

The Roman Conquest: a good thing

PFFC's first tour to Rome propelled the team onto a new level of camaraderie off the pitch and success on it. Here is **Joe Boyle's** diary of the tour.

Part I: Geoff and Filippo's organisation.

Astonishingly for this motley collection of British, thirty-something, Loaded-generation males, we somehow all booked tickets, got time off work, packed our kit and arrived at Heathrow, where we exchanged currency, bought books that were never read, made hearty noises about eating cooked breakfasts (Geoff forbade it – pasta and grilled fish only) and then nearly missed the plane.

Part II: The football

This was the game of football you dream about. Linesmen! Corner flags! Dugouts with curved roofs! Matching kit! Perfect temperature! A pitch so smooth they could cut it into strips, roll it up and sell it as lavatory paper.

We started the stronger, but the dominance didn't last. Bit by bit, they wrested control and then took the lead with a ferocious, dipping 30-yard drive. We rolled up our sleeves and fought back, Chris equalising with a striker's instinctive swivel. At times the game had such a classical air about it, you felt as if you weren't playing but were watching it on TV instead. Our pace and directness versus their passing and technique. Boosted by the goal, we pressed on and the second goal duly came.

The home team reorganised and suddenly we were on the back foot. For twenty torrid minutes they played supreme stuff. Being under the cosh was never so pleasurable but Ian and Matteo were steadfast, a dream-team combination of Hansen and Maldini. Then the pressure told, space opened in the box, a challenge was mistimed, penalty. The last quarter was end to end, intense. We talked to each other non-stop and yet it seemed as if the game took place in a concentration-filled silence. We wanted to win, but we didn't want to lose. 2-2 it ended. "You had us worried," they said. "You played like an Italian team."

Part III: The showers

The showers. They worked, they were hot, they got rid of the mud. Filippo strutted in his bath-robe, thrilled that his two sides had emerged honourably equal. High on adrenaline, we pledged to order a range of matching monogrammed PF bath-ropes. The hilarity flowed as incessantly as the wine would.

Part IV: The Pope

Walking to our evening rendezvous, Cornish and myself became lost in a packed Rome. We started to cross yet another piazza, broad as a meadow, but were blocked by a policeman. "Look," I said, "it's the fecking Pope." He looked

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Player Profile: Marco Capecelatro

Former skipper **Paul Kayley** looks back to the beginning of the Italian Renaissance

MIDFIELDER known to Filippo from early school days. Showed how increased fitness, confidence and finesse could enable a team to play in the 'Thinkers' manner'. Midfield priorities were no longer about crowding your own box and quickly hacking the ball as far away as possible from a muddy goalmouth.

QUIET MAN who played the game the way it should be played and was likened to Dennis Bergkamp. Like Bergkamp, Marco always seemed to have an age when in possession. Gone were those aimless punts from the back; we had a link in midfield through which to play.

ONE OF THAT RARE breed who played football on Saturdays. When he turned out for PFFC a day later, you felt his measured composure on the ball was a way of catching his breath and easing his tired calves through another 90 minutes of action.

SPEARHEADED Fil's cultural renaissance. Of course it goes without saying that Marco brought to the team a pair of flip-flops and a dressing gown. Not any old dressing gown but a fluffy white one bearing his initials. But were those initials MC or DB?

PLAYED ONLY one full season, but his legacy lingers for those of us lucky enough to have played with him.

Editorial

Italy's influence on both philosophy and football is considerable. This issue looks at some of the ways Italy has also influenced Philosophy Football FC. Reflecting on Italy's culture, food and personalities offers a chance to reflect on ourselves and how we have been enhanced by its various Mediterranean flavours.

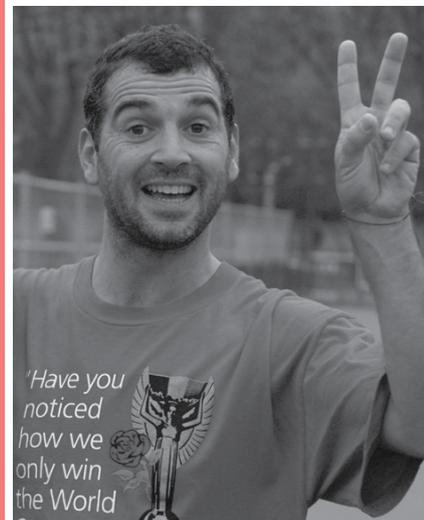
Grazie Roma, grazie Italia.

