



**FANTASY CHALLENGE
PYRAMID CUP
FINAL
2024**

Steve Rogers

v

Danzel D'Costa

16th Final

GAMEWEEK 38

19th May 19th

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this seasons Pyramid Cup Final preview.

The Pyramid Cup continues to be the competition that all in the FC World hoped it would be highlighting the new and growing talent within the FC World.

The competition for all the managers in the Pyramid Leagues it has proved to be a real showcase for growing talent in its 15-year history today's final being the conclusion of its 16th season.

Both managers are today experiencing their first Major final and a chance to win their first major trophy, both will look to the prestigious history of this competition to see the platform that in can provide for a career in the FC World. Neither have to look that far back as last seasons winner John Bellamy who was making his debut in a major final has made the FC Cup Final this season, the Pyramid Cup being that platform to give him the confidence to make a second major trophy final in successive seasons.

With both finalists being debutants in a major final it means once more that a new name will go onto the Pyramid Cup, sixteen seasons and sixteen different names have graced the magnificent trophy only one manager Alvar Chambers has made two finals in fact in successive years losing the first and claiming the trophy in his second final. Chambers like Bellamy also went on to make a FC Cup final appearance in 2022.

One of today's finalist Danzel D'Costa might have caused a little stir within the FC World as he has not really set the FC World alight in his seven seasons only ever have gained one Lucky Promotion and, in that season, he finished 15th in Pyramid One. D'Costa though has shown that he does have potential making the Semi-Final stage of this competition four seasons ago in 2020. Some managers take their time to find a rhythm in the FC World D'Costa is one gameweek away from joining that elite brand of managers who have won a major trophy and will then become a manager that the FC World will sit up and take notice of.

Steve Rogers is only in his fourth season as an FC Manager but his path so far has been a little different to his opponent. Rogers has caught the eye of many an FC World pundit claiming two promotions and a Lucky Promotion to the Conference last season. This season he has already claimed promotion from the Conference into League Two making this final his last season in the Pyramid Cup for a while as he will be in next seasons Champions League.

Today's final representing a great achievement for both managers in their careers to get here but both will now be hoping to go that one step further and write their name in the history of the FC World with a major trophy and join that elite band of managers who no matter what happens can always say I won a major trophy.

Over the next pages in this preview, we profile our two managers how their run got them to this year's final. The FC expert takes a look at the two manager's teams and we show the history of the competition.

Before I sign off, I want to apologise for any spelling and or grammatical mistakes in this preview the timeframes are just getting tighter every season the alternative is no preview. I would also like to express my thanks to Mike Carleton for his hard work and assistance in updating the game this season.

I hope you enjoy this Pyramid Cup Final Preview Edition.

All that is left for me to do is to wish both managers all the best for this final.

Paul Richardson

Fantasy Challenge Founder

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PLAYER PROFILES

STEVE ROGERS

ROAD TO THE FINAL

1st Round Group Stage

Group B

Paul Richardson	45	-	35
Euan Robertson	53	-	33
Lee Irons	68	-	80
Gavin Barnes	40	-	47
Craig Lewis	59	-	65
Paul Richardson	44	-	66
Euan Robertson	56	-	44
Lee Irons	74	-	51
Gavin Barnes	62	-	60
Craig Lewis	28	-	19

FINAL TABLE

POS	TEAM	PLD	WON	DRW	LST	FOR	AGST	+/-	PTS
1	Steve Rogers	10	6	0	4	529	500	29	18
2	Gavin Barnes	10	5	0	5	570	560	10	15
3	Euan Robertson	10	5	0	5	563	561	2	15
4	Paul Richardson	10	5	0	5	549	554	-5	15
5	Lee Irons	10	5	0	5	539	548	-9	15
6	Craig Lewis	10	4	0	6	550	577	-27	12

