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‘Race’, Racism and Football

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Introduction

As a competitive sport, football has a necessary history of endearing rivalries, diversity and identities that draw millions to its various grass-roots and international events year on year. As a social phenomenon and significant cultural product it is replete with markers of both the good and bad of global humanity. As Allport reflected upon social relations in his classic text the Nature of Prejudice (1954: xiii), rivalries and hatreds between groups are nothing new. Yet in football what we witness are these rivalries and hatreds being manifest in such variegated fashions that it is testimony to the sport that many maintain their initial childish enthusiasm in relation to its innocent rekindling of notions of a ‘level playing field’ and meritocracy.

It is enlightening how football followers get over racist events such as in the 1970s when future England international Viv Anderson was pelted with bananas, apples and pears on his debut. After complaining to his manager while warming up he recounts that his manager Brian Clough said ‘Well get your ******* arse back out there then and fetch me two pears and a banana!’ (Wheeler, 2010). Neither do many remark upon the mindset of the English Football Association when the England team gave the Nazi salute before playing Germany just before the start of the Second World War. Goldblatt (2006: xi) argues that blindness to the ills of football emerge from the love of playing, watching and following the game. For others he suggests the blindness comes from the love of us and … hatred of them. At closer inspection, association football has other legacies where the symmetry of social relations is exaggeratedly asymmetrical along a number of intersecting lines of oppression. Gender, class, religion, ‘race’, ethnicity, nationality among others become the grounds for football to reveal further divisions in society that are not unique to football but are still some of their responsibilities. Literally and metaphorically, football is clearly a contested arena where prejudices and bigotry are regular features. As in other social arenas football brings these tensions and relations to our attention bringing with it a plethora of debates, both critical and uncritical, which have the potential to challenge broader-than-sport problems, or trivialise and perpetuate them.

This chapter is made up of three sections. The first part begins by clarifying some of the conceptual terrain necessary to unpack issues related to ‘race’ and racism in football. The
topic itself has an emerging epistemology that is worthy of further consideration (Burdsey, 2011; Carrington and McDonald, 2001; FRA, 2010; Hylton, 2009; Long, 2000; Long and Spracklen, 2011; Ratna, 2007a). The second part of the chapter introduces the concept of microaggressions as a way to understand racism in a more nuanced fashion. The section explores where football has concentrated much of its efforts and introduces other ways in which racial processes thrive in football (Constantine and Sue, 2007; Sue et al., 2007; Sue, 2010). The third part explores the resulting irony of two football taskforces approximately 15 years apart that reflect the state of thinking and pace of change in relation to ‘race’, racism and football in the UK. ‘Race’ finds its way onto the agenda in football because it remains on the agenda outside of it; however, the amount of attention and resources committed to making the game more inclusive and less susceptible to bigotry and prejudice is open to question.

Giulianotti and Robertson (2009: 5–27) locate football’s significance as a key driver in the world globalisation project. They outline how football contributes to the five phases of globalisation (germinal, incipient, take-off, struggle for hegemony and uncertainty) coincided with identifiable historical eras in football’s development. In particular, football ‘took off’ as: (1) home competitions were developed; (2) international football relations along state lines were reinforced along with the influence and self-determination of less powerful nations; (3) the introduction of international club tours; (4) due to football’s popularity it became viewed (politically) for propaganda and as an opportunity to build international standing, especially in times of international tension; (5) football’s ability to reflect diverse international culture and energy through successful competition.

FIFA has reserves of USD1.280m. (FIFA, 2011), and in Europe, the location of the top 20 earning professional football clubs in the world, their earnings top over €4bn (Deloitte, 2011). The cross-border exchanges across nations, the liberalisation of international trade, the shared cultural experience and the consequent deterritorialisation of social relations lead commentators like Houlihan (2008) and Giulianotti and Robertson (2009) to posit that football’s position as the most popular and media-centric global sport has steadily developed into where it stands today, but it must be consistently maintained. The presence of racial ideologies and racism in football, however, can do nothing but harm to its market leading ‘product’.

