



unity '09

The newsletter of Football Unites, Racism Divides

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Welcome to the third edition of **unity** – the newsletter of Football Unites, Racism Divides.

Football Unites, Racism Divides (FURD) is a community project and charity based in Sheffield which works locally, nationally and internationally to combat racism and increase understanding between different communities.

It's been a year full of exciting developments for FURD, with the most heartening news being that the City Council has secured funding to build a new world-class young people's centre including a new home for FURD. Read more about it further in this newsletter.

The past year has seen FURD's **Vinvolved programme of youth volunteering** fully underway: we have exceeded our targets both in relation to the percentage of black and ethnic minorities involved in volunteering, and also the increasing numbers of young women becoming involved with FURD.



FURD continues to offer tailor-made anti-racist education work to schools, colleges, youth groups, prisons and workplaces, and an information service and resource centre full of inspiring anti-racist posters, books, DVDs, exhibitions and more.

On the football field **Sharrow United** won the Meadowhall Sheffield and District Sunday League Cup in front of a crowd of over a thousand at Bramall Lane, the majority of which were local young people cheering on Sharrow. It was especially fitting that the goal which clinched the 2-0 win over Wadsley Bridge was scored by Tariq Akhtar, a regular in the team since its first season in 2000-1.

FURD's coaching team were buoyed by the emergence of **Kyle Walker** who debuted for Sheffield United at Leyton Orient, before going on to impress further in an FA Cup tie at Hull City, and later in an imposing league debut against Swansea City. Kyle, the first player to be recommended to Sheffield United by FURD coaches, was joined in the Hull game by substitute and fellow FURD referral, **Aymen Tahar**. Both Kyle and Aymen have won international youth honours, for England and Algeria respectively.

Finally FURD Positive Futures, in partnership with other local organisations has been successful in bidding for a Youth Music Power Play project, known as **'Sound Kickers'**, which will see FURD work with both Sheffield United and Wednesday on developing musical initiatives with young people in the Sharrow and Parson Cross areas of Sheffield. We're very excited about this project which starts in summer 2009.

Aymen Tahar (left) with Kyle Naughton



FURD's new head coach Keith Ward

We have recently appointed Keith Ward to the post of Head Coach following the semi-retirement of Luis Silva. Luis is now working part-time with FURD as the Talent Identification Officer and manager of FURD's Positive Futures Under-18 team.

Keith combines his FURD post with working as Co-ordinator for the Kickz Project which also provides sporting opportunities for local young people. Keith has been involved with FURD since he was 15, becoming one of our first Millennium Volunteers, and his story illustrates how FURD can help people to develop.

How did you first get involved with FURD?

I started with Luis at his coaching sessions at Lowfield in 2000. My parents contacted Paul Archer, who was coaching both for FURD and Sheffield United, who suggested that I came into FURD and sign up as a volunteer, and work on things like Streetkick events.

What involvement have you had with FURD since then?

Through FURD I got a trial with Sheffield United, where I stayed for about 8 months. FURD helped me get my level 2 coaching badge and also to sign for Worksop Town Football Club. I went on a residential for Millennium Volunteers in North Yorkshire. I also went to Italy twice to take part in the Anti-Racist World Cup Tournament, and helped the Somali Blades get to the final one year.

I went on to get my Level 3 coaching badge. I've helped out at most of FURD's annual Community Days. I also play for Sharrow United and played in the final of the Meadowhall League Cup last year, which Sharrow won. I've been doing some paid coaching work for FURD since about 2003.

How has volunteering and working for FURD helped you?

It's helped to build my confidence to work with other organisations and young people in the local area, and it's given me lots of opportunities to gain qualifications. All this stood me in good stead when I applied for the jobs with Kickz and as the FURD Coaching Coordinator.

What is your proudest achievement so far?

Being a Dad and helping local young people.

What do you hope to achieve as FURD's head coach?

To pass the kinds of opportunities that FURD gave me onto other local young people.

What advice would you give to someone who hopes to become a professional footballer?

Stay out of trouble and train hard.

What advice would you give to someone who has not made it as a professional footballer?