A football haiku

Al Johns

Italianate As a Bolsover junket* Next Marco Cinque

*a reference to Dennis Skinner's trip to Rome which coincided with a PFFC tour to the eternal city. When challenged at the opera by the Gaffer, the Bolsover MP protested (perhaps too much) that he was there on his own money and had never been on a junket in his life.



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like he was just about hanging on. Swollen like the mumps, his cassock billowed around him like a freshly opened parachute, protecting him against the fall. His arm moved mechanically up and down as if manoeuvred by a cardinal concealed beneath reams of linen.

Part V: The food and drink

Call me sentimental but that Friday night in the restaurant was a miracle. A big table, raucous noise, story-telling, wine as honest as it was plentiful, personal dishes, shared dishes, grappa!, familiar tastes, different tastes (the artichokes, the suppli, the pork in particular) more grappa! and Filippo, drawing it all together like the conductor of a head-strong but talented orchestra.

Part VI: The partying

"The sheetless dead did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets," says Horatio in Hamlet. Well, before Monday morning I think we looked healthier than the sheetless dead, but Richard squeaked every time he passed a cake-shop, Rob gibbered whenever he passed a hawkker selling Roma shirts, Al squeaked every time he saw a poster for the opera, I gibbered at the price of scarves and Jez squeaked at the sight of the women.

Part VII: The Opera

La Bohème, the tragic story of friendship and death from a bad cough. The singing was gutsy, the audience dominated by socialists. And one socialist in particular. Whether the constituents of Bolsover would have approved of their hell-raising beast gallivanting round a European capital with his Americaine, listening to a fooking opera about a bunch of fooking students, I don't know. But we approved. With an interval at the end of each act, we had three doses of Skinner. Skinner on how he'd brought house down at fooking t'Albert Hall. Skinner on how he'd turned fooking college football team at fooking Oxford University into fooking bunch of Peles. And mainly we got Skinner on Skinner. Thank God there wasn't a fifth act. We also emerged with the weekend's epithet, Skinner on football: "It's about team-work and it's about fooking war."

Part VIII: Disco on the river

The nearest we got to an injury the whole trip was on a boat on the Tiber, where we risked perforated ear-drums and any reputation we might have for style. The eclectic dancing prompted football comparisons:

Ian Tony Adams: authoritative but often static; **Owen Steven Gerrard:** good touch, great engine, never stopped; **Rob Robbie Savage:** savage; **Richard Steve McManaman:** flashes of sublime skill but flattered to deceive; **Jez Emmanuel Petit:** classy and knew it; **Raj Mark Hughes:** traces of a glorious past, but the pace got to him.

Part IX: Roma v Udinese at the Olympico

There was a sense of destiny about this game. The chase around Rome to find tickets, including the ill-advised trip to Lazio's booking office. The suspicion we were going to get ripped off. The buying of scarves, the Italian equivalent of pie and bovril (roast belly pork and a Coke). The fascist monolith that is the Olympico with Mussolini's athletic statues outside, Batistuta scoring, Totti's wonder volley from the angle of the box, Udinese making a match of it, and at the start and end of it the Roma official song that should have seemed indescribably naff but was in fact deeply moving. It was such a perfect event, I half expected Skinner to turn up and ruin it. That Batistuta, taught him all he fooking knows.

Part X: The hospitality

"The Romans were like brothers," said Lord Macaulay. Enough said.....

May I recommend..?

Andrea Giannotti selects modern Italian classics available in good English translations.

Primo Levi, *Se questo è un uomo* (If This Is a Man, 1947) – Levi's memoir of his time in Auschwitz from February 1944 to January 1945, A man experiencing three defeats at once: as a captured Italian partisan; as a Jew imprisoned in a death camp; as a man, downgraded to the status of animal. An epic tale of survival. Universal, compulsive reading.