Though in football, discussions of ‘race’ are commonplace, ‘race’ theorists have been keen to stress its mythical and socially constructed nature. At the same time as we engage in discourses about ‘race’ many scholars will stress the fallacy of ‘race’ while articulating the paradox of its non-existence. ‘Race’ is not used without caution here, hence the use of scare quotes to emphasise its contested nature. ‘Race’ is used in its overarching sense to acknowledge its use in the everyday with a view to disrupting its uncritical application. ‘Race’ is also used here in a pragmatic way to incorporate notions of ethnicity especially as one is regularly used as shorthand for the other. Ethnicity is racialised in its application as nationality, geography, colour and religion are ‘mashed up’ in a limited and limiting menu of categories for our consumption. However, Gunaratnam (2003) purposely speaks of ‘race’ as ethnicity to evoke what she calls the two registers of racism biology and culture. Thus alerting football authorities to the dangers of the unfixed, permeable boundaries of socially constructed terms. Elsewhere I argue that:

The problematic of ‘race’ thinking for many in sport is its endemic omnipresent discourse. The popularity of ‘race’ thinking is historically located in multifarious assumptions, and deeds that reinforce the legitimacy of ‘race’ and therefore physical differences in sport. Assumptions that have endured are those that argue humans could be divided into a few biologically and phenotypically detached ‘races’; the similarities within these groups could be reduced to ability, behaviour and morality; these
differences would be naturally passed from one generation to the next; and racial hierarchies exist with white people at the top and darker ‘races’ at the opposite end.

(Hylton, 2009: 3)

‘Race’ talk more broadly is symptomatic of more pernicious social ills aptly considered by Guinier and Torres (2003) who argue that the ‘miner’s canary’ metaphor is useful in understanding why the term ‘race’ is important to be enlisted as part of a longer agenda of resisting racialised problematics, leading to social change. A miner’s canary was originally used to detect the life-threatening toxic gases in mines. The presence of the canary was a symptom of the more pernicious poisonous problem, just as the presence of ‘race’ talk in football is symptomatic of race slippages (Williams, 1997), ‘race’ logic (St Louis, 2004), racial processes and formations that underpin the ideologies of ‘race’ and therefore racial differences (Omi and Winant, 1994; Williams, 1997).

Guinier and Torres (2003) use the term ‘political race’ to emphasise that the racialised problems that have been so high profile in football (and of course for some is an everyday phenomenon) are in fact the early warning signs of more toxic elements in wider society. Though these may be broader social issues, those with responsibilities in, and to, football must be conscious of their part in reinforcing or resisting them. Individual reactive measures alone, such as establishing a regime of fines and bans, are a step forward though by themselves are equivalent to putting a gas mask on the canary while the larger more systemic processes remain unchecked (BBC, 2013; Conway, 2013; UEFA, 2013). Rather than individual incremental actions Guinier and Torres (2003: 12) urge football to change the air in the mines.

Popular naive views of football would suggest that football is generally devoid of the racial tensions seen elsewhere. Notions of racism being banished to the foothills of the sport’s history are often revealed when racism is evidenced in a public way. In many ways, Burdsey’s (2011) assessment of the individualisation of racism by key stakeholders to absolve themselves of the need to be vigilant and systematic in the policing of it and its outcomes offers insight into the constant naive shock and horror when incidents arise and they realise that racism isn’t actually dead; reminiscent of Waheeda Ahmad’s ‘hysterical woman’ character in the film Awakenings. Burdsey (2011: 4) argues that:

Whilst few would posit its total absence from the game, racism is now viewed by many people as confined largely to history and/or remaining the preserve of a small number of residual bigots tucked away on terraces, rather than permeating … clubs, structures and organisations.

Lusted’s (2009) analysis of race equality in football governance goes on to support this premise that an individual prejudice thesis is inadequate as a frame from which to understand the complexities of racial exclusion in the administration and management roles of football. The tendency to individualise instances of racism or racialised outcomes rather than to see them as indicative of broader cultural or institutional processes is typical of such ideologies. ‘Race’ has been contentious in football for some time and significantly affects how we all experience it as players, spectators, officials, coaches and managers. It is also clear that football is one of the most rarefied spaces where racism and racialised processes are common features of interactions (Back et al., 1998, 2001; Bains, 2005; Hylton, 2009). Yet, football makes a persuasive case that it is the most popular sport in the world. The world governing body for football (FIFA) states that 265 million male and female players, in addition to five million referees and officials – or 4 per cent of the world’s population – are actively involved in the game of football (FIFA.COM, 2011).
It is clear that football is mottled with forms of racism that are rooted in history, are particular, residual and emergent, and yet there are global patterns of racism in football that are easily recognisable from any cultural background. The major caveat on reading ‘race’ and racism in football is that the obvious forms are but the tip of the iceberg, and like in other arenas, racism is subtle, dynamic and being constantly reinvented over time.

