

Spurs will soar under Redknapp



Redknapp

HARRY REDKNAPP already has an impressive reputation for breathing new life into ageing footballers — like me.

He has done it time and again at his previous clubs West Ham and Portsmouth, working with experienced pros to give them a second wind.

But now at Tottenham, he will be able to work his magic on players approaching the peak of their careers. And it is going to be exciting.

Certain players will thrive under him at White Hart Lane. In particular, I expect David Bentley and Aaron Lennon to re-emerge from the doldrums in a blur of eye-catching attacking football.

Harry is English, a Cockney and a complete and utter football nut.

He will tell kids like those two to simply show the fans what they can do.

He will tell them how great they are, how captivating to watch in full flow, how they can take on the world.

Harry knows Tottenham, being a Londoner.

He knows what the fans over there want, too. He will bust his gut trying to reintroduce the entertaining football that made the club popular the world over.

I signed for Harry at West Ham after years at one of the world's biggest clubs — Arsenal.

When the deal was done, I got a voice message on my mobile phone.

It was Harry singing the club anthem I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles from start to finish at the top of his voice.

He added: "I'm delighted you are coming to West Ham."

That made me tingle and I was 34 and ready for a new challenge. Goodness knows what enthusiasm like that will do to the younger players like Lennon, 21, and Bentley, 24.

One of the best games of my entire career was my Hammers debut at Sheffield Wednesday.

There were 5,000 fans up there and I scored. We played great football and around Harry there was a buzz, even though I was only on the periphery of it.

That is what he brings to teams. In terms of pots in cupboards and gongs, Harry cannot compete with the top bods.

But when you talk about managers who get the very best out of teams and limited resources, then he is up there in pure management terms with Alex Ferguson and Arsene Wenger — no doubt about it.

Tottenham are lucky to have him. He was linked with the job last time around and got passed over for Juande Ramos, whose departure along with sporting director Damien Comolli has pleased me greatly.

Harry turned down Newcastle but, fortunately for Spurs, couldn't resist this challenge.

Maybe this job, the biggest to date for him, could be the stepping stone that one day leads him to manage England — if he wants the job. It is still not too late for that.

Tottenham have now decided there is no room for a director of football. Harry will not carry the can for someone else's mistakes, which has happened to a lot of managers lately.

Let's hope this is a marker that signals the beginning of the end of that new and unwelcome culture in English football.

Harry, 61, knows this move will not be welcomed by West Ham fans as many regard him as one of their own.

But when I was there and he was boss he got terrible abuse during lean times.

Abuse, though, is part and parcel of the game.

So whatever he might cop at the Lane won't be anything he hasn't heard before.

Kinnear wants Newcastle hot seat permanently



Kinnear

Joe Kinnear is keen to hang on to his job at Newcastle United, whoever owns the club. The 61-year-old tasted victory on Tuesday night for the first time in his four-match reign to date when the Magpies edged past promoted West Brom 2-1 in a game that remained up for grabs until the final whistle. Victory lifted Kinnear's men out of the relegation zone and atoned to a small extent for Saturday's derby defeat at Sunderland. But if things on the pitch are starting to turn, the uncertainty off it remains with owner Mike Ashley still looking to sell, and the interim manager does not know how long his stay will last.

He said: "I go from day to day, to be honest. If it gets sold, it will be

up to the new owner. I am only on a month-to-month contract, that was the deal before I took over. I am well aware I took over because lots of people turned that contract down, but as we go on, I live like everyone else, day to day. I have got no idea who is going to buy the place, but I can throw my hat in the ring whoever buys it. I am not going to get another chance like this. But I really don't know, to be honest. I know it is obviously for sale, but who is going to buy it, I have got no idea."

Whatever happens in the weeks and months ahead, Kinnear will at least be able to reflect on a crucial win over the Baggies just when his side needed it most.

His decision to hand controversial midfielder Joey Barton his first start for the club since he was released

from jail paid off handsomely when the 26-year-old converted a 10th-minute penalty to give his side a rare lead.

Although West Brom enjoyed plenty of possession — James Morrison forced an excellent 35th-minute save from Shay Given — Newcastle looked comfortable before half-time, and when Obafemi Martins, who had not scored since the opening weekend of the season, headed home Habib Beye's 42nd-minute cross, the victory seemed secure.

The Magpies manager added: "We didn't want to dwell on the Sunderland disappointment [Saturday's 2-1 defeat at the Stadium of Light], so I am really pleased that we got this game under our belts and we got a victory whilst doing it."