Umberto Eco, *Il nome della rosa* (The Name of the Rose, 1980) – Imagine a novel written by a medievalist who specialises in semiotics, biblical analysis and literary theory. A failure? No, an extraordinary publishing success! A solid treatise on logic, a well-informed historical survey, a hypnotic murder mystery.

Luther Blissett (nom de plume of four Italian authors), **Q** (1999) – If you liked *The Name of the Rose*, you'll love *Q*. Radiohead's Thom Yorke said of the book in 2007: "Oh it's fucking ace! ... Medieval church carnage. It's mental. I want to get it made into a film." Pure adrenalin.

Giancarlo De Cataldo, *Romanzo criminale* (Crime Novel, 2002) – Inspired by the true story of the Banda della Magliana, one of Italy's most powerful criminal networks, which dominated drug dealing, gambling and racketeering and murder in Rome between 1970 and 1992. Not just an absorbing noir, this will propel you through one of the darkest chapters in Italian history.

Roberto Saviano, *Gomorra* (Gomorra, 2006) – The recent story of Camorra, a Neapolitan mafia-like organisation: its criminal activities, business interests and political connections. One might call it a nightmare generated by a sick mind, if the facts described in this bestseller weren't all tragically true. Vivid reportage, addictive after only a few pages.

Pier Paolo Pasolini and Philosophy Football

Geoff Andrews explains the cultural and football impact of Italy's dissident film-maker

Pier Paolo Pasolini. Poet, film director, writer. And footballer. Few know of his interest in football, but those who do and who played with him – including the current England manager, Fabio Capello – testify to his love for the simple pleasures of the beautiful game. This passion, combined with his status as one of Italy's greatest dissident intellectuals, a man who took up the underdog's cause and never feared challenging those in power, made him an obvious candidate for a Philosophy Football shirt. Our Pasolini shirt is now our official away strip and carries the words: 'After literature and sex, football is one of the great pleasures' – in Italian, of course.

However, Pasolini holds an even deeper significance for our squad. Drawing on his dissenting spirit in the era of Silvio Berlusconi has given us our finest moments in Italy. In October 2003 we visited Casarsa, in north-eastern Italy, where he wrote his first poetry and played his first football match. We even played on his pitch, at Via del Fante. Then in March 2004 we wore the Pasolini shirt in Rome at the famous Stadio Dei Marmi in a match kicked off by Gianni Rivera, one of Italy's greatest ever players and then a local centre-left politician.

It was in October 2005, thirty years after Pasolini's death, that we held our biggest event. With the help of Luigi Coldigelli, one of our Roman players and then head of the Mayor of Rome's press office, we participated in a four-way tournament. It involved the Italian writers' team Osvaldo Soriano, the Italian film directors' team Nazionale Registi, and a Pasoliniana squad, featuring actors from Pasolini's films, including Ninetto Davoli. This event was driven by internationalism and Pasolini's belief that popular culture, including football, can be a force for social change.

Italian Job Lot

Filippo Ricci, PFFC's primo Italian, looks back at his compatriots who have represented the club.

September 2000 saw the debut of PFFC's first Italian: me, days after I moved to London. Since then, 24 Italians have followed and I sincerely think each one brought something to the team, on and/or off the pitch. There are some legends, some special characters, some wonderful players, and a lot of memories. This list runs up to early 2008, so doesn't feature the new brood of Italians, including my nephews Francesco and Isaia, as I can't comment on their football.

Matteo Patrono A great debut in Rome, then a single league game in London away to Grafton: he scored and then I scored, celebrating with a famous run towards the A3 that earned me the 'goal celebration of the year' prize. Great defender. Loaned to Luigi's team in the Pasolini event, a piece of generosity which cost us the tournament.

Marco 'Uno' Capecelatro Our own 'Prince' Giannini. Classy, slow number 10 with a great touch on the ball, and on the guitar strings. Master of the pass, he took a few months to get his message through, citing the PF Clough shirt: he wanted the ball at his feet, played on the grass, not in the sky. Once the PF masses heeded his words, the revolution was complete. We started to play like a continental team with northern grit and became unbeatable in the Grafton league. A vital element.

