



DROGBA

EXCLUSIVE



If we finish outside the top 4 it will be a DISASTER



DIDIER DROGBA cannot bear to even think about Chelsea finishing outside the top four.

The Ivorian is back after missing a penalty in losing the African Nations Cup final and is not in the mood for any more football misery. Drogba is determined to help turn the Blues' fortunes around.

And he admits that failure to qualify for next season's Champions League would be a complete nightmare.

In his previous seven seasons at Chelsea, Drogba has won three Premier League titles and only once finished outside the top two - a third place, three years ago.

But this season is shaping up to be the worst ever in the striker's time at Stamford Bridge and young boss Andre Villas-Boas 34, is feeling the heat.

Drogba, 33, said: "If we don't make the top four it would be a disaster. Every time we've started a season since I've been with Chelsea we never even finished as low as fourth."

"We have to make the top four because Chelsea is a big club. Of course it can happen that the club goes below fourth."

"When I joined Chelsea, the club was second and I helped them to be first. It is



DIDIER DROGBA SEASON BY SEASON

PREMIER LEAGUE & CHAMPIONS LEAGUE PER CENTAGE

Season	Apps	Starts	Goals	Goals/90	W	D	L	Win%
2004-05	35	34	15	0.43	24	7	4	88.6%
2005-06	36	25	13	0.36	27	5	4	75.0%
2006-07	48	44	26	0.54	31	12	5	64.6%
2007-08	30	28	14	0.47	19	9	2	63.2%
2008-09	34	32	10	0.29	18	12	4	52.9%
2009-10	37	36	32	0.86	22	7	8	59.5%
2010-11	43	35	13	0.30	24	8	11	55.8%
2011-12	17	13	8	0.55	9	4	4	52.9%

INTERVIEW BY SHAUN CUSTIS IN THE IVORY COAST

The hardest season I've known since I've been here. The players and fans are used to being in the first two or three but this is different. "We are having a difficult season and it's not always easy when you change manager and there are new players to fit in the team. I know that because I've had six managers in my time at Chelsea. "For me the manager's age is not an issue, you have to respect his position and his authority. "As AVB struggles to make Chelsea into challengers, owner Roman Abramovich has been conspicuous by his regular presence at the Cobham training ground looking over the manager's shoulder. "Drogba said: "He's not a man you see every day at training so when he is there everyone is a bit surprised. "But they shouldn't be because this is his building, his place, his club so if he wants to come he can do that. "He's a good owner and what he has done for the club is very important. He always puts the players in the best conditions to play and is always trying to improve the club. This is him."

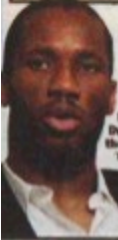
This, though, is not the Chelsea that Drogba has grown used to under Abramovich, the one which is always fighting to the wire with Manchester United. He added: "Everyone from the manager down realises what is required and that they are not coming up to scratch. "Drogba said: "When you join Chelsea you know what to expect. "They sign you to win trophies. There are certain things we have to achieve like winning the league, the FA Cup, the Carling Cup and the Champions League. "It's hard for everyone at the moment for the players and for the manager. "I think he's a big man and he's a bit loud. There's no age when you can say you don't hear any more. "Even Ferguson is still learning with his team - that's

how you become better. He's learning and he will be better next year. "There is the feeling that the more open style Villas-Boas favours is not working. But for Drogba it is about Chelsea finding a way to win again that matters, not the way they do it. "He said: "He came with his philosophy which is playing a bit more football than the other managers. That's how he succeeded in Porto so he wanted to do the same at Chelsea. "You know how it is when you come with a lot of ambition and it doesn't go the way you want, it's difficult. It's not easy for him but he's not the only one who is responsible, we all are. "In football everyone blames the manager first which is difficult for him because he is on the sideline when you are playing but I guess that's football. "It's difficult because we are trying to change the way we play and adapt to his philosophy so that's maybe why it's taking time and we are struggling to be in the top two. "But I don't think it's about the style the manager wants to bring to the team, it's about winning games. "You can win with different philosophies, you can score a lot of goals or you can not concede and score one. You can win in different ways. "The best tactic is always the one which makes you win. You can feel comfortable in a certain system like 4-2-2 or 4-2-3 but believe me, when you win you forget about the tactics used to achieve it. "Seeing AVB in turmoil has not put Drogba off doing his job one day though. The Ivorian said: "It would be interesting to be Chelsea manager. "I love this club and I always want to help the people I love so why not? "If I was a manager I would give a lot to my players. You have to show them you care and that they are the best and they will pay you back. "Meanwhile, Drogba has to adapt back to football in Europe again after the balmy weather in Gabon where Ivory Coast lost to Zambia in the final. He laughed: "I need to get used to the cold for a few days. To be at the African games was a really good experience and I hope I take all the energy I can back to help my team again. "Now there's no time to rest. We are still in the FA Cup and Champions League which are big, big trophies. "I've missed my team. We did everything together and won together before, so when we are in a difficult moment we have to be together. "For more information on Didier's foundation or to support his charity work on March 10 in London please go to www.thodidierdrogba.com or follow @didierandrogba on Twitter. A custis@the-part.co.uk

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TOUGH TIME... Drogba reckons this is his hardest season he has known at Chelsea



Drogba on the Champions League

AFTER eight years of trying to win the Champions League with Chelsea, Didier Drogba is desperate to get the job done. The Ivory Coast star has been a main finalist three times and a finalist once, yet the big prize has eluded him. Next Tuesday the Blues travel to face Napoli in their last 16, final leg clash, with the odds on them lifting the trophy lower than ever given their patchy form this season. Drogba admits that had he quit Chelsea he might have cracked it with another club. But he insists there could never be anything like getting that ultimate success with the London-

ers. He said: "I could go to any other team playing in the Champions League and maybe win it. But odds would never be the same as if I did it for Chelsea. "Napoli have had a good run in the last few games but we are going there to try to get a good result and then win at home. "If we can score there it will be perfect. It's a competition where we want to do well. We go there with a lot of ambition. believe, even if there are not a lot of green signals or green lights saying Chelsea could win the Champions League this season. "Drogba said: "I think he's a big man and he's a bit loud. There's no age when you can say you don't hear any more. "Even Ferguson is still learning with his team - that's



Drogba on his Blues future

CHELSEA favourite Didier Drogba insists he could still be at the club next season. The Ivorian striker's contract runs out this summer and he wants a new two-year deal at Stamford Bridge. The Ivory Coast forward has been in goal search, but he is still in the club. He has been strongly tipped for a move to mega-rich Chinese outfit Shanghai Shenxin, where his old Blues strike partner Nicolas Anelka now plays. But Drogba believes an agreement can be reached with his beloved Chelsea, whom he joined from Marseille for £20million in July 2001. The Ivory Coast forward said: "Everybody knows I love the club and everyone knows I want to stay. "We are still talking about it, so

let's see what comes out of all the discussions. I'm optimistic something can happen. "I love Chelsea and I think they love me as well. I think we are going to find something and make a decision which suits everyone in the club and the fans. "At the same time, if it doesn't happen, that's his business. I will never change the respect and the love I created together. "My heart is Blue."