



## **OL Groupe news roundup**

**Lyon, 22 December 2008**

### **OL IS AUTUMN CHAMPION**

Following the match pitting Olympique Lyonnais against Caen on Saturday 20 December 2008, Olympique Lyonnais has obtained the unofficial title of Autumn Champion with 38 points, ahead of Bordeaux with 35.

In the context of the current economic recession, and pending completion of the new stadium in 2013, Jean-Michel Aulas, CEO of OL Groupe, has modified the Group's targets for the 2008-09 season. Owing to the excellent 2007-08 earnings (net profit of €20m) and to the Group's very sound financial structure, the Board of Directors plans to continue investing in the professional squad, so as to reach new levels of achievement, and to put the Group's football performance ahead of its financial performance in terms of priorities.

"I am very pleased with the first half of the season. Structurally, the arrival of Claude Puel has enabled us to improve our organisation. We have also produced good results on the pitch, with the club in possession of first place in Ligue 1 against a background of heightened competition owing to the quality of our rivals, universally recognised by the media. We have also qualified for the first knockout round of the Champions League for the sixth consecutive time."

Given the Group's European ambitions,

- The Club intends to keep its best players, notably Benzema, who is under contract until 2013 and Fred. Both players have been solicited by the major European clubs.
- Depending on the direction that manager Claude Puel wishes to take, the Group might acquire players during the winter and summer mercatos.
- In the scenario mentioned above, revenue from the sale of player registrations in the 2008-09 financial year might be impacted by this new direction and come in lower than in previous years.

### **QUALIFICATION FOR UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE FIRST KNOCKOUT ROUND**

In a particularly difficult context, with several injured players during the first half of the season, Olympique Lyonnais nevertheless won a spot in the first knockout round of the Champions League. As a result of the 19 December 2008 drawing, OL's next adversary will be FC Barcelona, considered the best European club at the moment.



## OL GROUPE

The first of the two fixtures will take place on 24 February 2009 in Lyon and the return match in Barcelona on 11 March.

Alongside Real Madrid and Arsenal, OL is one of only three clubs to participate in the Champions League round of 16 for the sixth consecutive time.

### **THE WOMEN'S TEAM SUCCEEDS AGAIN**

The women's team pursued its climb to the highest European level. Already in first place in Division 1 play, the team has also qualified, as they did last year, for the semi-finals of the UEFA Women's Cup.

They will face German league champions Duisburg on 28 March 2009 in Lyon and 4 April 2009 in Duisburg.

OL is once again the only club to have both men's and women's teams qualify for European Cup competition.

### **BERNARD LAPORTE LAUNCHES THE REFORM OF PROFESSIONAL SPORTS**

In synthesizing his plan to reform French professional sports and make them more competitive, presented on 16 December 2008, Bernard Laporte drew largely from the Besson and Seguin reports.

The Secretary of State in charge of sports has proposed a series of measures that should take the form of proposed new legislation in the Spring of 2009.

These measures include:

- Allowing French sports companies to adopt the ordinary form of incorporation (SA), thereby becoming traditional corporate entities;
- Creating a Federation affiliation number specific to professional clubs;
- Granting "general interest equipment" status to stadiums.
- Replacing the entertainment tax with a 5.5% VAT;

These reforms constitute an important advance with respect to new stadium projects in France, notably in view of the Euro 2016.

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