

First-Division Football

1.0 Introduction

First-Division Football (FDF) is a quick-play simulation, designed to allow recreation of entire league fixture lists in a short amount of time (typical playing time for a match is 2 minutes). The back-and-forth nature of game play makes each match a suspenseful event, allowing for early blowouts, late comebacks and everything in between. FDF is designed to produce realistic results in the following categories:

- Club won-draw-lost records
- Half- and Full-time match scores
- Goalscorers
- Home/Away club performance
- Home/Away goalscorer performance

2.0 How the game is played

Each team has goal-scoring ratings for each goalscorer on the squad for the season in question, for home, away and neutral matches, plus a team defensive rating, again with ability in this area differentiated for site of the match. FDF ratings are always presented in three columns, with the first representing HOME ratings, the second AWAY ratings, and the third and last used for matches at NEUTRAL sites.

The game is played by generating scoring opportunities for each team. This is accomplished by alternating dice rolls for each side, with the home team always rolling first to start the match. (Home and Away status can be assigned randomly in the case of matches to be played on neutral ground.) The team which trails at halftime (or the visitor in case of a level score) begins play in the second half.

Three ten-sided dice of differing colors (we will assume red, white and blue) are used to control play. The red and white dice are the "Offensive" dice. These dice are always read as a two-digit number (red first, then white). The blue die is the "Defensive" die, and is read separately from the other two; rolls of "0" on the blue die are read as "10".

EXAMPLE: A roll of red 7, white 2, blue 9 is read as offense "72", defense "9" (we will shorthand this as 72/9).

3.0 Playing FDF -- in detail

To start the game, the home team rolls all three dice. The offensive dice (red, white) are read as described in section 2.0. This roll is checked against the appropriate list of player ratings for that team (remember to use the HOME section of the ratings!). The offensive roll (a two-digit number from 00 to 99) will either fall in the range next to one of the team's players or into the range marked END.

If the offensive roll falls within a player range:

- If the opponent's defensive rating is positive (+1 through +10), it is a GOAL scored by that player, and play passes to the other team.
- If the opponent's defensive rating is negative (-1 through -10), the scoring chance is smothered by

the defense if the blue die reads less than or equal to the defensive rating. If not, the GOAL is scored; in either case, play passes to the other team.

If the offensive roll falls within the END range:

- If the opponent's defensive rating is negative, play ends for the half for the team rolling the dice.
- If the opponent's defensive rating is positive, and the blue die reads less than or equal to this rating, then a weak defense has coughed up a GOAL against the run of play. Reroll the offensive dice to identify the player scoring the goal (reroll again if this roll falls within the END range, until a player is identified). If the value on the blue die is higher than the defensive rating, no goal has been scored and this team's scoring chances have been completed for the half.

To summarize, the defensive ratings come into play in the following fashion: good defensive teams (negative ratings) will stop what appear to be sure goals (from player ranges), while poor defensive sides (positive ratings) will allow goals to be scored from apparently harmless situations (END results).

Play now passes to the visitors, with the teams now alternating chances until both sides have generated END results. Note that this might result in one side or the other getting a number of consecutive rolls because their opponent has already exhausted their chances by rolling their END for the half. An END result from both squads signals the end of the first half of play.

The second half is played out in exactly the same fashion (although play is started by the trailing side), with a second END result for each team bringing on the end of the contest.

All of this is really quite simple, and should become clear as we go through a sample match.

4.0 A sample match

Arsenal and Sheffield Wednesday are meeting at Highbury in a Premiership battle. The ratings for the two sides look like

ARSENAL	(-5	-2	-3)
Tony ADAMS	00-03	---	00-01
Nicolas ANELKA	04-08	00-02	02-05
Dennis BERGKAMP	09-15	03-18	06-17
Gilles GRIMANDI	16	---	18
Stephen HUGHES	17-18	---	19
Marc OVERMARS	19-29	19-24	20-28
Ray PARLOUR	30-31	25-29	29-31
Emmanuel PETIT	32-33	---	32
David PLATT	34-37	---	33-34
Patrick VIERA	38-39	---	35
Nigel WINTERBURN	---	30-31	36
Christopher WREH	40	32-34	37-38
Ian WRIGHT	41-50	35-39	39-45
own goal	51-52	---	46
END	53-99	40-99	47-99
SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY	(+1	+3	+2)
Peter ATHERTON	00	00-02	00-01
Andy BOOTH	01-07	03-07	02-06
Benito CARBONE	08-17	08-12	07-13
Wayne COLLINS	18	13-19	14-17

Paolo DI CANIO	19-31	20-26	18-26
Andy HINCHCLIFFE	32	---	27
Graham HYDE	33	---	28
Jim MAGILTON	34	---	29
Jon NEWSOME	35	27-28	30-31
Mark PEMBRIDGE	36-38	29-31	32-34
Francesco SANETTI	39	---	35
Dejan STEFANOVIC	40	32-33	36-37
Guy WHITTINGHAM	41-43	34-36	38-40
END	44-99	37-99	41-99

Remember that Arsenal are at home, so they use the first column of ratings (remember, FDF ratings are always presented in HOME/AWAY/NEUTRAL order). Sheffield, as the visitors, will use the middle column of their ratings. This means that Arsenal are a -5 defense for this match (-5 heads the HOME column), while Sheffield will be at +3 defense (which appears at the top of their AWAY column).

As home team, Arsenal roll first. They roll a 31/4 (red 3, white 1, blue 4). Looking at their HOME ratings, we see that Parlour has gotten a chance at goal (his range is 30-31). Sheffield have a positive defensive rating, so they have no chance to stop the goal -- 1-0, Arsenal.

Sheffield now have their turn, and roll 22/4. Under their AWAY ratings, we see a chance for DiCanio (20-26). But Arsenal have a negative defensive rating, and so have a chance to stop the goal. We check the blue die and its value (4) is less than or equal to Arsenal's defensive rating (-5), so the scoring opportunity has been thwarted by the Gunner defense.

Arsenal's turn again, they roll 89/1. A roll of 89 falls within their END range, but Sheffield's poor defense leaves the door open to a score. The defensive die roll (1) is less than or equal to Wednesday's defense (+3), so a goal has been scored. We reroll the offense dice to identify the scorer, and get a 42, which means Wright has scored the goal -- 2-0, Arsenal. But Arsenal have rolled an END result, which means they are done for the first half.

Back to Sheffield who roll a 77/6. A 77 is within their END range (37-99), and Arsenal don't have a negative defensive rating, so the visitors fail to score and are through for the half thanks to the END result. Both sides have produced an END, so we go to the intermission with Arsenal leading by a 2-0 score.

Sheffield trail, so they open the second half. Rolling a 22/10, they generate another scoring chance for DiCanio. But this time the Arsenal defense can't contain him, as the defensive die roll (10) is higher than their defensive rating (-5) -- 2-1, Arsenal.

Arsenal now roll an 82/6. This falls within their END range, and the defensive roll exceeds Sheffield's positive defensive rating, so Arsenal fail to score and the END means they are finished for the match. It's up now to Sheffield to mount a comeback!

The Sheffield roll is 71/1. This, unfortunately for the fans who traveled to London to support them, leads to an END result (Arsenal's negative defensive rating won't allow a goal to be created from this) and the final whistle sounds. Our final scoreline looks like

Arsenal (2) 2 (Parlour, Wright)
 Sheffield Wednesday (0) 1 (DiCanio)

And that's all there is to it!

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