David Eminente Came with Marco 1. Great technique but lacked the weight required to survive Regent's Park mud.

Marco 'Due' Fontana Won the 'celebration of the year' trophy the year after me with a series of Babayaro-style somersaults after scoring a league-winning goal in Crystal Palace. His gymnastics were caught on camera by Benedetta. Strong and skilful midfielder. Injury-prone.

Luigi Coldagelli Played for and against PF, always in memorable matches. His best performance came after a night first spent raving in a London fashionable West End club and then with the ex-wife of a former Wimbledon winner. A few hours sleep, then a fantastic game. Perhaps PF's best Italian talent and one of the quickest to adapt to English football.

Dennis Fontana Cousin of Marco 2. The trouble was convincing him to appear on the pitch. A silky striker, a bit lazy and scared by the rudeness of English defenders. Potentially, a deadly finisher.

Lele Capurso Doctor, driver, full-back. Great scout (he brought in the likes of Vipul, Giacomo, Vito). Let the club get under his skin, becoming a devoted fan of QPR, Geoff's team. Still fond of the team.

Mauro Campana Burdened by the nickname 'Neeskens', it took a while for him to adapt to the role of striker. Since this keen DJ started to mix fluidly on the pitch, his music has always been of high quality. In his seventh season with the club, making him the longest-serving Italian in terms of league appearances.

Marco 'Tre' Bianco Our own Xabi Alonso, due to the expression on his face, the thunderous strike and the millimetre-perfect long pass. Hailing from Lazio's youth ranks, he won the game in Paris with a 30-yard missile. Competes with Luigi for the crown of best-ever Italian.

Giacomo Koch Introduced by Lele as 'Giacomone' or Big Jack, this skilful neurologist was one of the best acquisitions in our first season in the top division of the London Football League. Utility player who played in many positions, including goalie.

Vito Vittore The lawyer with super-long working hours and no time to play. Talented winger and great scout (unearthed both Steffen and Conrad). Took time to adapt to the brutality of the English tackle and the hardness of Astroturf, but once he learnt to fly he never looked back.

Marco 'Quattro' Casparri Cook, gardener and keeper. With his inseparable friend Dodo, he brought the fresh air of Valtellina into the team. A super-talented pair of hands, equally capable of dealing with canederli, roses or long-distance shots.

Andrea 'Dodo' del Marco See above. Another utility player used in every corner of the pitch. A picture of an acrobatic goal he scored at Pad Rec has been published in the Fulham Chronicle.

Giovanni Profazio A wonderful, funny companion. Great Inter fan. Didn't play much but was always present.

Rinaldo Puccia Sometimes he's in Ireland, then in Nigeria. But his emails are always there and his career with PF now spans well over five years.

Then there are some one (or very few) cap wonders: **Roberto di Lorenzo** and **Fabrizio Zibetti**, whom I don't remember; **Max Pedrolini**, a no-nonsense defender; **Andrea Koch**, younger brother of Giacomo, who scored in his only league game; **Alessandro Grandesso**, played on the wing in Paris, providing pinpoint crosses, then restaurant tips; **Bobo**, lasted a few minutes in the Never Forget triangular in London before he got injured; **Valentina**, great performance in goal at Bra, bullied by a fat, skilled centre forward; **GB Rossi**, played one momentous game, getting away with a classy punch on an opponent; **Stefano Galiani**, three performances, including the famous quarter-final Cup win in Regent's Park where he left the field to put money into the parking meter.

And two 'no cap wonders': **Sam Dalla Bona**, unused by Gianluca Vialli, held brief negotiations with the Gaffer before signing for just £1, putting pen to paper in front of the cameras in my Maida Vale flat; **Carlo Cudicini**, who, ousted by Cech, repeatedly asked if he could play up front for PF incognito. His debut was scheduled for a chilly winter's night in Pad Rec, but the game was cancelled due to torrential rain. Further promises came to nothing.