KNOCKOUT STAGE

		1 st Leg		2 nd Leg		Aggregate	
2 nd Round	John Bellamy	51	- 65	82	- 65	133	- 130
3 rd Round	Sammy Abbey	74	- 78	69	- 57	143	- 135
Quarter-Final	Cha Baller	51	- 51	61	- 55	112	- 106
Semi-Final	Will Orchard	80	- 70	93	- 61	173	- 131

HISTORY

Career Honours 2021 Pyramid Two Runner-Up Promoted 2022 Pyramid One 3rd Promoted

Honourable Mention 2023 Pyramid Premier 6th Lucky Promotion

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE HISTORY		PYRAMID CUP HISTORY		NEW LIFE CUP HISTORY	
2021		Group Stage			
2022		Second Round			
2023		Group Stage			

STAT ATTACK

(After Gameweek 37)

AVERAGE GAMEWEEK SCORE	62.70	GAMEWEEKS SCORE OVER 49	27
HIGHEST GAMEWEEK SCORE	108	GAMEWEEKS SCORE UNDER 50	10
LOWEST GAMEWEEK SCORE	15	CHAMPIONS LEAGUE AVERAGE	60.55

PLAYER PROFILES

DANZEL D'COSTA

ROAD TO THE FINAL

1st Round Group Stage

Group D

Timo Mulari	53	-	47
Delfryn Williams	43	-	25
Brett Peake	64	-	78
Tony Nicolaides	49	-	39
Bella Earley	65	-	57
Timo Mulari	33	-	43
Delfryn Williams	58	-	37
Brett Peake	65	-	74
Tony Nicolaides	63	-	76
Bella Earley	44	-	15

FINAL TABLE

POS	TEAM	PLD	WON	DRW	LST	FOR	AGST	+/-	PTS
1	Brett Peake	10	7	0	3	586	573	13	21
2	Danzel D'Costa	10	6	0	4	537	491	46	18
3	Tony Nicolaides	10	5	0	5	597	539	58	15
4	Timo Mulari	10	5	0	5	530	508	22	15
5	Bella Earley	10	4	0	6	516	552	-36	12
6	Delfryn Williams	10	3	0	7	492	595	-103	9

KNOCKOUT STAGE

		1 st Leg		2 nd Leg		Aggregate	
2 nd Round	Callum Hogwood	79	- 37	63	- 60	142	- 97
3 rd Round	Daniel Hill	87	- 63	45	- 41	132	- 104
Quarter-Final	Daniel Sherry	90	- 77	71	- 58	161	- 135
Semi-Final	John Allison	86	- 68	75	- 68	161	- 136

HISTORY

Career Honours

Honourable Mention 2020 Pyramid Cup Semi-Finalist 2021 Pyramid One 15th Lucky Promotion

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE HISTORY	PYRAMID CUP HISTORY	NEW LIFE CUP HISTORY
2017	Third Round	
2018	Group Stage	Second Round
2019	Group Stage	
2020	Semi-Final	
2021	Third Round	
2022	Second Round	
2023	Group Stage	

STAT ATTACK

(After Gameweek 37)

AVERAGE GAMEWEEK SCORE	62.45	GAMEWEEKS SCORE OVER 49	26
HIGHEST GAMEWEEK SCORE	107	GAMEWEEKS SCORE UNDER 50	11
LOWEST GAMEWEEK SCORE	8	CHAMPIONS LEAGUE AVERAGE	62.94



FC EXPERT MATCH ANALYSIS

We asked the Fantasy Challenge Expert to give us his thoughts on this year's Pyramid Cup Final. We have managed to give the FC Expert the two team line-ups from Gameweek 37.

