

# "MY JOB? PLAYING FIFA!"

You probably think you're pretty handy on FIFA. But have you won £103,000 playing it? Because ZOO reader Adam Winster has...

Adam Winster likes getting drunk on lads' holidays, chatting up girls and playing FIFA. In short, he's one of us. But what makes the 19-year-old from Preston different is that when he plays the game, he does it for a living.

In April this year, Adam scored his biggest win to date – a huge \$167,000 (£103,000) jackpot, after notching the EA Sports Challenge Series in New York. But how did this all come about? He told us over a game of FIFA 13 – a match we went into full of self-belief that we could get a result... before going 1-0 down inside three minutes.

## TOURNAMENT PLAY

"I started playing on FIFA 08. That was the first time I'd ever played online and, after a month, I was high up on the leaderboards. So I started entering tournaments."

Competitions can be found via Google, but it was the in-game FIFA Interactive World Cup tournament where Adam got his big break. He made it through to the Final and, although he lost, it spurred him on to greater successes.

"When I started winning, I was so young and thought I was the best. I thought I was unbeatable. I'm a bit more realistic now!" he says.

Not that he needs to be. We're now 2-0 down after just seven minutes.

The FIFA ace was soon racking up competition wins in the UK and across Europe. He reckons he's won about 70 per cent of the tournaments he's played in and can pick up £3k in prize money, like at one event he won in Denmark recently. But his life-changing payout came in April, at the Challenge Series in New York.

"Virgin Gaming allows you to play FIFA for money, like you would online poker," says Adam. "I paid \$10 to enter the qualifiers for this tournament

and winning six games got me into the top 256 players, which got me to the New York Finals."

Virgin Gaming also allows you to play matches for wagers, usually set at around \$10 or \$15. Adam recommends you do it to help improve your game – something he takes seriously before a tournament.

## FAT CONTROLLER

"Before New York, I was playing about 10 matches a day against other players in the tournament. It's good practice. When I'm not training for a competition, I still play to earn a bit of money," he says, as he sticks a third past us.

The comforting thing about Adam's ability is that he believes anyone can reach his level. To improve, you just need to "play, play, play".

Like most of us, his training ground is his bedroom; his

equipment is the big difference. He uses a special Major League Gaming controller, which can be used on both PS3 and Xbox, meaning Adam

can easily switch between consoles, without changing button configurations.

Also, unlike typical wireless controllers, it doesn't have any time delay, which could mean the difference between a goal and a miss – crucial



when the stakes are so high.

It's his superior controller we're using as an excuse, as we go 4-0 down, while he tells us about his experience in NYC.

His accommodation and flights were paid for by one of his gaming sponsors.

"It's a big room full of PS3s and an FA Cup-style draw is made. It's a straight knockout tournament and the entire competition is held on one day. It's really tiring because you're concentrating so much."

## MALIA CELEBRATION

Adam conceded just five goals in six games on his way to the Final and won the decider 2-1, to take home the jackpot.

Perhaps the best thing about Adam winning the \$167k is the fact he's spent the money exactly how we would have.

"I bought a new Audi A5 – which I'm in love with – then I just got things like a new TV, laptop, clothes, a holiday to Dubai and a trip to Malia with my mates. I spent some money getting the beers in there!"

So what do his mates make of it? "They just think it's crazy how good I am. I get plenty of

banter for it. We play against each other a lot and they're always really happy when they manage to beat me!"

Which is something we don't feel, as he bags his fifth without reply, before the ref puts us out of our misery. It's official: Adam Winster is the FIFA King.



Adam's custom controller!



## HOW TO BE A FIFA PRO!

Adam's five-point guide to earning top dollar on FIFA...

- 1 Play defensively. Set yourself up with a solid 4-2-3-1 formation and keep the back shored up. You can score at any time, so keeping clean sheets is paramount.
- 2 Practice your skills. Step-overs allow you to change direction quickly and the 360-degree spin can put you through on goal with ease.
- 3 Get yourself into Division 1 on the Head-To-Head mode. You'll only improve by playing better players.
- 4 Start playing for small wagers on Virgin Gaming. If you start winning money, you know you're good.
- 5 Begin entering formal tournaments. Start winning the small ones and you'll soon be ready for the big-time jackpots.

