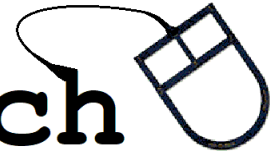




MicroCoach



Rules and Guidelines

2024 Season

Version 1.0 - April 2024



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 MicroCoach is a football (play by mail/website) game that simulates the highs and lows of football club management. It is arguably the most comprehensive game of its type. MicroCoach has been operating since 1994 This is the 28th full season of MicroCoach.
- 1.2 The simulation of match day comes from a computer program, supported by a database of hundreds of clubs & more than 10,000 active real footballers. Members of the MicroCoach committee originally developed the game and improvements are implemented each season. The players & player ratings this season have been sourced externally and using formulas (that we have defined) mapped to MicroCoach player attributes. External games/databases are used to track real transfers, and this is used to update a player's real club (for reference), periodically. Short-term loan deals are usually ignored in this update.
- 1.3 The MicroCoach match day program uses defined player ratings, but also applies probability factors, so, as in real life - no result is guaranteed!
- 1.4 MicroCoach consists of 128 domestic clubs and several simulated European/Global clubs. The domestic clubs are divided into 3 managed divisions of 20 clubs each (Premier, 1 & 2). All remaining MicroCoach domestic clubs (68 in number) are classed as non-league clubs.
- 1.5 The 2024 season will commence in April 2024 and is scheduled to be completed before the end of 2024.
- 1.6 There will be 8 full sessions during the season plus play-off rounds (Session 9 and 10) and Finals Day (Session 11).
- 1.7 Communications from MicroCoach are made available (by e-mail and via the website) to all managers at the start of each session and at relevant points in the season. There is a Twitter/X feed, where regular score updates are posted.
- 1.8 The Team Selection process is via the MicroCoach website. You will be allocated password(s) to access your club pages.
- 1.9 A mobile application (see website) allows you to access team information and updates via a smartphone.
- 1.10 These rules and guidelines have been developed to assist managers in playing MicroCoach. To succeed in MicroCoach you are advised to read this document carefully. However, if anything is unclear, please contact Norman House.

2. Key things to note

- 2.1 **Player Ratings:** As last season, all player data is now entirely sourced externally. Compiling the data still takes a significant amount of time but takes less time than when we did all the ratings ourselves. We do not alter the raw data, but still write formulas to map this data to our player attributes/requirements, including adjusting total ratings to ensure the majority of players are in their natural positions.

This is the 3rd season with this process and the mapping process has been improved again this season. Please note - Nothing is ever perfect, and the source data is not either. The data is based on data as it was nearly one year to eighteen months ago.

This process allows us to remain 100% independent, as our view of the players is largely not represented. Sometimes, we might know better, but that is the call we have made!

Several tests have been run on real teams. We are confident that overall, the data is highly representative of real-life abilities and strengths. The other advantage of using an external source is that we have been able to access a much wider global set of players, rather than just primarily focussing on the top European leagues.

- 2.2 **Cup competitions:** Competitions are pretty much as last season but some changes have been made to the format and clubs in competitions. (see paragraph 15).
- 2.3 **Unmanaged Clubs:** Unmanaged clubs will play with standard formations, with best team (as per computer rules) selected in all matches. Each competition may have different standard formations.
- 2.4 **Random Teams:** A random team and formation will be selected if a manager fails to complete a selection form by the deadline return date/time. This season the selection is completely random for

outfield players. However, the selection of goalkeeper is random only within available goalkeepers. If a designated goalkeeper is not available, the outfield player with the best goalkeeping rating will play in goal.