Keep training, do not give up. You might be able to play as a semi-professional and still have the opportunity to make it as a professional. Stay involved; become a coach for a local team.

When and where are your coaching sessions and how can someone get involved?

Sessions are held in several areas around Sheffield including Sharrow, Broomhall and Shirecliffe. For details, you can contact Keith at FURD or at kickz@sufc.co.uk.



EURO 2008

(Streetkick tour of Austria and Switzerland)

Euro 2008 saw FURD take their Streetkick mobile football pitch to a major tournament for the third time running. Eleven staff and volunteers split into two teams were involved in the tour. Volunteers were chosen in recognition of the support and hard work they have given to the FURD cause in recent times.



The work linked in with FURD's involvement in the 'Football Against Racism in Europe' (FARE) network, the aims being to spread the anti-racist message and encourage fans from competing nations to mix and play together in positive ways.

The Streetkick tour kicked off in the Swiss city of Geneva, with a purpose-built Streetkick pitch on the Place du Rhone, slap-bang next to Lake Geneva. After a week engaging with Swiss, Portuguese and Czech fans the tour moved to the ski resort of Innsbruck in the Austrian Alps.

The second leg utilised FURD's own inflatable football pitch, putting on events that engaged with German, Turkish, Swedish, Spanish, Russian and Austrian fans.

The final leg of the tour took place in the Austrian capital Vienna during the tournament quarter finals.

Somali-born volunteer Ahmed Mohamed said

'This is an experience I will never forget. It's been great. I've been involved with FURD for a number of years now, participating in football events and setting up a team - I love football. I can remember watching the European Championships on the TV when I was a kid; I never believed I'd be going. This has been a dream come true.'



New young people's centre coming to Sheffield

FURD, together with The Hub, Sheffield City Council, Lowfield Junior School and local young people have received a major boost with the news that a bid to build a new young people's centre has been successful.



The award of over £2million is from the government's Myplace programme which aims to provide modern facilities where young people can take part in positive activities in a safe and supportive setting. We hope the award will attract financial support from the Football Foundation for a floodlit all-weather enclosed playing area containing two five-a-side pitches.

The building will be adjacent to Lowfield School, off Queens Road, close to our current base at The Stables.

The facility - currently named the People's Place - will provide a much-needed new home for FURD and The Hub African-Caribbean Centre. The building will include a dance studio, gym, performing arts space, library, space for small conferences and training events, IT suite, changing rooms and offices. We hope the facility will be open by the end of 2011.

Consultations regarding facilities and the programme of activities were carried out with 70 local young people aged 8-25, using design plans of the proposed centre.

Young people are central to the decision-making process and a Myplace young people's steering group is being set up.

If you'd like to know how to join the Myplace young people's group, contact Mehrun Ahmed at FURD or join FURD's facebook group.





where it's based. The mayor of Baraka has offered FIC space to build an office and football pitch to help develop its work. FIC was set up thanks to funding from FIFA but further funding is now needed to continue the good work of the project. Desbon stresses that a little money goes a long way out there so if you can help, please contact us.

In 2008 Sophina Hanif, a volunteer with FURD, spent five weeks there helping to plan the Unity festival. She described her trip as

"an amazing experience... My time at D R Congo has reinforced the way I live my life and what I stand for. I believe everyone should experience what I've experienced. The project I am supporting is very special".

Read Sophina's full account of her trip on the FURD website.

FURD's message spreads to Africa

FURD coach Desbon Bushiri has taken the FURD philosophy of peace and unity through football to the war-torn Democratic Republic of the Congo in Africa. He has set up a project there called 'Football Inter-Communautaire' (FIC, or 'Football Between Communities' in English).

The project is based in the Sud Kivu region, which has huge numbers of children orphaned by war, conflict and disease, and displaced both from inside and outside the country.

In September 2008 it held a big Unity festival which brought together people of all communities and ethnicities in a spirit of peace. FIC has since been invited by the Congolese government to take part in its programme to bring peace and development to the east of the country. It's also in discussions about joining the African Network of Sport for Peace.

