

A writer's fantasy (2008)

I had a fantastic dream last night. One of my best.

I dreamed that Liverpool Football Club wanted me in their team. They made me an irresistible offer, to write articles and poems about their players for the club magazine on a regular basis. I would be earning \$180,000 per week.

I'm a born writer. I can churn out player profiles, club histories, epic accounts of on-field dramas, all on demand. I can even use rhyme and alliteration. I'm pretty good under pressure and can write in front of thousands of screaming spectators (see, I told you I could use alliteration), with no sign of nervous tension.

I also have a lethal right hand when holding a pen or driving a mouse. I'm a really big occasion writer. That's why Liverpool wants me.

But that's not all: Manchester United are also chasing me. They need to win in Europe and are reshaping their support staff. They want a good writer to give their players a collective persona – so many stars, too much individualism. Man U are offering \$290,000 a week if I go there.

Even Real Madrid put in a bid when they realized I was available. Not as much as Man U, but I get to hang around with Becks and Posh. Tofu, with Spanish lessons thrown in.

The artist in me says go to Liverpool. There's so much of interest there. Maritime history and pop music iconography.

Greed says go to Manchester. Never mind you have no interest in textiles – I don't knit, just write – but hey, count the money.

The glamour-junkie says go to Real – Ronaldo, Zidane, Beckham, Posh, paparazzi, and me.

Sports journalists are writing about me and morning television commentators are arguing about where I should go.

My sleep is becoming disturbed as I roll from side to side in the throes of a dilemma. Suddenly I awake. I'm in bed in Kinglake. My wife has retreated to the other side of the bed, terrified of my swinging elbows.

'That's some dream you've been having', she tells me.
'I'm a writer, I can dream of anything'.

It's true. Dreams are my office space. I can turn them into any content that's needed for a press conference or sports show encounter. I write speeches and short media grabs. My skills will make the shy, inarticulate sports stars into, into...but no, wait.

It's only a pointless dream. No one will pay that much for a writer in a lifetime, let alone per week. All those years ago, if I had only listened to Mr. Wellman, our sports master at school (please keep his hostile form in whatever circle of hell it now resides). Who needs to read, let alone write? Learn to kick a ball, run a few yards, wear a footy uniform and turn up on sports days.

You'll grow up knowing how to hold a beer and talk about what really matters. Throw away all those books and become normal.

He was right. I bet Becks never dreamed of becoming a writer.