STEVE ROGERS

Gameweek 37

Squad List

83 Average **112** Points 174 Highest →



DANZEL D'COSTA

Gameweek 37

Squad List

83 Average **110** Points 174 Highest →



STAT ATTACK

108 **
 30
 29
 49
 34
 3
 Minus 4 Points
 3-5-2
 NONE
 BENCH BOOST

SCORE
 CAPTAIN
 DEFENCE
 MIDFIELD
 ATTACK
 TRANSFERS
 FORMATION
 CHIP PLAYED
 CHIPS LEFT

106 **
 30
 33
 36
 41
 3
 Minus 4 Points
 3-4-3
 NONE
 TRIPLE CAPTAIN

** Score adjusted after losing 4 Points on Transfers

THE ANALYSIS

Well can you believe it I have got an extra day as finally we have a season where Gameweek 37 finished on Wednesday night allowing Fantasy Challenge founder Paul Richardson to give me the two cup finalists teams on a Thursday.

Although I have the extra time, I feel I have hit upon a formula that works, at the time of writing I can confirm that I predicting the 2024 FC Cup final correctly even after being put under extra pressure from Paul asking AI Microsoft CoPilot to also do an analysis and prediction, so once more you will see below me go through the key components as I see them in this final.

If this match had taken place in Gameweek 37 there would have just been two points between the two managers with Steve Rogers coming out Victorious. It is interesting to note that both made Three Transfers costing their team Four points, I wonder were these transfers done with one eye on today's final to lose the points before the final even though it means they only have the one transfer for today's final.

I am going to go through three categories that I think will decide this final.

CHIPS

STEVE ROGERS
CHIPS
BENCH BOOST

DANZEL D'COSTA
CHIPS
TRIPLE CAPTAIN

Wow I will be doing analysis of several components but seeing both managers have chips available for this final makes me think that this is going to be the most vital part of the analysis for this final and what is going to be the deciding factor in the outcome of the final. Let's take a look at Gameweek 37 if Danzel had triple captained, he would have gained an extra 15 points putting him 13 ahead of Rogers but Rogers could have played that vital Bench Boost which would have boosted his score by an impressive 25 points. So, if in Gameweek 37 these two had played their chips Rogers would have come out winner by a greater margin. Looking at the final I am sure that Danzel will once more captain Haaland but Rogers bench could be different but of course that does not affect his squad's overall score. Does a Bench Boost trump a Triple Captain, well the Bench Boost gives a manager an extra Four players to score points, whilst Triple Captain only really represents one extra player. **CONCLUSION:** - Rogers Bench Boost has the advantage here.

CAPTAIN – (Points for the Could have selected have been doubled)

STEVE ROGERS
Haaland (Manchester City) 30 Points
COULD HAVE SELECTED
Palmer (Chelsea) 14 Points
De Bruyne (Manchester City) 12 Points
Foden (Manchester City) 11 Points

DANZEL D'COSTA
Haaland (Manchester City) 30 Points
COULD HAVE SELECTED
Palmer (Chelsea) 14 Points
Foden (Manchester City) 11 Points

Both managers got their captain pick correct and with City going for the title I can't see either of them gambling on not picking Haaland again especially as the Norwegian superstar has a home fixture against West Ham with the title to be won and West Ham virtually on the beach. Question can Danzel really gamble against Haaland Rogers will be hoping not and will select Haaland to try and negate that Triple Captain score by as much as possible. With his current squad surely, the only option is Foden others are just too risky. **CONCLUSION:** - No advantage here. Can Danzel really afford to gamble.

FINANCE / TRANSFERS / OPTIONS

STEVE ROGERS			DANZEL D’COSTA		
FINANCE		TRANSFERS	FINANCE		TRANSFERS
SQUAD VALUE	IN THE BANK		SQUAD VALUE	IN THE BANK	
£103.2	£2.1	1	£100.1	£2.9	1

Both managers made transfers in Gameweek 37 so neither have an extra transfer interesting, both have healthy budgets. I can only really see one transfer for Danzel and that is to get rid of Chelsea’s Gallagher and I think go for a differential Tottenham player, he will have enough money for Johnson, Richarlison, Maddison or Kulesevski. Tottenham need a last day victory to secure 5th and European football an away trip to Sheffield United looks like a good fixture to achieve that goal. For Rogers the big question is the fitness of De Bruyne currently showing as having a 75% chance of being fit will he wait or will he look maybe to bring in an Arsenal midfielder Odegaard to cancel Danzel or maybe Havertz also an Odegaard canceller. **CONCLUSION:** - I do not see Danzel having £0.8 Million more in his transfer kitty as an advantage so no advantage here.