‘Race’ scholars often prefer to use the term racism(s) to emphasise the multifaceted nature of the processes that subjugate, oppress and disempower. Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1993: 2) explain that racism needs to be recognised as:

Modes of exclusion, inferiorization, subordination and exploitation that present specific and different characters in different social and historical contexts.

The plurality of racism is paramount to use as a starting point for any analysis of ‘race’ and racism in football. As our identities remain fluid, broader macro-inequalities and social injustices impact elements of these identities thus rendering ‘versions’ of racisms. Racisms have been extensively mapped elsewhere (Eze, 2008) and continue to be demystified due to the relative nature of these ambiguities for those least likely to experience them. The complex social dynamics that operate across the personal, cultural and structural terrains that work alongside other intersecting forms of social oppression ostensibly means that stakeholders in sport, and football in particular, tend towards ‘tackling’ the more obvious manifestations of racism. Even when using more accessible discourses to categorise racial discrimination as direct or indirect, overt or covert, they present leaders in football with multiple fronts beyond the more manifest hooliganism and individual acts on which to focus when tackling racism. Without sustained leadership, resources or intelligence to challenge these issues the racial processes and formations that lead to a range of racialised inequalities in football remain common and embedded in what many see as football’s benign custom and practice.

Football’s focus and microaggressions

Constantine and Sue (2007) argue that racism is embedded in society, that white privilege is perpetuated by those who benefit the most from it, that black people are most likely to suffer racism, that racism is an everyday experience, and that racisms change over time into less detectable forms. Discussions about football, ‘race’ and racism have often been preoccupied by more explicit manifestations of bigotry and racial inequalities, yet key stakeholders could be accused of missing more subtle everyday psychologically harmful expressions of racism. Racial microaggressions can be described as everyday and fleeting verbal, behavioural or environmental ignominiies that can be intentional or otherwise. The subtleties of racial microaggressions is useful to assist policymakers to form ideas about how much further football governing bodies need to go to understand how ‘race’, racialisation and racism impact our experiences of the game. Microaggressions have been described by Sue et al. (2007: 73) as:

Subtle, stunning, often automatic exchanges which are put-downs.

Microaggressions are divided into three types: (1) microassaults; (2) microinsults; and (3) microinvalidations. The Eliminating Racism in Football Taskforce in 1998 and more latterly in 2012 both emerged as reactions to concerns about explicit microassaults and the damage that such activities were doing to the game. The racially initiated hooliganism from the 1970s in the UK and the regular instances witnessed today across Europe are examples of this. The recent
John Terry–Anton Ferdinand trial and the Luis Suárez–Patrice Evra cases in the UK are examples at the highest levels where overt racist behaviour have been the subject of much hand-wringing and angst for all concerned. However, it could also be argued that football has been preoccupied with reacting to microassaults, which are the:

Conscious biased beliefs or attitudes that are held by individuals and intentionally expressed or acted out overtly or covertly toward a marginalised person or socially devalued group.

(Sue, 2010: 8)

Racial processes are not always so straightforward to pinpoint and not always so publicly performed. Football’s problems with ‘race’ and racism are often more subtle and ambiguous therefore making those least likely to be affected by it less likely to challenge it. The Microinsults and microinvalidations in football that we know less about have been described as unintentional and customary. Microinsults can be interpersonal or environmental acts that communicate racial slights or forms of insulting behaviour. For example, microinsults can be spotted where ascriptions of intelligence (high/low) are associated to a particular group. This has sometimes been articulated by antiracism organisations like Kick It Out, and Football Against Racism in Europe, as an explanation for phenomena occurring such as the lack of black and minority ethnic managers at the highest levels. This disparity in representation can be explained by a number of factors according to the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA, 2010). They identify rules, norms, routines, patterns of attitudes, behaviour and related social structures that symbolise obstacles in rights and opportunities for minority ethnic groups against those afforded to majority populations (FRA, 2010: 47). More specifically Bradbury et al.’s (2011) study into race and gender suggests that the structural barriers can be classed as socio-economic and cultural, overt racisms and/or sexisms, physical and cultural stereotypes, and organisational provision and institutional discrimination. This under-representation has been described as a ‘glass ceiling’, a term useful to describe the relative homogeneity across most levels of football from regional committees to professional management. Kick It Out reported that the Black and Asian Coaching Association state that this is reflected in a low number of coaches being encouraged through the system to get their UEFA coaching badges.

As of last year, only 4.8% of the 1,300 coaches holding a UEFA B license or higher were from a black and minority ethnic (BME) background, despite 20% of professional footballers coming from BME communities.

