

Listen to Neil talking about Coventry City Football Club and why he's a loyal supporter.

Before listening

Do the preparation task first. Then listen to the audio and do the exercises.

Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–h) with the vocabulary (1–8).

Vocabulary

Definition

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| 1. to relegate | a. in sports, a group of teams which play against each other |
| 2. a division | b. to put someone or something in a lower position |
| 3. a playoff | c. to win a point or goal in a sport or game |
| 4. to score | d. zero |
| 5. the FA Cup | e. being raised to a higher position |
| 6. a semi-final | f. an extra game in a match played between teams who have the same number of points |
| 7. a promotion | g. the Football Association Challenge Cup, an important competition in English football |
| 8. nil | h. one of the two games played to decide who enters the final round of a competition |

Tasks

Task 1

Are the sentences true or false?

- | | Answer | |
|---|---------------|-------|
| 1. Coventry City had a very successful year in 2001. | True | False |
| 2. In 1987, Coventry City fans had something to celebrate. | True | False |
| 3. Neil started supporting Coventry after watching them beat Sheffield. | True | False |
| 4. Coventry City is one of the top clubs in the English Premier League. | True | False |
| 5. Neil is happy that Coventry City isn't in the Premier League. | True | False |
| 6. He is optimistic about the next season. | True | False |

Task 2

Put the words and phrases in order to make sentences.

1. I've Coventry City since supported I was a young boy.
2. Coventry City. support I ask me why People often
3. beat listening in the semi-final. I remember to them Sheffield
4. People ask one of the big teams. I why don't support
5. is not supporting in There a lot of joy one of the big teams.
6. We to beat scored last minute in the them 3–2. two goals
7. always the threat There is of relegation.
8. we've a good chance This got I think season of promotion.

Discussion

Which football team do you support?

Transcript

I want to talk about supporting Coventry City, the team I've supported since I was a young boy at school. Coventry City are a team from the West Midlands near Birmingham, where I grew up. And just to give a bit of background on the club, it was founded back in 1883, and we were founder members of the Premier League. But in 2001, after 34 consecutive years in the top division, we were finally relegated. And since that year, we've been in the Championship or the second tier of the English Football Leagues.

Our only real honour was winning the FA Cup back in 1987. People often ask me why I support Coventry City. Well, in my school, everyone either supported Aston Villa, the local team, or Liverpool, the team that won everything at the time. I didn't really want to support the same as everybody else – I wanted to choose a different team. So after a school trip to Coventry one day, I thought, well, I'll support Coventry City, then. It was the FA Cup win that cemented my support for them. I remember listening to the radio commentary, listening to them beat, I think, Sheffield Wednesday in the semi-final and that was it. I was a City fan then.

Erm ... people ask why I don't support one of the big teams. Well, in England, people either support a team that always wins, and we call them 'glory hunters', or a team near from where they were born. And there is a lot of joy in not supporting one of the big teams, especially when we get to play the big teams. I'll always remember beating Manchester United one cold Boxing Day, when we scored two goals in the last minute to beat them 3–2. And even last season we went to Old Trafford and beat Manchester United 2–0. Also, playing in the Championship is surprisingly a better league, I think, than playing in the Premier League. Every team can beat each other, it's much more exciting, every team has got a chance of getting promoted, or there is always the threat of relegation. Every season, there's new teams to visit and it's much more interesting than the Premier League, which is pretty much the same every year.

Supporting a team's like being part of a family: you can't just choose to leave the family if there's some disappointments. And being part of that family means that you share the same dreams and the same desires, and the same disappointments. This season I think we've got a good chance of promotion – we've got a good manager, Chris Coleman, who used to be in charge of Fulham. And we've got an outside chance, I think, of making the playoffs. Last season we were very nearly relegated, but this season I think we'll have a much better season.

Answers

Preparation task

1. b
2. a
3. f
4. c
5. g
6. h
7. e
8. d

Task 1

1. False
2. True
3. False
4. False
5. True
6. True

Task 2

1. I've supported Coventry City since I was a young boy.
2. People often ask me why I support Coventry City.
3. I remember listening to them beat Sheffield in the semi-final.
4. People ask why I don't support one of the big teams.
5. There is a lot of joy in not supporting one of the big teams.
6. We scored two goals in the last minute to beat them 3–2.
7. There is always the threat of relegation.
8. This season I think we've got a good chance of promotion.