3. How to Play

- 3.1 Each session you select your teams for the forthcoming fixtures and can make transfer bids or facility improvements, (in relevant sessions) ensuring your club finances stay in credit. Team selection forms are completed via on-line via web-forms on the MicroCoach website. Transfer forms and Facilities Improvement forms are intelligent MS excel forms.
- 3.2 The form completion can take as little as five minutes, or as long as you wish - to pick a winning combination of players and formations.
- 3.3 Team selection forms must be submitted on-line via the MicroCoach website, except in exceptional circumstances (e.g., major website issues). If in doubt, contact Norman House.
- 3.4 Managers are advised to use read receipt facilities (if available) from their e-mail service provider for transfer and facility returns.
- 3.5 Please make sure the forms you send are complete (not blank templates) as we do not normally check forms until the deadline date has been reached. One way of doing this is by copying the returns to yourself and opening the files on receipt.
 - **Errors on Returns:** Every effort is made to correct simple mistakes, but the correct completion and submission of returns is each manager's responsibility. Errors or omissions can result in random team selections, random formations, or failed transfer/ facility requests.
 - **Each session:** You will have access to a pack of information via links to the MicroCoach website or via e-mail, including:
 - Return forms - Team Selection forms (on-line via website)
 - Transfer forms (MS Excel templates; session 1-4 only)
 - Facilities Installation forms (MS Excel templates; session 5 only).
 - An MS Excel document with additional statistics 'Extras' (e.g. tables, results, scorers, match details and fixtures) which is posted on the website.

4. Team Selections

- 4.1 **Team Selection Submission:** Managers should submit their returns each session by the dates stated. These returns must be received by the deadline date/time to avoid a club fine. Returns must be made via the on-line team selection facility on the website.
- 4.2 **Early Returns:** A manager who selects a team for all their matches by the early return date/time will receive a bonus of £1,000,000, for each of their club's budgets.
- 4.3 **Fines:** A manager who fails to provide a return by the deadline date/time will have £1,000,000 deducted from each of their club's budgets.
- 4.4 **Holidays:** Any manager who is going on holiday or has any other reason for being unavailable (when returns are due) should make prior arrangements with MicroCoach for their returns. This will avoid random team selection and fines being incurred.
- 4.5 **Selections:** Team selections must be made for all matches in a session. If a manager fails to select a team for any matches scheduled for that session, a random selection and formation will be made for those matches.
- 4.6 **No Selection Made/No Return:** If no team selection is made for a session, a random team selection & random formation will be used for all matches. The MicroCoach program selects this separately for each match.
- 4.7 **Unmanaged Clubs:** Selections will be computer generated and represent the best available teams with standard formations.

- 4.8 **Manager v Manager:** Where the same manager manages both teams in a match, the manager should select teams as normal. However, the match will be played using standard formations for that competition and the match program will select the best lineup for both teams.
- 4.9 **Invalid Selections:** Where a selection becomes invalid due to player injury or suspension, the game program will select the next best player from the squad in the appropriate position. Pre-selection of substitutes is not required, nor possible, by managers.
- 4.10 **Short Sided:** If a club has less than 7 players available to start any match, the match will be awarded to the opposition, with a 10-0 score line. Any club who has less than 11 players available for a match will be fined £250,000 per match.

5. Formations

- 5.1 **Choosing Formations:** Formations selected should consider the following: venue, strengths/weaknesses of opponents plus your own players’ strengths and weaknesses. A team formation must be chosen for each match. Where a formation is not selected, a random formation will be selected by the game program. Available formations are listed in this section.
- 5.2 **Formation and Venue Weightings:** Weightings are applied to the overall team weighting for defence, midfield, and attack, which is initially calculated from the individual player ratings, but is not applied directly back to the player weightings. Both player ratings and formation weights are used in the game program. For instance, with a 433-central formation, - this would calculate the Defence and Midfield team rating at 99% of the stated player values, however, will enhance the attacking element to 102%. In addition to the formation weights, there are home and away weightings: 1.001 for home teams and 0.999 for away teams, and this is applied to all player ratings.
- 5.3 **Any Player can play in any position:** Each player is designated as a Goalkeeper (GK), Full Back (FB), Wing Back/Wide Midfielder (WB), Centre Back (CB), Central Midfielder (M), Attacking Midfielder (AM) or Striker (STR). However, this is only a guide to their best position, as any player may be selected in any position.
- 5.4 **Team Captains:** Are automatically selected. The player with the best effectiveness rate gets the job for each match.

