Watford Supporters Board Statement – Dismissal of Alessio Dionisi as Head Coach

Another Manager Gone. When Will the Real Problems Be Addressed?

The Watford Supporters Board (WSB) views the departure of Alessio Dionisi with disappointment, but sadly little surprise. The next Head Coach will be the fourteenth permanent appointment since 2020. Such frequent change creates instability and makes it difficult for any Head Coach to build a settled team, implement a long-term approach and deliver sustained progress within the Championship.

The Structure, Not Just the Head Coach

The WSB believes it is time to question not simply the performance of another departing Head Coach, but the football structure within which successive Head Coaches have been expected to work.

Recent comments from former Head Coach Javi Gracia have raised questions about squad planning and recruitment, while comments from Troy Deeney and Tom Ince have highlighted concerns around discipline, culture and the authority afforded to Head Coaches. Together, they point towards issues that extend beyond any individual manager.

Recruitment

Recruitment remains a central concern. During the WSB's meeting with the club in September, it was explained that the ambition had been to recruit experienced, Championship-proven players. However, financial constraints resulted in a greater reliance on younger talent and opportunities later in the transfer window.

Several arrivals joined short of match fitness or with recent injury records, making it more difficult to establish a settled side. Watford currently has one of the youngest squads in the Championship, with an average age of 25.3 years (Transfermarkt). While young talent can bring significant quality, successful Championship sides are often built on a balance of emerging players and experienced professionals.

What We Are Asking For

The WSB recognises and appreciates the successes achieved under the Pozzo family's ownership. However, there comes a point where past achievements alone cannot answer legitimate questions about the club's current direction.

Supporters deserve a credible long-term plan, a recognisable footballing identity and greater clarity over the club's football strategy. We therefore hope to discuss these matters directly with Gino Pozzo and Scott Duxbury at the earliest opportunity, including the factors behind Alessio Dionisi's departure, the club's vision going forward and how the next Head Coach will be supported to succeed.

Openness

Changing the Head Coach yet again cannot, on its own, address the wider challenges facing the club. Above all, supporters want openness from those running the club and honest communication about the realities and ambitions of Watford Football Club.

Your **Supporters Board**