

Should the Browns' Owner Buy the Columbus Crew?

By Leah Nicol

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The Columbus Crew SC could have been and still might become, Austin FC. The owner of the Crew, Anthony Precourt, wants to move the MLS team to Austin, Texas. The Crew could stay in Ohio if the Cleveland Browns' owners, Jimmy and Dee Haslam, along with a few other people, buy the soccer franchise. The team could have been moved as soon as the 2019 season but the potential Browns' ownership has pushed that back. So with that development the "Save the Crew" movement still has hope.

Precourt wants a new stadium for the team. Columbus didn't want to pay for or build the stadium, but Austin was willing to put up a stadium. In early December, Columbus created plans for a new stadium in the Arena District in downtown Columbus. The new proposed stadium would seat 20,000 and would cost around \$230 million. The Austin Stadium would seat the same number of people and even include some housing units but would be on less land.

My opinion is that the Browns should buy the Crew. I never have been a big soccer fan but I think it is cool that Ohio has one of the 23 Major League Soccer teams. If the team left I wouldn't be too mad but I could see how big Crew fans could be. Some fans have been willing to go to every game to help keep this team in Columbus, and I think that they would continue to go to the games if they stayed in town.

The opposing opinion could say that the Crew should just move to Austin. They might be a local to Columbus or Austin and have arguments like Columbus is just going to spend more money or Austin needs a team more than Columbus. Austin is also the capital of the state, just

like Columbus, Ohio so that wouldn't change for the team. Austin doesn't have any Major league teams currently so some might say they need one.

The owners of both teams are rich already and have a net worth way into the millions or even billions. So would buying the Crew just make the Haslams richer? And if it would, do they really need to become any richer? I think the Crew might be better off moving to a slightly big city that is ready for them and is willing to support them. Yes, Texas has lots of sports teams already but so does Ohio. They have the Texans and the Cowboys and we have the Browns and the Bengals just to name a few.

So Should the Browns' owners buy the Crew? I think there are different opinions but most say yes. It would help the city of Columbus and the state of Ohio. It could bring in more money for the city and the owners. The player wouldn't benefit as much as the owners but they would get to play in a new place with new enthusiastic fans. The team and fans will just have to wait and watch to find out if the team will move or stay.