

# FOOTBALL UNITES RACISM DIVIDES

Football Unites  
Racism Divides



Annual Report 2000-2001





## Contents:

Foreword	p.3,
Introduction	p.4/5
Increasing ethnic minority participation in football	p.6/10
Ethnic minority women in football	p.11
Reducing racial harassment	p.12/13
Anti-racist education	p.14/16
Resources and information	p.17/19
Millennium Volunteers	p.20/24
National and International work	p.25
Looking Forward	p.26

United Colours of Football 2



## Foreword

As this report goes to print towns and cities across the north of England are picking up the pieces from a series of riots precipitated by young men expressing their dissatisfaction with their immediate environment, economic prospects and in defence of their communities against racist attacks.

The nature of this discontent and its expressions has brought about a plethora of analysis widely aired in the media and on the streets. A depressing picture of exclusion, segregation and denial of opportunities has begun to emerge. All the more depressing because we've been here before in different parts of the country and with different constituencies of young men.

The links between young people rioting and the work of a project such as Football Unites, Racism Divides may not be immediately obvious but in the spirit of examination and recommendations for future good practice the achievements of the project and similar groups should not be ignored.

Football Unites, Racism Divides (FURD) has been working with different sections of its local community to tackle social and racial exclusion for a number of years. The projects outlined in the pages of this Annual Report detail the extensive nature of their work and the different groups of people whom the project has sought to engage.

Through building effective working partnerships with football fans, young people from all backgrounds, local Black communities and footballing institutions at all levels, alongside city-wide and regional statutory organisations, FURD has been able to translate a widespread passion for football amongst client groups into meaningful and effective anti-racist interventions.

So through educational work in schools and organised youth groups, street activities with young people through Streetkick, reaching out to adult football fans through the United Colours of Football fanzine and [www.furd.org](http://www.furd.org), the mentoring and empowerment of young people through Millennium Volunteers, Sharrow United and Somali Blades, and by offering a stake in their local communities to individuals who came as refugees, the project illustrates how it is possible to overcome differing but related problems of exclusion.

The lessons are clear and transferable. At the crux of it is the analysis that progress comes through working in real partnership with communities. Moving forward with the agendas of those communities and individual clients to the fore. In contrast the immediate lessons to be drawn from rioting youths may not be so clear, but if these principles formed the starting point of action elsewhere who knows where we could go?

**Piara Powar**  
National Co-ordinator, 'Kick It Out'  
July 2001



Sheffield/Derbyshire border 1997

# Introduction

The relationship between 'race' and football takes a number of forms. It has long been the case that a number of fans have used Saturday afternoons at football matches to air their racial prejudices but it is now recognised that this minority of racist fans is only part of the problem. What is also important is how Black and Asian people become involved in football as players, coaches or spectators, the interest they take in football and whether in certain areas they feel excluded. A third issue is the relationship between a professional football club and its local community; that is, whether the association is of mutual advantage or one-sided.

Sheffield United Football Club is based at Bramall Lane, which is one of the oldest existing sports grounds in the world. The local city council ward, Sharrow, has an ethnic minority youth population of 44%; however only one percent of the crowd at a Sheffield United home game against Bolton Wanderers on 22 November 1996 were Black or Asian. According to research undertaken by Sheffield Hallam University in 1996, twenty percent of local ethnic minority residents had suffered regular racial harassment on match-days. A common reaction to this was for residents not to be seen outside before, during and after matches so as not to attract attention.

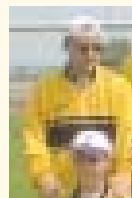
'Football Unites, Racism Divides' (FURD) believes that football, as the world's most popular game, can help bring people together – people from different backgrounds, to play, watch and enjoy the game, and to break down barriers created by ignorance or prejudice.

The partnership project has its origins in a small group of Sheffield United fans and youth workers, who in the early 1990s began to voice their concerns around a number of issues connected with their local football club, including racism.

The partners are a unique mix of fans, football club, local city council officers, youth and community groups, racial equality council, schools, church, police and community safety units. They consist of:-

- Sheffield United Football Club
- Blades Independent Fans' Association
- Sheffield United Supporters' Club
- Football Supporters' Association
- South Yorkshire Police
- The Hub African-Caribbean Centre
- Abbeydale Asian Youth Project
- Sheffield Wednesday Football Club
- Sheffield Race Equality Council
- Abbeydale Grange School
- Sheffield Youth Service
- Somali Blades Football Club
- Sheffield and Hallamshire County FA

## case study



**Kevin Titterton, FURD volunteer and designer/builder of the 'Streetkick' mobile football game**

"My name is Kevin Titterton and I'm a 38 year old Sheffield United supporter/sufferer. My involvement with the project began after a spell as a volunteer worker with the FSA's Sheffield Fans' Embassy during Euro 96, and following a contribution I made to a discussion around the problems of racism in football at the 1996 AGM of the Blades Independent Fans' Association. This led to my being invited to join the newly-formed project as a volunteer, which allowed me to tackle something that's always been important to me and to serve a community that has always been special to me. That community, Sharrow, incorporates the home of The Blades, and it's where I spent the early part of my life.

