FOOTBALL INVESTOR

Member's Guide 2018/19

V1.0 (September 2018)

Introduction

Welcome to the Football Investor member's guide for the 2018/19 season. This is the tenth season the Football Investor service has been in operation which is a fact I'm rather proud of. I've seen many a service come and go in that time and although there have been the inevitable lean periods every model based service experiences, the long term performance has shown Football Investor to be one of the most consistent services available.

The service now comprises of three individual systems:-

- Football Investor
- Strike Zone
- Combo

Football Investor

Football Investor was the original system when the service was launched at the start of the 2009/10 season. It is now about to commence its tenth season with six out of the first seven seasons returning a profit.

The system is ratings based utilising four unique algorithms to generate match ratings for every game which is then converted into match odds and compared to the market prices to identify value.

The last three seasons have seen the system treading water and I have identified some weaknesses within the model. Details of the proposed changes can be found in the Betting Banks section.

Strike Zone

The main difference between the Strike Zone and Football Investor systems is that Strike Zone is ratings based rather than value based. Essentially, this means that selections are determined by the ratings and not the odds although some divisional filters are applied based on odds criteria. The system fared poorly in 2014/15 but bounced back in spectacular style in 2015/16 and 2016/17. The 2017/18 season saw a ratings refresh but the results were mixed. I have decided to retain the refreshed ratings for the 2018/19 season but in combination with elements on the 2016/17 ratings. In practice, you probably won't notice much difference.

Combo System

The Combo System has proven to be very popular with members since its launch at the commencement of the 2012/13 season. The system comprises of selections that are common to both Football Investor and Strike Zone. The reasoning behind the Combo system is that the two feeder systems have a very different approach to match selection and matches that appear on both systems should in theory be very strong selections. So far, the theory has worked very well in practice with the first five live seasons returning a profit. The 2018/19 season returned a small loss largely due to the performance from March to the end of season in May. Again, details of my recommended strategy can be found in the Betting Banks section.

Rating Algorithms

Algorithm One

The original algorithm utilises shots on goal data as an indicator of a team's potential goal scoring ability and the record develops as the season progresses. Teams must have played at least eight rounds of league games before a match can be rated by the algorithm. The record of the home team is subtracted from that of the away team to derive a match rating which is then used to calculate the fair odds for the match. This is then compared to the market odds to determine value bets. Not all value bets are flagged as system bets as other filters are applied before a selection is identified.

Algorithm Two - Time Weighted

This algorithm is different from algorithm one in that it weighs more recent games more heavily than older games as the name suggests. This introduces an element of 'short-term' form into the mix whilst maintaining a full season record for a measure of consistency.

Algorithm Three - Recent Form

The Recent Form algorithm concentrates on performance in the last six home or away games only with each match awarded the same weighting. It is designed to identify the teams that are in form and offer the best opportunity for profit accumulation.

Algorithm Four - Time Weighted Recent Form

The Time Weighted Recent Form algorithm is essentially a hybrid of algorithms two and three. It is designed to calculate team records over the previous six matches but more recent games are awarded increased weighting over older games therefore placing even greater emphasis on short-term form.

Algorithm Five – GR100

This algorithm looks at goal scoring data rather than shot data. The GR100 algorithm is now completely integrated into the Strike Zone system and mirrors algorithms 1-4. A GR100 rating of 100 represents goal supremacy of +1 in favour of the home team. A rating of -100 represents goal supremacy of +1 in favour of the away team.

Football Investor Season

The rating algorithms can't rate matches until round 9 of each league in order for the teams to build up a reliable record with their current playing squads. The key dates are shown in the above table.

The 2018/19 season is scheduled to begin with the Championship and Leagues One and Two fixtures on 22nd September so the first selections will be emailed on Thursday 20th September at 7pm.

Division	1st Round	9th Round
Premier League	11-Aug-18	20-Oct-18
Championship	03-Aug-18	22-Sep-18
League One	04-Aug-18	22-Sep-18
League Two	04-Aug-18	22-Sep-18
Scots Premier	04-Aug-18	20-Oct-18

Betting Banks

For the past four seasons the betting banks have been determined by running simulations on the live results data in the mathematical programing language 'R'.

Full Season	Average No of Bets Per Season	Average No of Bets Per Week	Average Odds	Betting Bank 0.1% Risk	Betting Bank 1% Risk	Betting Bank 2.5% Risk	Betting Bank 5% Risk
Football Investor	325	10	3.69	220	160	135	115
Strike Zone	550	17	2.61	165	115	90	75
Combo System	200	6	3.06	55	35	30	25

The above table shows the recommended betting banks for each system at four different risk levels, 0.1%, 1%, 2.5% and 5%. The figures show the percentage chance of bankruptcy over a period of ten seasons for each system / risk combination. Each system had 100,000 simulations ran over ten seasons which equates to one million seasons per system!

Which risk level you choose to follow will be determined by your own risk / reward preference. The official recommendation is 1% risk.

Long term members will note that the recommended betting banks are significantly higher than in previous seasons. This is primarily because of the 2017/18 performance which was well below previous standards. Significant research has been undertaken during the summer months to determine the reasons for the relatively poor performance in 2017/18 which the main focus being the drop off from March to the end of season. I have published the research in the Downloads section of the web site.