(Kick It Out, 2013)

Similarly, ascribing higher intelligence to particular groups is likely to lead to the perpetuation of poor diversity that we see within football, which has been challenged by many for being very white from top to bottom (Bains, 2005; Burdsey, 2006; King, 2004a, 2004b; Long and Hylton, 2002). Institutionalised racism is said to pervade football as black and minority ethnic people are conspicuous as players though not as administrators, managers and officials (Bradbury et al., 2011; Long et al., 2000). Back et al. (2001) consider the presences and absences in football as cases to explore how whiteness is normalised. With reference to Macpherson’s (1999) definition of institutionalised racism, that was an outcome of the Stephen Lawrence inquiry, they use the term ‘unwitting and unconscious’ to describe how racial processes are maintained. Bradbury et al. (2011: 14) go on to report that,
Research indicates the marked absence of minorities in leadership positions in football. Less than 1% of senior administrators and executive committee members at national and regional federations are from minorities. Similarly, less than 1% of all ‘white collar’ staff at professional clubs are from minorities, even at clubs situated in culturally diverse locales.

These issues are further compounded where other intersecting factors of gender and sexuality are concerned (Ratna, 2007a, 2007b; Scraton, 2001). Related to these concerns of racism in football are the perennial issues of nationalism and xenophobia, which are regularly conspicuous at national/international championships (Bairner, 1999; Carrington, 1998; Crabbe, 2004; Dimeo and Finn, 2001), and whiteness (King, 2004a, 2004b; Long and Hylton, 2002; Watson and Scraton, 2001). Common microinsults occur through the stereotyped [lack of] physicality of British Asians which has also often led to them being viewed as second rate or as Sue et al. (2007) state, second-class citizens. There are a plethora of texts that go to great lengths to examine and demystify the British Asian experience of football at all levels (Bains, 2005; Bains and Johal, 1998; Bains and Patel, 1996; Burdsey, 2004, 2004a, 2011). Other assumptions underpinning cultural rationales for their lack of participation, inclusion, abilities, are often superficial, subtle, but commonly held and shared, their position within football also meaning that few opportunities are offered to challenge these views. Yet when county Football Associations, and above, display pictures of previous committee chair-people and committees, Sue (2010) would be further convinced of the messages sent out to those not/under-represented in those pictures. These are examples of microinsults where black people are not likely to feel comfortable in that company because they are likely to feel that they are not valued as much as the figures commonly seen in such photographs. Sue’s (2010) view that these microinsults can hide racial prejudice in everyday speech and behaviours while reinforcing the ignorance of reductionist ideals of ‘others’ is pertinent to football. Football is a contested arena where these microaggressions can be witnessed and yet if they can be identified one could argue that they should also be challenged.

Microinvalidations have similarities with microinsults, as unintentional behaviour tends to typify those perpetrators. Sue (2010: 10) posits that microinvalidations could be viewed as the:

Most insidious, damaging and harmful form, because microinvalidations directly attack or deny the experiential realities of socially devalued groups. They accomplish this goal through interpersonal and environmental cues that exclude, negate, or nullify the psychological thoughts, feelings and experiences of the target group.

Attempts at insisting that football is colour-blind and that it is a fair meritocracy, is a major contributor to the microinvalidations that black people will experience in the game. Elsewhere I argue that though colour-blindness is a laudable goal, it is similar to ideas of talking about ‘race’ being obsolete due to Barack Obama’s elevation to the highest position on the planet, post ‘race’. Lusted (2009: 733) calls this ‘rejecting the validity of “race”’ as a technique to legitimate current power relations. He revealed how the denial of the significance of ‘race’ by football authorities could be traced to perceptions that a ‘race card’ was being played to seek an unfair advantage; a denial of ‘race’ through a colour-blind rhetoric. These ideas do not help football when it still has these racialised inequalities and hierarchies in place. Adhering to a philosophy of colour-blindness is a vote for the status quo and a denial and invalidation of the racialised experiences of those who have suffered directly or indirectly in the game. It is a privilege of whiteness to deny the inequalities in football. It is a privilege of power to deny the experiences of those most
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affected by the existence of ‘race’, racialisation and racism in football. It is also a microinvalidation, one of three forms of microaggressions, that football must counter if the presence of ‘race’, the miner’s canary, is to be seen as symptomatic of deeper concerns within the game. Not seeing colour does not mean that individuals or governing bodies are unbiased. By not acting, or not wanting the game to appear racist by ignoring these major social issues, football is storing problems up for a later date; and continually risks being surprised by the high-profile incidents that we have become used to seeing in the media.

