



Time to tell us the truth, Arsene

By Ian Wright

WENGER

THERE is no point going down the Thierry Henry route by saying everything is rosy in Arsenal's garden. Of course it's not.

Such comments merely placate the fans but hide the fact there are some major problems with the team.

While the defeats to Barcelona and Spurs were disappointing, the capitulation in the final 10 minutes at Wigan proved Arsene Wenger's side needs some major surgery.

And now it's time for Arsene to be honest with the fans.

All my Arsenal mates keep asking me what's going on - and all Arsenal fans deserve to hear the truth.

Arsene's current contract ends at the end of next season and when Arsene says he has yet to decide whether to stay, I do actually believe him.

I think he is still mulling over whether he wants an extra couple of years at the club.

After yet another season without a trophy - it's five years now - there is a split between the supporters who want him to remain and those who want a change.

I reckon it's now about 50-50.

While I'm worrying about the situation, Arsene is still the right person who can attract world-class players to the club.

I cannot think of any other person I would want as manager. Fingers crossed he will stay.

Although he doesn't always see everything on the pitch, Arsene needs to come clean about the club's financial predicament.

I want to hear Arsene admit that he is being incredibly stubborn.

That he does have plenty of money to spend but he wants to continue to do things his way and prove that you can create something special with kids.

Otherwise, Arsene has to finally admit that he hasn't had any money to spend which is the reason why there have been so few world-class signings over the last few seasons.

I want him to finally concede that building the Emirates has affected his ability to compete in the transfer market and this will continue to be the case for the next few years.

There has always been mutterings from the board that Arsenal do have money to spend. While the comments from Arsene could be in-

terpreted both ways.

I think the thousands of fans at Arsenal who display such loyalty and fork out from £1,000 each year for a season ticket deserve some answers.

There has never been a clear explanation over the club's transfer policy and I find this very strange. The supporters want to know whether there is a chance of Arsenal signing the four quality players which they need to compete.

I have found this season frustrating because as the season has been so open due to some of Manchester United's and Chelsea's results, Arsenal could have nicked the title had they strengthened.

But one look at the team sheet at Wigan was a reminder of the weakness of this current squad.

I really don't know what is happening with the goalkeeper situation. Manuel Almunia is a No 2 keeper. Lucasz Fabianski is a No 3. In central defence, Arsenal had Sol Campbell and Mikael Silvestre.

Sol was a great player and while he did well at Spurs last week, another match so soon might have been too much for him.

I heard Lee Dixon highlight the team's defensive frailties and he was asking why Silvestre was not closing down Wigan's players quick enough.

One of Adams, Keown, Bould, Dixon or Winterburn would never have defended like that. Aside from needing a new keeper and at least one central defender to play alongside Thomas Vermaelen, Arsenal need a midfielder to partner Cesc Fabregas and a striker to go alongside Robin Van Persie.

Wenger doesn't seem to fancy Eduardo who has hardly been given a decent run of games, although I admit he's not had much luck with injuries.

He's the sort of player who will probably go to another club and then start scoring loads of goals.

But Wenger must start giving him more games or bring in someone else. Arsene says Arsenal are the only team where the players are improving.

It's all very well comparing the players to an ageing Chelsea team but they have the money to sign new, better players. I'm sure they will open their chequebook in the

summer so I find Arsene's argument pretty irrelevant.

And the last thing he needs is being haunted by a former player who could turn up at the Emirates and score a few goals.

Emmanuel Adebayor is poised to do exactly that when he rocks up with Manchester City on Saturday evening.

He will get a hot reception from the Arsenal fans and I must admit, he wasn't one of my favourite players.

From what I hear, he was pretty disruptive.

But he will be back on at the weekend and, considering the players who could be marking him, I think he could do some real damage alongside Carlos Tevez.

The title may now be gone but it is vital Arsenal pick up some points because the thought of them being pipped to third by Spurs is, quite frankly, unbearable.

But most importantly of all, it's time Arsenal's supporters are given some hard facts.