Beat: Sports

Julen Lopeteguis in-tray at Real Madrid

SPORTS NEWS

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USPA NEWS - pain manager Julen Lopetegui was named by Real Madrid as Zinedine Zidane´s successor on Tuesday, however what awaits the club´s former player and reserve team coach when he takes over after the World Cup in Russia?

1. Ronaldo´s future

The dust had barely settled on Real´s third-consecutive Champions League win last month when Cristiano Ronaldo declared: “It has been beautiful to play for Real Madrid,“ sparking fears within the La Liga side that he had decided to leave.

While still at the club, local media reports that he remains unhappy and that promises made to him have not been fulfilled, however it is not the first time he has made noises about leaving.

“Cristiano is one of the best players of all-time, there´s no doubt about it,“ Lopetegui said in a recent interview. Whether his admiration for the player will be enough to keep him there remains to be seen.

2. The Bale conundrum

While the departure of Zidane will have upset many members of the Madrid side, it is unlikely that Gareth Bale will have shed too many tears. After his matchwinning display in Kiev, Bale said he wanted more regular first team football and whether that came in Madrid or away from it was something that would need to be assessed over the close season.

The 51-year-old now has to decide whether or not to proceed with the Welshman, who was often overlooked for Isco and Karim Benzema by Zidane.

Unfortunately for Bale, Lopetegui is a known admirer of Isco´s and having given Marco Asensio his first full cap at international level obviously rates the youngster, too.

3. The great goalkeeper debate

As a former goalkeeper himself, who made one appearance for Real in a 3-3 draw away to great rivals Atletico, Lopetegui will be faced with a familiar situation at the Bernabeu.

Zidane was a staunch defender of Keylor Navas and vetoed a deal to bring Athletic Bilbao´s Kepa to the club in January, despite Florentino Perez, the Madrid president, setting up the move.

With the Spanish media linking them with moves for AS Roma´s Alisson and Chelsea´s Thibaut Courtois, Lopetegui must decide whether to stick or twist regarding Navas.

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