Formations and Weightings Table

Formation Weightings					Number of Players in Positions							
Formation	Def	Mid	Atk	Total	GK	FB	CB	WB	M	AM	STR	Total
343	0.99	1	1.01	3.00	1		3		3	1	3	11
361	1.01	1.02	0.97	3.00	1		3	2	3	1	1	11
424	0.99	0.98	1.03	3.00	1	2	2		1	1	4	11
532	1.01	0.99	1	3.00	1	2	3		2	1	2	11
352-atk	0.99	1	1.01	3.00	1		3	2	2	1	2	11
352-def	1	1.01	0.99	3.00	1		3		4	1	2	11
433-central	0.99	0.99	1.02	3.00	1	2	2		2	1	3	11
433-support	0.99	1	1.01	3.00	1	2	2		3	2	1	11
442-atk	1	0.99	1.01	3.00	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	11
442-def	1	1	1	3.00	1	2	2		3	1	2	11
451-def	1.01	1.01	0.98	3.00	1	2	2		4	1	1	11
451-support	0.99	1	1.01	3.00	1	2	2		2	3	1	11
451-wide	1	1.01	0.99	3.00	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	11
541-atk	1.02	0.99	0.99	3.00	1	2	3	2	1	1	1	11
541-def	1.02	1	0.98	3.00	1	2	3		3	1	1	11

- Home Weight = 1.001; Away Weight = 0.999

Standard Formations:

For unmanaged clubs, the following formations will be applied

Competition	Home	Away
League (all divisions)	442-def	442-def
Domestic Cups	451-wide	442-def
European (EuroCup & UEFA Cup)	451-support	451-def

6. Player Ratings

- 6.1. **Summary MicroCoach Positional Ratings:** Each player has several attributes on which his value to a club is evaluated. The ratings are presented in the form of a summary for each player. For example: GK = Goalkeeper rating, and WB = Wing Back/Wide Midfielder rating. The ratings published are the maximum that a player can play to. Other general ratings influence player performance/ratings and how often that maximum is likely to be achieved. The Effectiveness rating is the best guide to how close a player will perform to their full potential, as it considers consistency, experience, and stamina of the player.
- 6.2. **Detailed MicroCoach Ratings:** Each player has over forty individual factors that are used in the game program in various match sequences. These detailed ratings (e.g., ball control, aerial defence) are not generally published but are available to managers on request. They are similar but not exactly the same as the external source ratings, hence various formulas have been applied.

This season the ratings from the external data source have been mapped directly to the summary positional ratings as follows:

Position	Formula (=)
GK	Shot Stopping + Positioning + Reflexes + Bravery + GK Distribution + Crosses + Control + 1 on 1 + Speed Off-Line + GK Distribution
FB	Tackling + Marking + Bravery + Positioning + (maximum of Strength & Pace)
CB	Anticipation + Jumping Reach + Strength+ Heading + (maximum of Bravery & Aggression)
WB	Crossing + Dribbling + Agility + Acceleration + (maximum of Pace & Technique)
M	Tackling + Passing + Aggression + Work Rate + (maximum of Positioning & Vision)
AM	First Touch + Flair + Vision + Long Shots + (maximum of Passing & Technique)
STR	Anticipation + Off the Ball + Finishing + Composure + (maximum of Heading & Acceleration)

- 6.3. **Changes to Ratings:** Player ratings may change at the end of each season. In no circumstances, will they alter during a season.
- 6.4. **Ratings:** The following is a précis of the ratings and attributes that are used within MicroCoach:
- **Player ID:** is a unique identifier for each player in MicroCoach.
 - **Position:** indicates the normal position for that player.
 - GK - Goalkeeper
 - FB - Full Back
 - CB - Centre Back
 - WB - Wing Back/Wide Midfielder
 - M - Central Midfielder
 - AM - Attacking Midfield
 - STR - Striker
 - **Age:** the age of a player, as at the start point of the current season. For this season, this has been set at a date in at the end of March 2024, when the data set was frozen for the new season.

