form**

Premier League:

Home: WWDWW (14 goals for, 4 against)

Away: LDLLL (3 goals for, 10 against)

### **Remaining Premier League and FA Cup Games:**

25/04/11	Blackburn Rovers (a)
01/05/11	West Ham United (h)
07/05/11	Everton (a)
10/05/11	Tottenham Hotspur (h)
14/05/11	Stoke City - FA Cup Final (n)
17/05/11	Stoke City (h)
22/05/11	Bolton Wanderers (a)