Although I wasn't able to identify any single factor affecting the end of season performance, I was able to show that the results were statistically significant and therefore I have decided upon what I consider to be the most appropriate strategy going forward. I have decided to continue to produce the information until the end of season as normal but give members the choice of which option they take. My reasoning is twofold:-

- Ending the season at the end of February would be a bold move and is likely to alienate some members who have the opposite view.
- Continuing until the end of season will give me another full season of data on which to base future decision making.

To this end, I have produced a second set of betting banks for members who intend to stop betting at the end of February.

September to February	Average No of Bets Per Season	Average No of Bets Per Week	Average Odds	Betting Bank 0.1% Risk	Betting Bank 1% Risk	Betting Bank 2.5% Risk	Betting Bank 5% Risk
Football Investor	240	10	3.65	110	75	60	50
Strike Zone	400	17	2.63	100	65	55	45
Combo System	140	6	3.08	35	25	20	15

It should be noted that the above betting banks are significantly lower than for the full season and lend further weight to the argument for ending the season at the end of February.

Staking

The official record will show all bets settled to level stakes which is the industry accepted benchmark if not necessarily the most efficient. There are many different staking methods available and it's not within the scope of this guide to detail them all as there is a wealth of information available on the internet. Kelly staking is favoured by many bettors but it should be used with caution. It could be used with the main Football Investor system or the Combo but I wouldn't recommend using full Kelly staking. I've read that some studies have shown that fractional Kelly is a more efficient approach but again, I'd do your own research before adopting this staking method.

Odds Policy

The service doesn't have an official odds policy per se but the vast majority of prices quoted will be from Pinnacle and SBO with a few Matchbook exchange prices in higher liquid markets (Premier League). There may also be the occasional price from Bet 365 for Premier League games if there are a few other UK books with the same price. Odds are scraped approximately 30 minutes before the selections are finalised with last minute checks for odds movements before I hit the send button. No system is ever going to be 100% perfect and there is still a couple of minutes window between the final checks and the email landing in your inbox. Hopefully late movements will be minimal and they even themselves out over the course of a season.

Selections will be notified by email at these times:-

- ➢ Monday 7 pm UK time for Tue / Wed fixtures
- ➢ Thursday 7 pm UK time for Sat to Mon fixtures

It won't always be possible to send the selections at 7pm but I shall endeavour to be as consistent as possible in this respect. Updates on likely release times and other pertinent information will generally be communicated via Twitter. It is therefore recommended that members subscribe to the service Twitter feed:-

@footyinvestor

The files will be Excel 2010 formatted (examples below):-

FOOTBALL INVESTOR							
Date	Division	Home Team	Away Team	Selection	Match Odds	Min Odds	Value Rating
25/04/2015	Premier League	QPR	West Ham	Home	2.34	2.15	8.8%
25/04/2015	Premier League	Stoke	Sunderland	Home	2.05	2.00	2.5%
25/04/2015	Championship	Huddersfield	Blackburn	Home	2.25	2.15	4.7%
25/04/2015	League One	Preston	Swindon	Away	4.72	4.25	11.1%
25/04/2015	League Two	Bury	AFC Wimbledon	Away	7.25	6.50	11.5%

STRIKE ZONE						
Date	Division	Home Team	Away Team	Selection	Match Odds	Min Odds
01/04/2017	Premier League	Liverpool	Everton	Home	1.74	1.66
01/04/2017	Premier League	Watford	Sunderland	Home	1.89	1.80
01/04/2017	Championship	Brentford	Bristol City	Away	3.25	3.01
01/04/2017	League One	Bristol Rvs	Shrewsbury	Home	1.79	1.74
01/04/2017	League One	Southend	Oldham	Home	1.85	1.80
01/04/2017	League Two	Grimsby	Doncaster	Away	1.83	1.69
01/04/2017	League Two	Mansfield	Exeter	Home	2.16	2.10
01/04/2017	League Two	Plymouth	Accrington	Away	2.77	2.56
01/04/2017	Scots Prem	Hamilton	St Johnstone	Away	2.26	2.15
01/04/2017	Scots Prem	Inverness C	Kilmarnock	Away	3.74	3.56

COMBO SYSTEM							
Date	Division	Home Team	Away Team	Selection	Match Odds	Min Odds	Value Rating
25/04/2015	Premier League	QPR	West Ham	Home	2.34	2.20	6.4%
25/04/2015	Premier League	Stoke	Sunderland	Home	2.10	2.00	5.0%
25/04/2015	Premier League	Newcastle	Swansea	Home	2.42	2.15	12.6%
25/04/2015	Championship	Birmingham	Charlton	Home	2.23	2.14	4.2%
25/04/2015	League Two	Dag and Red	Accrington	Away	2.85	2.75	3.6%

Changes for 2018/19

The major changes to the service for 2018/19 can be summarised as follows:-

➢ Strike Zone selection criteria now a combination of 2016/17 and 2017/18 parameters.
➢ Betting Banks recalculated and now include a September to February option for members who wish to end the season at the end of February.

I think this guide covers the main features of the service but please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any specific questions or need advice.

Best of luck for the new season!

Stewboss