- **Effectiveness:** is a composite rate that indicates the influence that a player can have on any match. This rate is calculated by the following ten factors, Leadership, Balance, Teamwork, Decisions, Determination, Concentration, Temperament, Consistency, Stamina & Experience. The higher the effectiveness rating of a player the more influence he is likely to have on a team's performance.
- **Consistency:** The closer the rating is to ten, the more likely a player will play to their maximum. For instance, a player who has a consistency rate of eight will perform to a level ranging between 96% and 100% of their published ratings, whereas a player with a consistency rate of 5 will perform between 90% and 100% of their published ratings. The level of performance is calculated by the game program, for each player, before each match is played, so will vary from match to match.
- **Stamina:** If a player's stamina is less than 10, their published ratings will reduce slightly in the last 15 minutes of each match. (And extra time, if played). The lower the stamina rating the greater that effect. Players with lower stamina ratings are also more prone to injuries. At 75 minutes, the game program will decide whether a player on the bench is better than one of the players selected to start the match, assessing performance calculation, stamina, and consistency. If so, an auto-substitution takes place. Players coming on as an auto-substitution are not affected by the stamina reduction. A maximum of one auto-substitution will occur per team per match. Other substitutions will only occur in the case of player injuries.
- **Overall:** is a composite rate of all individual ratings, summarising the overall contribution a player can make in various parts of the pitch.
- **General Ratings:** Other attributes apply or to specific situations - as follows:
 - **Penalties:** the ability of players to score from the penalty spot. When a penalty is awarded, one of the best three penalty takers is selected automatically; If one player has a significantly higher rating than the other, they will always take the spot-kicks. In a penalty shoot-out, the players with the highest penalty ratings will be automatically selected first. Players are more prone to miss penalties in a shoot-out!
 - **Free Kicks:** Where a free kick is close to the opposition penalty area, this kick can be either a direct shot or a cross; where it is a shot, the taker will be selected from the three players with the best free-kick rating. Where one or two players are significantly better than the remainder they will always be selected. If it is a cross, the same calculation ensues but is based on the Crossing rating.
 - **Corners:** will be taken by the player with the best corner rating.
 - **Temperament:** All players can be cautioned (yellow card) or sent off (red card) – however, the lower the temperament rate of a player the more likely that a card will be administered.
- **Financial Ratings:** The following are the financial ratings applicable to each player:
 - **Minimum Transfer Value (MTV):** A guide to the nominal value of a player. MTV is calculated using a formula, which considers all the player attributes, including age, stamina and experience. No player can be transferred for less than the MTV. The MTV does not necessarily reflect the actual value of a player, which is determined by MicroCoach market conditions, e.g., the willingness of managers to pay more than the MTV!
 - **Player Wages:** These are paid to all your players from your club budget. The calculation is based on each player's player index, which considers all their attributes and varies slightly by their nominal position. Player wages are only charged to a club during the regular season (i.e., Session 1 to 8). The quoted wages on your club files are wages per session. Wages are calculated via an exponential curve, with the very top players being more costly, but this is also reflected in their MTV. This method of wages calculation means that middle of the road/journeymen and medium to talented players are comparatively more affordable than the crème da la crème!

7. Player Discipline

- 7.1 **Yellow card:** A player who receives a caution (yellow card) during a match will be debited with 4 Disciplinary Points (DPs).
- 7.2 **Red Card / Two Yellows:** A player who receives two cautions or a sending off (straight red card) in a match will be debited with 8 DPs and will receive a 2-match ban, which will be enforced in the next two matches that the player would have been eligible to play in.
- 7.3 **Suspensions:** A player who reaches 24 DPs will receive a 3-match ban, 48 DPs = 6 match ban, 72 DPs = 9 match ban, etc.
- 7.4 **Carry Over:** Incomplete suspensions from the previous season have been carried forward to this season. All Disciplinary Points (DPs) are set to zero at the start of each new season.
- 7.5 **Euro/Global players/Non-League Players:** Simulated Euro/Global players (duplicate players denoted by an 's' at the end of their name) have their DPs set to 12 at the start of the season (this is to balance against MicroCoach clubs because these players only play in EuroCup/Global Cup matches). Non-League players are also set to 12 DPs at the start of the season as they only play in cup matches during the season proper.