We turn to examining how ‘race’ and racism has been considered in football over a 15-year period between two significant events. Two task forces charged with eliminating racism in football are considered as examples of how the incremental shifts in football’s grasp of these issues have struggled to change the fundamental landscape of ‘race’ and racism in football. Microassaults, microinsults and microinvalidations signal such consistent and troubling problems for football that it has struggled to commit resources and effort to impact. In effect, after 15 years, claims of change for good can be tentatively made in some areas, though the fundamental problems remain unfettered.

Learning from the past: déjà vu and football task forces

In 1998 the Eliminating Racism Football Task Force emphasised the power of football to inculcate an array of outcomes pertaining to ‘race’ very clearly in their report to the Minister for Sport. They made three major propositions for its key stakeholders: (1) Tackling racism in football is a moral issue. It will also contribute to drawing the strongest players from all backgrounds and not just from a few; (2) The financial health and stability of the game is at stake if these issues are not considered seriously; and (3) Racism in football arenas spoils the atmosphere and discourages parents and carers from bringing their children to future games. They argued that even after a long history, racism and its impacts only began to be taken seriously by football and its authorities in the 1990s (Football Task Force, 1998). The ambiguous agenda of football was staked out by them as football’s potential for good, couched in its ability to bridge religious, cultural, national and continental divides, was juxtaposed with its simultaneous capacity to enhance and strengthen these divisions. The 1998 Task Force went on to summarise the imperative to refocus football stakeholders on ‘race’ and racism in the 1990s when they stated that:

In the 1970s and 1980s, racism was rife at certain English football grounds. Racist chanting and abuse was common; bananas were thrown from stands and terraces at black players; and football clubs were targeted by far right groups for the dissemination of racist literature. The national team in particular became associated with a far right following. Home games at Wembley were marred by abuse of black English players. (Football Task Force, 1998: 3.11)

Others, such as hooligans and individual agency were common reasons used at this time to explain racist behaviour. However, such explanations ignored those within football who are the administrators, officials, players, the media, who themselves exercise agency, institutional or otherwise, in demonstrating and reinforcing forms of racialised behaviours. These forms of racism perpetuate ideologies and practices recursively in ways that reinforce the invisible everyday racism that many scholars are critical of (Essed, 1991). It would be churlish to argue that individual agency, especially those demonstrated by thugs, players and spectators acting in the ‘spur of the moment’, is not to blame for some of the problems in the game. However, where hooliganism has been a factor it has tended to be a significant cloak with which to blur
many of these nuanced issues and denies the subtleties of racial processes and microaggressions in football.

The 1998 Task Force made a number of significant recommendations that included: (1) harsher penalties for racial abuse; (2) require all stakeholders to sign an antiracist charter; (3) establish a racism monitoring unit at district level and within local authorities; (4) make efforts to encourage more minority ethnic players and in particular Asian players; (5) improve steward training and awareness of racism; (6) the FA should set targets to increase black and Asian qualified coaches and referees and take positive action to meet those targets; (7) the PFA and League Managers’ Association to make a recommendation to football clubs to insert an antiracism pledge in players’ and managers contracts with breaches incurring severe sanctions (fines or dismissal). Most of these issues and further recommendations also emerged from the largest study of amateur and semi-professional football for Kick It Out (Long et al., 2000).

In true cinematic style, if we cut to 2013, 15 years into the future, another football task force was this time called by Prime Minister David Cameron in response to Liverpool FC’s Luis Suárez’s racial slurs toward Manchester United’s Patrice Evra, QPR’s Anton Ferdinand’s racial assault from Chelsea and England captain, John Terry, and various other club and national incidents. This period also included the FIFA chief executive, Sepp Blatter’s, uninformed suggestion that ‘there is no racism in football’ and that if there are incidents in a game the trauma of being victimised can be dissipated by just ‘a handshake’ (BBC Sport, 2011). Following on from Blatter’s poorly judged commentary on these issues and some might say his apology that swiftly followed, the Bleacher Report (2011) compiled a list of past and present high-profile incidents in football. In 2013 soon after Kevin Prince Boateng became the first high-profile player to walk off the pitch for being racially abused by spectators as he played for AC Milan against Pro Patria, where the game was abandoned, Sepp Blatter established his own FIFA task force to tackle these issues at the highest levels. Organisations such as Kick It Out, and Show Racism the Red Card that had only a few months previously given evidence at the Culture Media and Sport Committee called by David Cameron criticised football authorities that leadership had been lacking at this level (see Table 23.1).