THE DIFFERENTIAL’S

STEVE ROGERS DIFFERENTIALS	DANZEL D’COSTA DIFFERENTIALS
GOALKEEPERS	GOALKEEPER(S)
Dorde Petrovic (Chelsea)	Jordan Pickford (Everton)
Dean Henderson (Crystal Palace)	David Raya (Arsenal)
DEFENDERS	DEFENDER(S)
Malo Gusto (Chelsea)	Manuel Akanji (Manchester City)
Jarrad Branthwaite (Everton)	William Saliba (Arsenal)
Gabriel (Arsenal)	Charlie Taylor (Burnley)
MIDFIELDER(S)	MIDFIELDER(S)
Son (Tottenham Hotspur)	Conor Gallagher (Chelsea)
Kevin De Bruyne (Manchester City)	Martin Odegaard (Arsenal)
FORWARDS	FORWARDS
Jean-Philippe Mateta (Crystal Palace)	Nicolas Jackson (Chelsea)

Interesting to see eight differentials in the two squads meaning that this shows it is a final where team selection is going to mean everything. Of course, we do know that Rogers has that Bench Boost so all of his 15 players are going to play in this final meaning his team selection is not a factor and that all of his eight differentials are going to make an impact on this final. For Danzel, he has to try and navigate his team selection deciding on what are differentials to make a difference or which are to neutralise. What do we mean by neutralise an example would be moving Saliba into the starting line-up to negate neutralise Rogers Gabriel. At first glance I like Danzel’s Differentials I saw Arsenal Goalkeeper Raya being the best pick we have already mentioned Saliba as a neutraliser Akanji of Manchester City also looks like he could make a difference. Arsenal’s Odegaard in midfield and whilst Chelsea’s Nicolas Jackson got outscored by Palace’s Mateta in gameweek 37 Chelsea have a more favourable fixture in the final gameweek at home to Bournemouth whilst Palace are at home to Aston Villa, but Villa have already secured a Champions League spot for next season will they have a hang over from that qualification secured in mid-week. **CONCLUSION:** - Slight advantage to Danzel here. He looks to have the best options of the eight differentials. That said Rogers midfield duo could be quite formidable.

THE CHIP EFFECT

CHIP	EXPLANATION
Bench Boost	All the Players on your Substitute Bench score points for that gameweek
Triple Captain	Instead of the normal double points your Captains Points are tripled
OTHER INFORMATION	What happens to my Triple Captain chip if my captain doesn't play The triple point's bonus will be passed to your vice-captain. If your vice-captain doesn't play either then the bonus is lost, the chip isn't returned.

Both managers will need to take a look at the fixtures below of the final day of the season to try and figure out who will be really trying and whose season is over. The selection of captain could be vital to gaining success in this final.

THE FIXTURES FOR GAMEWEEK 38

Sunday 19th May

Arsenal	V	Everton
Brentford	V	Newcastle United
Brighton & Hove Albion	V	Manchester United
Burnley	V	Nottingham Forest
Chelsea	V	Bournemouth
Crystal Palace	V	Aston Villa
Liverpool	V	Wolverhampton Wanderers
Luton	V	Fulham
Manchester City	V	West Ham United
Sheffield United	V	Tottenham Hotspur

THE VERDICT

I have made mention in recent times how nice it can be to review finals when neither manager has a chip here both managers have a chip available to them and for all the other factors in this final it is here where I see the difference being made. In the analysis I felt that the Bench Boost was a better Chip than the Triple Captain so it would appear that Steve Rogers has the advantage in this final.