8. Player Transfers

- 8.1 **Transfer Window:** This season, as in recent seasons, there will be one transfer window lasting for four sessions. Player transfers will only be possible in Session 1, 2, 3 and 4. No incoming transfers will be possible outside these periods. Up to four players in and eight players out in each transfer session are allowed, either from the listed available players or via Inter-Managerial deals.
- 8.2 **Transfer Templates & Valid Bids:** Only transfer dealings on the appropriate return templates will be accepted. The templates are updated each session to include hidden lookups to player names and MTVs and exclude players that cannot be transferred. It is therefore imperative to select the right session template and the correct player ID. If an error is made on selecting a player to buy or sell, this will result in the bid, or any affected bids being deemed invalid. Any bid below the MTV, or that puts a club below £0 balance, will also be deemed invalid. Managers are urged to check the file before sending, to ensure details are complete and forms sent are not blank – to avoid disappointment!
- If only one bid is received for a player from the Transfer Pool, they will be sold at the MTV, regardless of the bid made. If more than one bid is received for a player, the highest bid will be applied. If two bids are equal, the player will be transferred to the club with the lowest place in the league at the start of that session or lowest rank in session 1.
- 8.3 **Player Purchases:** To purchase players you must either make a bid against a player on the transfer pool or agree on a deal with another manager for their players. You can bid for a maximum of four players for permanent transfer in each transfer session (session 1-4).
- 8.4 **Player Sales:** You may sell players back to the Transfer Pool or direct to another manager's club. Sales to the Transfer Pool will always be at MTV. You can sell up to eight players in each transfer session (session 1-4) but cannot sell outside of a transfer window, except via a forced sale, due to a club's bank balance falling below £0. Once a player has been purchased in a season, they cannot be sold until the following season.
- 8.5 **Dependent Transfers:** A manager may stipulate that up to 'four transfers out' (sales) are dependent on a bid being successful for an incoming transfer (purchases). Where a bid is unsuccessful, this player will then remain on your club's squad. Dependencies must be on a one-to-one basis. No player can be used as a dependency on two different purchases in the same session. A player used as a dependency cannot be at a higher MTV, than the MTV of the player to be purchased. On the transfer form, place the player id in the relevant cell to indicate which player sale is dependent on your requested purchase. This is explained on the transfer form.
- 8.6 **Managers with Two or More Clubs:** Transfers directly between clubs with the same manager are not permitted. There is no restriction on inter-household deals.

- 8.7 **Inter Managerial Purchases:** Managers may make transfer requests for players currently playing in other managed clubs, these are called inter-managerial bids. An inter-managerial bid must be at least equivalent to the MTV. The transaction will attract a further 10% tax on MTV of the player purchased, (regardless of the fee agreed between the two managers) which will be levied on the purchaser's club funds. Players below £100,000 MTV will incur a standard tax of £10,000. Inter-managerial bids can only be made directly between managers. Inter-managerial transfers and bids should be agreed between respective managers before being entered on a transfer return. The same details must appear on both managers' returns, to be deemed valid.
- 8.8 **Loans:** A system of loan signings is in place:
- Each club can loan out up to a total of five their players in the transfer window to any other manager's clubs (over 4 sessions). They may also loan in up to five players to their club.
 - A player loaned out will return at the end of the season, so managers need to be aware of their squad size. If at the end of the season a club has more than thirty-two players, the additional players will be released on a free transfer to the Transfer Pool (lowest MTVs first).
 - Loan deals are only inter-managerial, so must be agreed by both managers. No loans are possible via the Transfer Pool or unmanaged clubs.
 - There is no restriction on loans within a division or within a household, but as with permanent deals, no manager can loan players to/from one of their other clubs.
 - Loan entitlement is in addition to the permanent transfer allowance (4 in, eight out, per session).
 - Loan costs are pre-set at 5% of MTV, or £100,000, whichever is the greater. The receiving club pays the full wages for the time the player is at their club. A deal reached in Session 1 will mean that a player joins his new club in Session 2 and remains until the end of the season. Loan deals can be struck right up to Session 4, although the loan cost is still 5% of MTV.
- 8.9 **Financially Viable Transactions:**
- You must ensure that each bid is financially viable (in its own right) as one or more of your bids might be unsuccessful.
 - To avoid disappointment, you need to check carefully that you have the appropriate funds to support any combination of successful or unsuccessful bids.
 - Prospective early return bonuses cannot be included in your calculations. Where insufficient funds are available the latter bids on the return will be deemed invalid and ignored.
- 8.10 **Highest Bid Wins:** For a bid placed against a player on the transfer pool/list, the player will join the club who makes the highest bid. In the event of there being equal best bids, the player will go to the club placed lowest in the league, as at the start of that session or lowest ranked club in Session 1.
- 8.11 **Transfer Tax:** MicroCoach inter-managerial transfer taxes are reallocated equally to the bottom three clubs in each managed division (Premier - League 2) at the end of that session. This is provided those clubs' managers have submitted a team selection return for that session.
- 8.12 **Draft Players:** Players received in the 'pre-season draft' or as an 'extra allocation' can be sold, but not until the final transfer session i.e., Session 4.
- 8.13 **Credit Balances:** If transferred players to the Transfer Pool are subsequently purchased, at an amount greater than the MTV, by another club, the original transferring club does not receive any additional funds beyond the original MTV fee.
- 8.14 **Injured or Suspended Players:** There are no restrictions on selling suspended or injured players.