My 'Italians only' PF team:

(4-4-1-1): Marco4; Giacomo, Filippo, Matteo, Lele; Marco2, Luigi, Marco3, Vito; Marco1; Mauro

A picture tells a tale: Catania 2004

Goober Fox on an ill-fated journey which produced memorable football

In this case, the picture doesn't tell the tale: this calm team photo belies the most dramatic journey in PF history. Striker Paul Clarke (back row, second from left) flew out on match-day morning to meet the others just before the game. However, the airline lost his luggage and, while trying to sort this out, his wallet was stolen.

He therefore had to find his way across Sicily to a remote town with no money and just the clothes he stood up in, and a sign in Italian to the effect 'Help me! I'm English' made for him by a fellow traveller. The fact he made it to the rendezvous, via two trains and a taxi, speaks volumes for Sicilian kindness. Clarke used all his troubles to fuel a galvanising performance up front against local team Stipsy King, causing the Sicilian defence no end of problems and bagging a brace of goals in a match-winning and tour-defining performance, ending up man of both the match and the weekend.



Back row, l-r: Geoff, Clarke, Jez, Bruce, Damian, Kieran, Jake; Front:: Cornish, Carlos, Ally, Gibbo, Raj.

Intelligent design ... Pasolini

Philosophy Football shirt designer **Hugh Tisdale** discusses the concept behind his two Pasolini tops.

Pier Paolo Pasolini is very much a Philosophy Football man: energetic and creative, but also politically committed and tainted with scandal. Geoff Andrews, catalyst fifteen years ago for the Perryman/Tisdale design partnership, offered the first Pasolini quote, translated as 'After literature and sex, football is one of the great pleasures.'



The design highlights the word 'football' in an informal, individualised typeface in pink on a navy blue garment. It carries the number '11' in recognition of Pasolini's left-wing credentials and was a commercial success.

The design for the second shirt was as different as possible from the first. It was produced for PFFC's 2005 participation in the cultural programme marking the 30th anniversary of Pasolini's death. Our designs avoid plagiarism – we seek to add rather than replicate – so the high-contrast portrait of Pasolini was created by combining two existing photographs into an entirely new image, in the style of the famous Che Guevara image.

Pasolini was, to the end, a lover of both football and controversy. He earned a red card in a charity game between crew and sub-contractors during the 1975 filming of *Salò (The 120 Days of Sodom)* for ungentlemanly conduct which exceeded what most fans could stomach in its explicit use of intensely sadistic violence.

Pier Paolo would doubtless be proud of his reputation as one of the most controversial members of the Philosophy Football squad.

A team that eats together stays together

Recreate the classic Italian dishes prepared by **Marco Casparri** for the pre-season party at Clarke's.

ANTIPASTO

UOVA E POMODORI RIPIENI CON INSALATA CAPRESE

Hard-boil the eggs and cut into halves. Remove the yolks and mix with tuna, mayonnaise and capers, blending to a good thick paste. Stuff the whites with the mix. Scoop out the seeds and juice of the tomatoes and mix with tuna, olives and oregano. Stuff the tomatoes with the mix. Serve with mozzarella and tomato salad.

PRIMO

PASTA ALLA AMATRICIANA

To make the Amatriciana sauce, take a joint or belly of pork and fry with olive oil and onions. Season to taste with salt, pepper and as much chilli as you like. Add fresh or tinned tomatoes, cook slowly for a long time until you get a nice thick sauce. Cook pasta. Put the two together. Delicious.

SECONDO

POLPETTONE CON PATATE

A great main course. Mix three parts beef mince to one of pork. Season well. Add two eggs, some parsley and dry herbs and mix in a bowl. Once well mixed, roll into a nice long shape and cover with bacon rashers. Tie with string. Place in the oven for 40 minutes at 200°C. Serve with roast potatoes, green leaves and gravy.

DOLCE

CROSTATA DELLA NONNA

Make a short-crust pie base, using eggs, flour and sugar. Fill it with crab-apple jelly and put it the oven for 20 minutes at 180°C. Serve with a spoon of organic clotted cream. Yummy.