Of the four key component of this final that I have examined two I feel have been inconclusive we can be pretty sure both will play Manchester City's Haaland as for the finances and Transfers both only having that one transfer and the finances being so close there is no clear advantage for either of them.

That leaves the differentials of which it is refreshing for a final to see so many, often by this time of the season teams are beginning to look the same so to see eight differentials in a squad of fifteen is virtually unheard of these days. In my analysis I concur that Danzel has the slight advantage here; the question is can he really make these count as he goes up against that Bench Boost and extra players.

In the end it feels that this final hinge son Rogers Bench Boost and whether Danzel can counter it with his differentials.

FINAL VERDICT: -

Steve Rogers to win

In the end I just think that Bench Boost is going to get Rogers over the line. It will be interesting to see what Transfer Danzel can make and see if he can find another differential and can he make them pay but I just see him coming up short.

IN THE EVENT OF A DRAW

In the event of a draw the match will go into a penalty Shoot-Out. Each team's top five-point scorers will go head-to-head to produce a result. If the best five scorers in the two teams cannot produce a result sudden death will take place with the next highest point scorers being next.

HISTORY

PREVIOUS FINALS

YEAR	WINNER		MATCH SCORE		RUNNER-UP
2009	James O'Leary	30	-	28	Michael Lynn
2010	Sandeep Chohan	90	-	75	Dan Calder
2011	James Conway	54	-	34	Matt Hansell
2012	Darren Cullen	52	-	47	Ben Clarkson
2013	James Bastow	61	-	37	Jatin Joshi
2014	Miki Mielonen	49	-	46	David Pewtner
2015	Heath Cram	45	-	31	Alvar Chambers
2016	Alvar Chambers	38	-	33	Steve Clarricoats
2017	David Noel	97	-	53	James Bloomer
2018	Ian Baldwin	94	-	85	Karman Bansi
2019	Dave Rogers	63	-	59	Joseph Greenwood
2020	Colin Davison	74	-	67	Joseph Nicolaides
2021	Sanj Joshi	78	-	52	Jonas Silva
2022	David Dinh	80	-	72	Louis Irvine
2023	John Bellamy	63	-	61	David Murphy

WINNERS

Alvar Chambers	1
Colin Davison	1
Darren Cullen	1
Dave Rogers	1
David Dinh	1
David Noel	1
Heath Cram	1
Ian Baldwin	1
James Bastow	1
James Conway	1
James O'Leary	1
John Bellamy	1
Miki Mielonen	1
Sandeep Chohan	1
Sanj Joshi	1

FINALISTS

Alvar Chambers	2	James O'Leary	1
Ben Clarkson	1	Jatin Joshi	1
Colin Davison	1	John Bellamy	1
Dan Calder	1	Jonas Silva	1
Danzel D'Costa	1	Joseph Greenwood	1
Darren Cullen	1	Jospeh Nicolaides	1
Dave Rogers	1	Karman Bansi	1
David Dinh	1	Louis Irvine	1
David Murphy	1	Matt Hansell	1
David Noel	1	Michael Lynn	1
David Pewtner	1	Miki Mielonen	1
Heath Cram	1	Sandeep Chohan	1
Ian Baldwin	1	Sanj Joshi	1
James Bloomer	1	Steve Clarricoats	1
James Bastow	1	Steve Rogers	1
James Conway	1		

Progressing from, the Pyramid Cup

MANAGER

Michael Lynn
Matt Hansell
Darren Cullen
Steve Clarricoats
James Bloomer
Dave Rogers

PYRAMID CUP

Runner-Up 2009
Runner-Up 2011
Winner 2012
Runner-Up 2016
Runner-Up 2017
Winner 2019

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Runner-Up 2014
Winner 2014
Winner 2018
Runner-Up 2019
Runner-Up 2021
Winner 2021