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Why is £50m super striker Falcao snubbing Real, United and co for lowly Monaco (with a crowd lower than Luton's...)?

By TIM POOLE
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When Radamel Falcao stunned Chelsea with his brilliant hat-trick for Atletico Madrid in the Super Cup final last August, the Premier League's next big-name transfer seemed only months away. The Colombia forward has it all - his pace, flair and power are only surpassed by his ability to find the back of the net. Back-to-back Europa League victories at two different clubs (Porto, then Atletico) have been

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30 de Maio de 2013 – Why is £50m super striker Falcao snubbing Real, United and co for lowly Monaco (with a crowd lower than Luton's...)?

When Radamel Falcao stunned Chelsea with his brilliant hat-trick for Atletico Madrid in the Super Cup final last August, the Premier League's next big-name transfer seemed only months away.

The Colombia forward has it all - his pace, flair and power are only surpassed by his ability to find the back of the net.

Back-to-back Europa League victories at two different clubs (Porto, then Atletico) have been followed by a third-place finish in La Liga behind Barcelona and Real Madrid and it seemed only a matter of time before the 27-year-old would make the natural step to a contender for the Champions League.

The options were endless. Something big was on the horizon. So, where would be his preferred destination?

The answer has left his admirers shaking their heads with frustration and disbelief in equal measure.

His destination is Monaco – a newly-promoted French side with a lower average attendance (5,086 for the current season, the seventh-lowest in Ligue 2) than Blue Square Bet Premier side Luton Town (5,671).

They are closing in on a £51million deal that is likely to be the biggest of the summer. And here we all were, thinking the South American's next move would be about football. How naive of us.

Money, it seems, will always be king.

Years spent at Porto and Atletico seemingly fine-tuning his game have turned out simply to be time spent waiting for the biggest payday.

Has the third-party ownership system come back to bite Falcao where it hurts?

He fell into the trap in 2009 when he moved from River Plate to Porto. In leaving Argentina for Portugal, he became 55 per cent owned by Doyen Sports – the company founded by Jorge Mendes, the agent of Cristiano Ronaldo and Jose Mourinho.

After two blistering seasons, Falcao was on his way to Atletico – with Doyen Sports even lending the Spanish club funds to help complete the transfer.

The investment needed repaying. And now Monaco have come forward with the deepest pockets. Falcao will be earning just short of £12million a year.

You can understand Ricardo Carvalho – a 35-year-old defender in the twilight of his career – moving to France.

But not Falcao. In his prime and at his peak, he has not chased a move to a top club in the Premier League, La Liga or the Bundesliga he deserves – and needs.

Instead, Falcao will become the latest name to head to a country that is some way behind England, Germany, Spain and even struggling Italy.

Novak Djokovic headlines a stellar cast of athletes who reside in the tax-free haven of Monte Carlo and a South American who grew up in poverty will cherish the chance to live like a prince.

But whether we choose to blame Falcao or the financiers that control him, the fact remains: only one French side has won the European Cup in history and Monaco are unlikely to be added to that list anytime soon.

And with PSG running things in Ligue 1, domestic glory will not be straight-forward.

But just how many people will watching?

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/football/article-2333257/Why-Radamel-Falcao-joining-Monaco-Manchester-United-Real-Madrid-co.html>