As the 1998 Eliminating Racism in Football Task Force announced, there are ethical, moral and commercial reasons for football to ensure that racism does not take a foothold. Van Sterkenburg et al., correctly observe that as racism often comes in waves it is difficult to keep it on football’s agenda, but ‘race’ and racism remain thorny issues in world football (2005: 135). It is emphasised here by a 15-year period where the same complaints at the beginning are being heard just as vociferously at the end; not enough policy and leadership; continued racism, bigotry and prejudice; lack of diversity in administration and management; and as a result a lack of role models. In some cases, the same solutions are being proposed, which suggests disingenuousness on the part of the football authorities charged with taking this forward. Further, those that have been affected by racial processes, and the three forms of microaggressions will perceive the football authorities in a different and perhaps not so forgiving light, as its structure and leadership systematically falters in establishing a coherent approach to tackling pernicious processes and outcomes. For those most affected they will consider the long-term microinvalidations of: (1) slow policy development; (2) continuing issues of poor representation for black players, coaches and managers; (3) snowy peaks at the highest levels of the game; (4) racisms appearing at all levels of the game, even in boardrooms; and (5) their experiences of racism being devalued in public arenas. As football authorities proceed without full agreement on how to tackle these issues, beyond the punitive, the likelihood of microinsults and microinvalidations to remain unchecked is a strong one.
Table 23.1 Evidence submitted to the Racism in Football Task Force 2012

<table>
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<th>Written evidence submitted by</th>
<th>Many professional football clubs still demonstrate a lack of corporate understanding about racial prejudice, hate-related abuse, bigotry, discrimination and exclusion and about their roles and responsibilities to tackle and eliminate these matters. A summary of four main impact points are: 1. Not enough vocal leadership on the issues and a lack of clear policies and practices to influence positive attitudes and behaviours, amongst some professional football clubs. 2. Periodic ongoing racist/discriminatory behaviour by fans, players, officials at games, driven by deep-seated ignorance, bigotry and prejudice. 3. Lack of diversity within the administration and management at some levels of the game. 4. Lack of role models for those excluded from the game, whether they are players, managers, coaches or referees. Recommendations • To urge faster and more thorough progress for all professional clubs towards the Equality Standard. • To urge a greater level of engagement from the Football League, supporting clubs to achieve the Equality Standard. • To increase research into coaching and the recruitment of individuals from diverse backgrounds into the game. • To examine the resources available for supporting education projects which raise awareness of these issues. • To encourage greater engagement from fans’ organisations on how they might work in partnership with the football authorities in addressing discrimination. • To support actions taken against individuals who use social media in an unacceptable discriminatory manner. (House of Commons, 2012a: Ev 34)</th>
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Written evidence submitted by Show Racism the Red Card

Executive Summary

1.1 Racism is still a very real issue both within football and wider society. In order to be successful, strategies to combat racism within sport need to encompass a holistic approach to the issue. This needs to include:

- Race-Equality audits of the policies and practices within sporting structures, with action plans developed to overcome areas of imbalance and inequality.
- Training for all employees from members of the board to players to enable them to be in a position to better tackle racism and promote equality.
- Clear, consistent, transparent procedures for dealing with players and fans who commit racially motivated offences.
- Clear, unambiguous messages from sporting clubs as to the expected behaviour of employees and spectators.
- Clear, unambiguous messages from government about the importance of promoting race-equality and tackling racism.
- Sporting clubs must clearly show that they reject the ideologies of far-right street movements, such as the EDL (English Defence League) which try to use sport as a vehicle around which to organise and recruit.
- Wider programmes of anti-racism education in society, to address underlying prejudice rather than just preventing the expression of this prejudice within the sporting arena.

1.2 If we start excusing racism, we risk losing the valuable ground that has been gained, there are always people waiting to exploit issues to spread division and hate. Government, footballing institutions, communities and individuals need to send out a consistent message that racism is never acceptable.

(House of Commons, 2012b: Ev w1)
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Note

1 Reminiscent of Football League and media representative, Jimmy Hill’s remarks to supporters at the Football Association HQ in 1995.

References


Wheeler, C. (2010, 28 April) ‘Viv Anderson exclusive: Racists were raining down fruit. Brian Clough just said “get me two pears and a banana”’. Mail Online.