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The Arsenal FC Blog Weekly Review

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## Weekly Wrap

### Champions League Arsenal 0-0 Fenerbache

**Goals:** None

**Best:** Djourou, Clichy, Sagna

**Game notes (taken from [the match report](#)):**

Given the embarrassing nature of our defending in the last few games it was satisfying to see the boys keep a clean sheet, even though they could not find a goal at the other end. Robin van Persie came closest on the half-hour when his fierce shot from close range was spectacularly tipped onto the bar by goalkeeper Volkan Demirel, but this was ultimately a day when the Arsenal attack fell a little bit flat.



The big worry going into the United game was the rather disinterested performance of Nicklas Bendtner. With van Persie suspended and Adebayor injured the big Dane has got to know the huge role he has to play this weekend. Based on that assertion, this was a very disappointing performance. It wasn't that he was particularly bad, just that he seemed really reluctant to get involved. Maybe he was trying to conserve energy or avoid injury but his performance was nowhere near his best. He must do

### Premier League Arsenal 2-1 Manchester United

**Goals:** Nasri 2

**Best:** Nasri, Gallas, Fabregas

**Game Notes (taken from [the match report](#)):**

A win over Manchester United is always satisfying but for Arsene Wenger and our players to do it in the manner they did on Saturday was wonderful. The result and the performance was as good as an Arsenal supporter could ask for while the game as a spectacle was more than any football fan in the world could have expected. It was brilliant stuff and both sets of players and their managers should be congratulated for playing in such a positive manner.

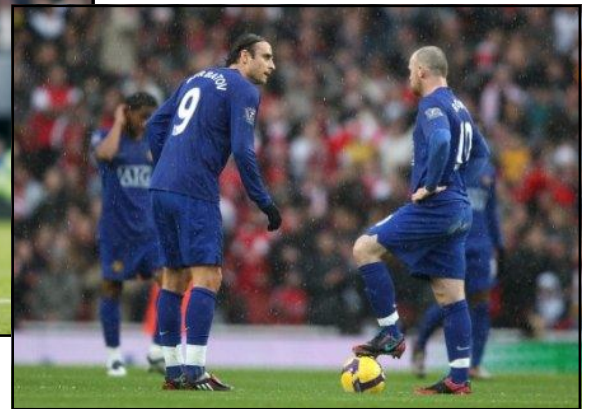


There were huge concerns raised going into the game about the lack of leadership at the club but today that couldn't be further from the truth. Captain Gallas put in a tireless performance while the other players I consider to be leaders in the squad - Fabregas and Almunia - were excellent. The goalkeeper had a tough time of things in the corresponding fixture last season and has looked a little wobbly of late but he was nothing short of brilliant against United. After a nervous start he held shots, commanded his area and made a thrilling save to deny Park in the first half. Well done to him.

## The Week in Photos



Samir Nasri celebrates the second of his two goals against United.



Dimitar Berbatov and Wayne Rooney converse after going two goals down against Arsenal

Lukasz Fabianski and Fenerbache goal keeper Volkan shake hands after both kept clean sheets in the Champions League clash.



A glimpse at the determination captain William Gallas showed in the win over Manchester United



## Good Week **Bad Week**

### It's been a **good week** for...

#### **Samir Nasri**

An obvious choice given the two goals he scored to beat Manchester United. Rarely has an Arsenal player adapted to Premiership football as quickly as Samir Nasri. His excellent close control and willingness to shoot has already made him an irreplaceable member of the team. Alex who?

#### **William Gallas**

The captain's leadership credentials have been called into question in recent times, but the Frenchman responded emphatically against United. He led by example to give Rooney and Berbatov little space but needs to continue showing this sort of form in the 'smaller' games.

#### **Arsene Wenger**

After the loss against Stoke City many people were irrationally and incorrectly calling for his head. But a superb managerial decision to play 4-5-1 with Diaby in the whole meant that his side was able to grab an unlikely victory over last year's champions. He would do well to grab a player or two in the January window but for now Wenger is sitting pretty again.

### And a **bad week** for...

#### **Nicklas Bendtner**

An injury to Emmanuel Adebayor and a ridiculous act of stupidity by Robin van Persie saw the Danish striker thrown into the limelight against United. And though it would be harsh to say he had a poor game, Bendtner will surely be unhappy with the chances he missed.

#### **Kolo Toure**

The manager's decision to pair William Gallas with Mikael Silvestre at the back sent the clear message that Kolo Toure is no longer a first-choice player. But while the Ivorian centre-back will no doubt be disappointed it is a decision which will surely only benefit the team.

#### **Johan Djourou**

What does he have to do to get a game? The team's best player against Fenerbache after filling in for the captain, Arsenal are yet to concede a goal when Djourou has been on the pitch. Wenger is clearly going for experience over youth at the back but I still find it very surprising that the giant Swiss centre-back has not enjoyed more game-time this season.

## 3 Things We **Learnt This Week**

### **(1) Arsenal can beat the big boys**

Arsenal's win over Manchester United wasn't just about the three points. They were important, for sure, but not as important as the boost in confidence it will give our side and the message of intent it sends out to the other big boys in the Premiership. The manager and fans know that this side must start beating the 'smaller' sides if they are to become genuine title contenders but this win can at a vital time and may well be looked back on as the catalyst for a fantastic season.

### **(2) Denilson plays better in a 4-5-1**

Statistics aside, it is clear that Denilson has struggled to emulate the efforts of Mathieu Flamini from last season. Playing in a 4-4-2 the Brazilian has often been the weak link and been unable to do his main job as a water-carrier for Cesc Fabregas. However, his performance in the win over United showed that Denilson is a completely different proposition in a 4-5-1. With Diaby providing an extra body in the middle the Brazilian starred, beginning wave after wave of attack and cleaning up in front of the back four. The question remains about what to do when Adebayor and van Persie return and the team goes back to 4-4-2 but for the moment we should expect big things from Denilson.

### **(3) Samir Nasri is one hell of a player**

Two goals against Manchester United - wow. Just a few months into his first season in England Nasri has already shown himself to be a more valuable player than Alex Hleb ever was.

## Coming Up This Week

Tuesday, 11 November, 7.45pm  
**Arsenal (H) v Wigan Athletic**  
Carling Cup 2nd Round

Saturday, 15 November, 3pm  
**Arsenal (H) v Aston Villa**  
English Premier League



## Final Bits & Pieces

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Until next week... have a good one!