9. Club Finances

- 9.1 **You Must Stay in Credit:** You must manage your club's finances to ensure you always remain in credit. If a club inadvertently goes into the red, because income was lower than outgoings in a session, the manager will be informed. They will be asked to act to bring the club back into credit in the next session. Failure or inability to do so will lead to the forced sale of player(s) to the Transfer Pool, for at least the value of the negative balance.

- 9.2 **Budgets:** Each club has one cash account (recorded as bank balance), which can be used to purchase players and improve club facilities. The money available for transfers each session is the total balance less your club's minimum possible running costs, which is deducted from your transfer budget (on the transfer form). However, managers should take note that in most cases actual running costs are higher than this figure.
- 9.3 **Income:** The following are the primary sources of income for your club:
- Player Sales
 - Gate Receipts
 - Early Returns
 - Monthly Awards/Bonuses
 - Club Prize Money
 - Winnings from Competitions
 - Facilities Income
- 9.4 **Expenditure:** The following are the main types of expenditure for your club -
- Facility Costs
 - Player Wages
 - Player Purchases
 - Facility Installations
 - Club Fines
- 9.5 **Balancing of Club Income:** There are differences in the spending power and status of clubs across the league, partly through historical manager activity at those clubs and the luck and judgement of buying and selling the right players, at the right time and of being successful 'on the pitch.'
- To ensure a level of parity across the divisions and to ensure balancing of club finances (income and expenditure), each season we look to level the playing field a little. As such, the following measures will be applied this season:
 - If any clubs in Leagues 1 and 2 have a negative balance at the start of the season, an equal amount is added to all club balances to ensure all clubs are in credit at the start of the season.
 - Clubs below the Premier League will get a % reduction, applied across the board, in each session on their player wage bill. The published wage amount per player will not change, but the reductions will be applied during the cash book process and shown on the financial summary, which is published at the end of each session.
 - League One clubs will get a 10% reduction
 - League Two clubs will get a 25% reduction
- 9.6 **Season Start:** For clubs that were unmanaged in the previous season:
- Premier clubs have been set to a minimum starting ground capacity of 40,000 and starting club balance of £7m.
 - League One clubs have been set to a minimum starting ground capacity of 30,000 and starting club balance of £6m.
 - League Two clubs have been set to a minimum starting ground capacity of 25,000 and starting club balance of £5m
- 9.7 **Operating Profit:**
- All League Premier and League 1 clubs are subject to operating profit tax in each session. Premier League & League 1 tax is distributed equally to League 2 clubs. In the Premier League, this tax is 20% and in League One it is 10%. Clubs not making an operating profit in a session and those in the relegation zone, in each of the top two divisions, are tax exempt.

10. Club Facilities & Improvements

- 10.1 **Facilities Budget:** Facilities can be purchased via the club budget.

- 10.2 **Costs:** Each facility has an installation cost, and in most cases, this incurs a running cost of 5% of the installation cost, per session. Seats have a different running cost of 2% of the total installed seats cost. (Based on standard seats cost). Running costs are deducted each session from the club budget.
- 10.3 **Facilities Windows:** There will be one Facilities Window this season. Facilities can be installed/purchased in Session 5 only. The facility is installed and available in the session it is purchased before matches are played in that session.
- 10.4 **ROI:** Each facility has a different return on investment (ROI), and it is up to each manager to decide which will bring the greatest benefit to the club in the short and the long term.
- 10.5 **Installation:** As there is only one session to install facilities, managers can install THREE facilities per facilities session. However, seats can also be installed in addition to facility installations. Installation costs for each facility are shown on the Facilities Return template.
- **Seats:** These can only be purchased in 1,000 seat blocks. No more than 10,000 seats can be installed in the session.
 - Each block of 1,000 seats, up to and including 75,000 seats costs £350,000.
 - For clubs installing seats above 75,000, each subsequent 1,000 seat block increase will cost £3m, up to and including 99,000 seats.
 - For clubs who install seats over 99,000, then these will be charged at £8m for each one thousand seat block increase.
 - The maximum ground size is capped at 120,000 seats.
- 10.6 **Funds:** You must ensure you have enough funds for any facility installation.
- 10.7 **Floodlights Requirements:** Any club that qualifies for European competition (EuroCup or UEFA Cup) for the current season must have 'International floodlights' installed in Session 5, to play home matches in this European competition. If this facility is not installed in Session 5, that club will still be allowed to compete in European competition, but all European competition matches for the remainder of the season will be played away from home.