FIC is now supporting orphaned children in three primary schools in the town of Baraka

Volunteer opportunity in Africa

Desbon is helping to plan a peace marathon to be held in Bukavo in August 2009. There may be an opportunity for a volunteer to go with him for a week or two for what could be a life-changing experience - although they'll have to find their own airfare!

If you're interested, visit www.furd.org to learn more about FIC, or phone Desbon at FURD for further details.



All Nations Festival: Integration through football for refugees and new immigrants

Football Unites has run an annual All Nations tournament in Sheffield for the last six years. The event brings together football lovers from across the world who have made their new home in the Sheffield area, with many of them having arrived as asylum-seekers after fleeing violence and trauma in their homelands.

In 2008, players took part from many countries including Kurdistan, Iraq, Sudan, DR Congo, Eritrea and Liberia, as well as local players from Sheffield's Chinese and Bangladeshi communities. Twelve teams participated and the winners were Galeed Giants, a team of different nationalities, but mainly Liberians. They beat Bangladesh FC 2-0 in the final, while Sudan won the Fair Play Award.



The 2009 All Nations will form part of Refugee Week activities in Sheffield, and will take place at Goodwin Sports Centre, Northumberland Road, on Saturday 20th June. Teams wishing to enter should contact Desbon Bushiri at FURD.

DO YOU FOLLOW? WHEN YOU CAN LEAD! BECOME A FURD VOLUNTEER

FURD runs a volunteering scheme for 16-25 year olds. Young people can do short term taster, part-time or full time voluntary work with FURD and get national accreditation for it through 'V', the national youth volunteering charity.

One of FURD's volunteers, Amal, tells us what it's like.



Amal

Firstly how did you get involved in volunteering?

I actually got into FURD through my sixth form college. I was looking to do some work experience with a people organisation really and one of the career advisors suggested this to me. At first I was a bit taken aback by it but once you get here that totally disappears and it feels good to be a "V" (volunteer), you get more out of it than you think.

So you mentioned you go to sixth form, what do you do there?

I'm studying towards my A-Levels in Chemistry, Biology and Psychology at sixth form and hopefully I'm going to a medicine based subject for a degree. Being a V is like the break I get away from my studies for that one afternoon. It's really good actually if you think about it because you're gaining life experience, a possible qualification and at the same time you're loving it and giving back to the community.

What are you working on at the moment?

The current project that I'm working on is with the Youth Against Conflict group and we have organised a anti-racist day 'Vibes and Unity', on Devonshire Green on the 23rd of May 2009. What I'm involved with for that at the moment is like designing posters, shirts and the decorations that are going to be used on the day. It feels so good when you contribute because like it's YOU that decides what colour to use and YOU decide the theme and its decisions that your view wouldn't have counted on before.

What has been the highlight for you so far?

I haven't actually been doing it for so long yet but simple things like for example on one of the days there were some boys trying to get in one of the buildings and I told them that your not allowed in, I was in that authoritative position where I could tell them that "nope you've gotta go". I'm also really looking forward to this anti-racist event because it's something I feel passionately about and it just feels so good to actually do something about it.

Finally, can you tell us of any personal benefits?

Confidence just goes sky high! It makes you feel so important because you actually are so important for that group that you're working with. It gives me a chance to get away from the study side and get out into the real world because that is what it really is. There's loads to do like call designers and have group meetings, the type of real life situations that you have to deal with once you are educated.

Youth Against Conflict

Some of FURD's 'V' volunteers have set up a Youth against Conflict group.

One of its members, Raheel, talks about it here...

So tell us about the Youth Against Conflict group, what is it?

It's a group of young people who've come together to try to improve relations between ethnic groups. The main focus at the moment is to raise awareness about the difficulties faced by Black Minority Ethnic groups (BME).

How do you do this?

We start off with workshops where we get the youngsters to interact with each other by doing something to break the ice. Then we get them together to talk about issues that they might not have thought about and discuss problems associated with race, religion and culture.

Tell us about the work you have done and do you think it helps?

