Relegation Battle of Menopause

Perimenopause as the chaotic, messy, end of season, relegation battle of the premier league, just before the final whistle.

The star players are no longer listening to the manager, the manager is panicking and shouting louder and louder causing unpredictable play and the referee has lost his whistle.

The monthly fixtures, that once used to be smooth and on schedule, are now either back-to-back (causing periods every two weeks) or there are postponements or cancellations (irregular periods) resulting in being unable to fully plan anything.

Right in the middle of a controlled passage of play, there is a sudden change in weather causing an unexpected heat wave (hot flushes) followed by a night of torrential rain (night sweats). The pitch has turned from a premier league pristine green standard to a Sunday league, waterlogged mud bath. The extra effort this uses causes your joints and muscles to feel as though you have played 120 minutes of Extra Time, recovery takes twice as long, and your energy is completely depleted. The referee then blows his whistle for the start of another match immediately.

The job of the holding midfielder (progesterone) is to sit in
front of the back line, control the tempo and calm the pace of play. To do this the holding midfielder provides a calming team talk (helps sleep). During play the holding midfielder receives a red card. Without the calming presence, the team is left open to counter attacks causing erratic play (racing thoughts and anxiety). The midfielder has been sent off, the striker is playing erratically, and the defensive line goes into panic.

Instead of a slow counterattack,

the team treats a minor rise in play from the opposition (cortisol) like a 90th minute defensive crisis. The adrenaline starts pumping making the team hyper alert (night wakings). The chaos the star players are experiencing, means they are playing in overdrive just to handle simple tasks thus depleting energy reserves very quickly. The players are suddenly experiencing extreme fatigue. There is a complete communication breakdown. The star midfielder receives the ball; knows the play they are supposed to perform but then completely forgets how to complete even a simple pass. Instead, the ball (word/thought) is kicked out of play ready for a throw in (brain fog).

The star players have forgotten the managers playbook causing the brain to become distorted and a miscommunication to the other players (receptors and blood vessels). This causes dizziness, palpitations and tinnitus which affects how well the team are playing. The blood flow to the team's extremities is sluggish, causing pins and needles and cramps only after 5 minutes into the game. The body finds it hard to retain water and control blood sugar levels when its star players are in disarray. Those final few minutes of the game become much harder because the team has run out of gas.

Without Oestrogen pulling the strings, Dopamine starts misplacing its passes. Instead of a smooth, orderly transmission of "it's time to rest" the brain sends erratic, glitchy signals to your limbs. The defence line has been sent off (progesterone) so now there is nothing keeping the play calm and coordinated, causing the central midfield (Central nervous system) to become hyper excitable. The manager (brain) completely loses control of the squad causing the players (legs) to become jittery, twitchy and unable to calm their play. The referee (nerve endings) has gone into panic and now making bizarre decisions. He just blew for a foul that never happened, interpreting a completely normal breeze for a swarm of imaginary ants rushing the pitch (skin crawling).

The Referee is feeling highly sensitive so
interprets a clean tackle as an aggressive, studs up attack causing you to make a tactical foul (physical and mental overstimulation and overwhelm).

Even though the striker is working twice as hard, trying diets and exercise to remain at the top of their game, the kit bag keeps getting heavier and bulging at the middle. The team loses the dressing room. The confidence has gone, self-doubt rears its ugly head, and you look at the team, that was fighting for silverware last season, are suddenly struggling to string a single pass together (loss of identity).

When the star players are no longer able to work together to maintain a stable formation the midfield completely collapses leading to sudden drops in play (depression), formation changes (anxiety) and slower reactivity (emotional). The complete overwhelm the brain feels causes tension (headaches and migraines) and a volatile atmosphere in the dressing room. The tactics aren't working; the fixtures are all over the place and the players and manager are completely exhausted. An extreme bout of rage explodes from nowhere over something tiny like someone putting their kit on the wrong peg and during the post-match interview an unexpected overwhelm in emotions causes the appearance of tears.

During the transfer window, two of your main players are benched (oestrogen and testosterone) and without them, the team's energy drops and "scoring" has become much harder. You are now playing extra time, in the pouring rain leaving zero energy in the tank. To save the squad and give the players the rest they need the libido cup is the first tournament to drop out.

The erratic whether is causing the pitch to be either dried out and cracked or completely waterlogged (vaginal wall thinning and dryness). How are you supposed to play a smooth,

flowing game on a pitch like this? The lack of moisture is causing thinning of the grass and dry cracked soil resulting in friction injuries and irritation, making the team completely miserable.

The season can last from 4-10 years, maybe even longer until the final whistle. By this time the star players should be back in some kind of order, taking calm, controlled instructions from the manager. In the meantime, the players require patience, understanding and input from the team Doctor.

Full credit and thanks to author **Katie Bobbett**