11. Squads & Players

- 11.1 **Minimum Squad Size:** There is no minimum squad size; though to cope with injuries and suspensions - managers are strongly urged to not let their squad fall below 20 players.
- 11.2 **Maximum Squad Size:** 32 players.
- 11.3 **Player Ages:** This season are calculated at a date in March 2024. A player's age will not change during a season. DOBs can be made available on request.
- 11.4 **Players in database:** There are over 20,000 players in the MicroCoach database. Approximately 9,000 are active including the transfer pool, plus copies of players for Euro teams.

12. Player Retirements

- 12.1 **MicroCoach Retirement Age:** There is no standard retirement age in MicroCoach. Players will be deemed retired when they are no longer included in the source data or their retirement has been announced (and we are aware of it!). If a player is known to be playing (at a professional level) but not in the source data, then the previous year's data will be applied, with a small percentage change downwards.

13. Attendances

- 13.1 **League Matches:** The following factors are taken into consideration in the calculation of attendances for league matches:
- Ground capacity/facilities
 - League position of home and away clubs, including relative positions
 - The rank of home and away clubs

- 13.2. **Cup Matches:** The following factors are taken into consideration in the calculation of attendances for cup matches:
- Ground capacity/facilities
 - Relative divisions, positions and ranks of participating clubs
 - Cup Round

14. Ticket Prices and Gate Receipts

- 14.1 For all matches, ticket prices are £30.00.
- 14.2 The home club receives 60% of the income calculated (attendance x ticket price). The away club receives the remaining 40%.
- 14.3 In the event of a match being played on a neutral ground, the gate receipts are split 50 / 50. If a match is hosted by another MicroCoach club, that club receives 10% of the gate, with the remainder being split equally between the competing clubs.

15. Competitions

League: Promotion, Relegation & Play-offs:

Division	Automatically Promoted	Play-Offs	Relegated
Premier	N/A	N/A	Bottom three
1	Top two	QF: 4 th v 7 th and 5 th v 6 th – 2 legs SF: winners of above 2 legs Final: 3 rd automatically qualifies for one leg final v winner of SF	Bottom three
2			Bottom two
Non-League	The 2 clubs with the most ranking points in the previous season.	None	N/A

15.1 **Pre-Season friendlies:**

- A variety of friendlies are played to give a manager an early view of how their clubs fare.
- No team selection is required by managers as all selections are computer selected and any injuries/suspensions incurred are disregarded.
- No income is received, or costs levied, for these matches.

15.2 **MicroCoach Shield:**

- The season proper (Session 1) starts with the traditional season opener, the MicroCoach Shield, played between the Premier Champions and the FA Cup winners.
- This season this is a match between the League Champions, Real Jameosean and the FA Cup Winners, Gainsborough Hamlet.

15.3 **EuroCup:**

- Group Stage. Each club plays the other in the group (home and away). The top two go through to the Last 16 knockout stage.
- Each Group Winner will play a Group Runner-up. Last eight onwards will be a random draw.
 - Bolded clubs are seeded. MicroCoach clubs highlighted in yellow.

EuroCup - Groups			
A	B	C	D
Mancunian City	Bernabeu Braves	Munchen Bay	Parisien Walkways
Nellerton City	All Saints United	Bishops Burghclere	Gainsborough Hamlet
Port de Das Antas	Anfield Argonauts	Nou Camp Eagles	Milano Maelstrom
Rasenballsport Bullen	Grimonprez	White Hart Spurs	Phillips Victoria
E	F	G	H
Real Jameosean	Bandal Borough	Trevmania Travellers	Hurricane Harriers
Bern Boys	Inter Meazza	Atletico Calderon	Dial Square Gunners
BV Westfalen	Real San Sebastian	Lattzeo	Koben Parken
Old Traffordonians	Shotyr Infoot	Sporting Bracarenses	Neopolitan Blues

15.4 **UEFA Cup:**

- Same format and rules as the EuroCup.