We visited a group of 13-23-year-olds in Barnsley in an area where the population was mainly white. We did a workshop looking at stereotypes that people have of black and ethnic minorities. We finished it off having a kick about and some friendly games. We did something similar in Manchester but with younger people and that was a bigger success. They wanted more from us so it must be working!

What do you think the community benefits are?

Communities such as Manchester and Barnsley have appreciated the workshops we have delivered. It just shows the youths that it's easy to mix when you've found a common interest, for example football. I recall one boy saying 'its orite you know to play with Asian lads'.

Could you tell us about 'It's Your Call'?

Some of the group have made 2 films to demonstrate the effects of segregation, either by religion or race.

The first is about a guy who gets involved in a gang and stabs someone. He is sent to prison - basically, it's showing how it's not worth messing your whole life up for a gang.

The second video follows a girl in a hijab and she's bullied in school for wearing it, she's called stuff like 'terrorist'.

We've used these films at a local primary school and it's successful because the kids can actually see it from a view that maybe they wouldn't have thought about before. We try to make it educational and fun; starting out with spider diagrams to make it simpler and then finish with a game.

Do you have any future plans for the Youth Against Conflict group?

We want to take this group as far as it can go, nationwide if they can handle us!

We're definitely going to keep the school workshops going and some other schools are approaching us which is great news. I want to take the group out of Yorkshire again to spread the word more widely.

Finally, what effect has it had on you personally?

It does make a big difference, firstly it gets you off the streets and doing something to help others makes you personally feel good. I mean I first used to just come here to relax with some friends and when Mehrun approached me and I got involved with the Youth Against Conflict programme I just couldn't turn away, it's really addictive. You get to meet new people, make new friends and a whole other social life.



Raheel receiving his 'V' certificate

A big THANK YOU to our volunteers Samiera Aslam and Ulfat Sabir who carried out the interviews with Amal and Raheel as part of their V placements.

Kyle Walker speaks to FURD

Kyle Walker, the first player recommended by FURD coaches to the Blades, has broken into the first team.

FURD tracked Kyle down as he travelled to the Championship play-off game at Preston

FURD: What did it feel like making your league debut at Bramall Lane?

KYLE: I loved every minute, every second of it. United are my childhood club - I lived only two minutes away - and it's always been my childhood dream to play at Bramall Lane in front of 30,000 fans. I remember feeling that all the hard work had paid off, but it didn't really sink in till the following day.

FURD: Can you remember playing the original Streetkick wooden game?

KYLE: Sure, I played Streetkick when I was a little kid: I especially remember playing when it was set up in the car park between The Stables and The Hub

FURD: How did you get spotted by the Blades?

KYLE: A friend told me about the FURD coaching sessions being run on a Saturday morning at Abbeydale Grange School by Paul Archer and Luis Silva. They must have thought I had potential because Paul straightaway arranged for me to have a trial with United. I've been with them ever since.

FURD: Do you see yourself as an inspiration to local young people?

KYLE: I hope so. I've proved that you can achieve in life, regardless of racial origin or where you come from.

FURD: What factors made the difference for you?

KYLE: My mum and dad always stuck by me - dad has never missed a match - plus working hard and the determination to succeed.

FURD: How about helping out at FURD coaching sessions?

KYLE: I am looking forward to helping out at local training sessions in the future, including Kickz.

Keith Ward (Kickz coordinator) has asked me to come along and we'll sort something out soon...

"I played Streetkick when I was a little kid"



IT'S YOUR CALL

Conflict Resolution DVD and teaching pack for sale

"It's Your Call" is a DVD and education pack made by members of the Youth Against Conflict group with Maddy Pike of InterAct Theatre. It looks at how to deal with conflict situations and challenges youngsters to take responsibility for their actions.

The DVD, which is aimed at secondary school students, includes two stories - one about gang violence and one about racist bullying - and the action is paused at critical points so viewers can discuss different possible outcomes.

The supporting notes also include ideas for drama activities and background information.

The pack can be ordered from FURD - please send a cheque for £25 made payable to Youth Against Conflict. Also, contact us if you'd like us to work with you on using the resource with a group.

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