

PICTURE: REUTERS

**Terry good:**  
Zola is a fan of  
Chelsea's title-  
winning captain



# Zola issues warning to Blues' rivals

**T**HAT famous smile said it all. Chelsea great Gianfranco Zola – the man the supporters themselves voted their greatest ever player – is a fan at heart too, and quickly broke into that familiar broad grin when reflecting on his former club's reclamation of the Premier League title this season.

Yet the little Sardinian magician, who lit up Stamford Bridge with his guile and craft during a memorable seven-year stay from 1996-2003, warned the potential new era of dominance from Jose Mourinho's side could be no laughing matter for their main rivals.

The new champions suffered just three defeats all season as they captured the title for the first time in five years, and Zola believes much depends now on how the Manchester giants and London rivals Arsenal respond.

'I'm delighted for Chelsea's success but I am more delighted with how they won it. They've been dominant and are deserved champions,' Zola told Metro.

'They have the perfect structure to keep winning titles, the capacity to keep improving. But the main thing is how Manchester City, Manchester United and Arsenal respond. City have huge resources and United are near the same.'

'City must make changes, and will, but must buy the right players.'

'Arsenal haven't the same buying capacity but I like their philosophy of bringing in youth players and the way they play. But these clubs need to keep

by **RICHARD HOOKHAM**

up.' Zola expects Mourinho to buy too but added: 'They are already a formidable side. Maybe a few new players – not many, just in key areas – someone with potential to eventually replace John Terry, maybe cover for Willian or Oscar?'

'Jose has a big advantage. He has won the Italian, Spanish and Portuguese leagues and knows where to get top players. That's why they are so well equipped to stay strong.'

Terry, 34, has just signed a year's contract extension, having won his fourth title and played every minute of the Premier League campaign. Former Watford,

**'They have the perfect structure to keep on winning titles'**

West Ham and Italy Under-21s boss Zola, who departed Cagliari earlier this year, saluted the skipper's influence.

He said: 'John was exceptional, even as a youngster, and it's not a surprise to see what he has achieved, he's such a leader. His attitude – the way he conducted himself – was, like Frank Lampard, exceptional from day one.'

*Zola and Barclays gave Chelsea fan Rachel Key the chance to present Blues with the Barclays Premier League trophy. To watch her story, search Barclays Football on Facebook.*

## ZOLA ON...ITALIAN FOOTBALL

'If Juventus could win the Champions League it would give new energy to the game in Italy and, trust me, we need that. Hopefully it will be the start of the comeback but we need the younger players coming through and not to have just one team dominate, like in Spain also. The good thing about the Premier League is that any team can win on the day and you have to protect that.'

# ODDBALLS

STRANGE STORIES FROM THE WORLD OF SPORT

## Video game, set and match, Andy?

ANDY MURRAY could play Nick Kyrgios on and off court at the French Open after being challenged to a game of Fifa by the Australian.

American Jack Sock called out Gael Monfils on Twitter, insisting he and Kyrgios would beat the Frenchman and 'whoever you want'. Monfils agreed and called in Murray, who readily accepted the offer.

## Currying favour



STEPH CURRY'S two-year-old daughter Riley (left) stole the show at the press conference after the Golden State Warriors reached the NBA Finals, singing a Drake song among other cute antics.



LOOKED AT THE  
**HOROSCOPES**

THIS MORNING?

— RECLAIM YOUR MANLINESS —

LIMITED EDITION

• SAUSAGE & BACON SANDWICH •



Served before 10.30am. From 29th April until 9th June 2015. Subject to availability. © McDonald's 2015

## ZOLA ON...BLUES CAREER

'Coming to England was massive for me. It helped my game because I became a better player. I came from a competitive Italian league and that helped me adapt to the pace here, but I never ever thought I'd learned everything and that gave me an edge.'