UEFA Cup - Groups			
A	B	C	D
Westfield	Northridge Cormorants	Broxton Bulls	Inter Normania
FR Crvena Zvelda	Bergomo La Dea	Ibrox Rangers	Berliner Irons
Nesukrevel Bay	Madrigareal	Les Pitchouns	Goldstone Old Boys
Upton Park Irons	Vanden Outofluk	Villaclarets	Praha Strahov
E	F	G	H
Jarikton	NPA	AC Desantelakos	Harrogate Orient
Antwerp Bosuil	Baden-Freiburg	Billfica	Defensivdisaray
Escocia Hoops	Feanorde	Casino Royale	Sevilorang
Oldcastle Geordio	South Velodrome	Roman Centurio	Sporting Alvalade

15.5 Domestic Cups:

All domestic cups are straight knockout ties - one leg only, with extra time and penalties if required. This is until semi-final stage, where the games are played over two legs. The single-leg finals will be played on a neutral ground on Finals Day. The eligible clubs for each cup are shown below:

15.5.1 FA Cup:

- 196 entrants:
- 68 non-MicroCoach teams not in European competition and all the non-league MicroCoach clubs (68) will compete in Round 1.
- The 68 winners in Round 1 will be joined by the 60 MicroCoach teams (from Premier, League 1 and 2) in Round 2.

15.5.2 FA Plate:

- 128 entrants:
- All clubs who are knocked out in round 2 of the FA Cup.

15.5.3 League Cup:

- This comprises 32 clubs:
- All managed clubs in League 1 & 2

15.5.4 Paper Orchid Cup (Sponsors Cup)

- 48 entrants. All clubs that are managed and playing in the top three divisions (Premier, League 1 & 2):
- Round 1 will consist of 16 ties comprising all the managed clubs in League 1 and 2.
- In Round 2, the 16 managed Premier League clubs will be joined by the winners of the Round 1 ties.

16. Awards

16.1 **End of Season:** At the end of the season, token awards will be presented to managers for all major league and cup competitions.

16.2 **Other Awards:** Club in-game financial awards (additions to club budgets) will also be given after each session for good performances, e.g., Club of the Month (per division) and Hot Shot (Top Scorer) Bonus.

17. MicroCoach Website

The website contains the following information:

- Latest news
- Results
- Summary match analysis (via clock watch and stats)
- Transfers
- Squad Listings
- Club pages, including honours
- History of previous seasons
- On-line team selection forms
- Links to enable a download of relevant files (e.g., Extras file)
- A downloadable version of this 'Rules and Guidelines' document

Visit the website www.MicroCoach.org for further details

18. Contacting MicroCoach

18.1 Transfer returns and Facilities returns and any other correspondence should be sent to: Microcoach@gmail.com and Norman.House77@ntlworld.com. It is suggested that 'delivery/read receipt notifications are deployed and potentially copying yourself on sent mail.

- 18.2 Team selection forms on the website will be sent automatically to the above e-mail addresses when you press submit. The web site will indicate the message Submitted if you have completed your team selections.
- 18.3 If there are any issues with the website/team selection process, please e-mail Steven Dingsdale sddingsdale@hotmail.com and Norman House Norman.House77@ntlworld.com
- 18.4 Please use the website for further information and updates. You can use Twitter or direct e-mail for contact with other managers.
- 18.5 Please sign up for Twitter/X. Our handle is MicroCoachTweet if you wish to see regular score updates. These also appear on the website. You will not be able to comment unless you subscribe to the Twitter feed.
- 18.6 Your contact e-mail details are available to managers unless you have specifically asked for these to be excluded, which you can do on the website, via your profile. Please add your contact details on your website profile.
- 18.7 Correspondence to all will be sent on the TO address line, not BCC.

Good luck in the 2024 season!

19. MicroCoach Officials & Contact Details

***General Contact / Transfers &
Facilities Returns***

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