Football Unites has allowed me to work in a field that I would probably have never done so, had the project not presented the opportunity. For someone with a passionate love of football, (but saddled with soccer skills that would not trouble the Queen Mother were she keeping goal for the opposition), it has allowed me to be involved in the Sharrow United Regional Alliance Sunday League side, to feel part of a team and its set-up. I have been able to assist and learn from the setting up of a remarkable library and resource facility, that will ensure the promotion and objectives of our work are achieved through the education side of the project. I also feel as a family we have profited from the project as David, my son, has been involved in much of the project, in particular as a Streetkick volunteer. This has given him much social awareness and education as well as allowing father and son to do something different, but rewarding, together".



Bramall Lane, February 1997

## FURD'S AIMS

The partnership was established in November 1995, and its stated aims are:-

1. To ensure that people who play or watch football can do so without fear of racial abuse and harassment, in either a verbal or physical form.
2. To encourage all those associated with Sheffield United Football Club to improve standards of behaviour, especially in relation to racial abuse, harassment and discrimination.
3. To create greater access for local black people through their active and safe participation both as players, staff and supporters.

In January 1996 a bid for funding from the European Commission Cities Against Racism Project was successful, and a full-time Project Co-ordinator was soon appointed, with the official launch taking place at Sheffield United Football Club on 30 April 1996.

In December 1996 the initial 12 months' funding from the EC was extended for a second year, with additional funding coming from the South Yorkshire Police Community Initiatives fund, as well as in-kind help, in terms of premises, utilities costs, communication and staff supervision from the Sheffield Youth Service. FURD moved into its present premises, the Stables Youth Project, in April 1997.

With the project in danger of running short of money in late 1997, a lifeline was provided by the Sheffield Single Regeneration Budget (SRB), who began part-funding FURD in December 1997, and indeed are scheduled to financially support the project until 2002.

Income from the hire of both FURD's mobile football game 'Streetkick' and the History Of Black Footballers Exhibition, enabled us to continue our work once the European grant ended, with additional help coming from the Churches Commission For Racial Justice, 'Kick It Out', Home Office Community Relations Unit, Professional Footballers Association, Commission For Racial

Equality, The Football Association, Sheffield TEC, Royal Mail, Walkers Crisps, Grant Thornton Accountants, Heeley Development Trust, and finally, from donations from individuals joining the FURD membership scheme.

In May 1999 the Football Unites, Racism Divides Educational Trust (FURD Ed) was established, and charitable status achieved later that year. All of FURD's work with the exception of Millennium Volunteers, is now managed by FURD Ed.

1999 was a key year for FURD, with three-year funding being awarded by the National Lotteries Charities Board for the educational work of the project, from the Department of Education and Employment to operate the FURD Millennium Volunteers programme, and from the European Commission to design and maintain the Football Against Racism in Europe (FARE) website.

In July 2000 FURD Ed began working with the Shirecliffe Youth Inclusion Project, with funding from the Home Office 'Positive Futures' initiative, to fund coaching in the Shirecliffe and Burngreave areas of Sheffield, a second 'Streetkick', and a peer mentoring programme.

FURD agreed a Development Plan in February 2000, which set eight priorities for the project during 2000. These priorities were then used for a more specific Action Plan, and are as follows:-

- Increase the participation of ethnic minority young people in football as players, spectators and employees.
- Significantly increase the participation and involvement of ethnic minority young women.
- Reduce racial harassment.
- Challenge racism through anti-racist education.
- Develop the work of the Resources and Information Centre.
- Increase the participation of volunteers in the work of FURD, especially young people aged 16 to 24.
- Develop regional, national and international initiatives.
- Secure the future work of FURD.

This report will use these eight key priorities as a means of reporting the work of Football Unites, Racism Divides in the year 2000.

Howard Holmes,  
Project Co-ordinator.

# Increasing Ethnic Minority Participation in Football

## COACHING AND COACH DEVELOPMENT

FURD's head coach is Chilean Luis Silva, who played professionally in Argentina, Brazil and Peru, before escaping from Pinochet's torture squads, eventually arriving in Sheffield in 1975 as a political refugee. Luis runs free weekly sessions in Heeley, Fir Vale and Shirecliffe, as well as coaching Sharrow United. Several promising young players have been recommended to the Sheffield United School of Excellence and three boys have been taken on by the Blades. Desbon Bushiri, an exciting young striker and asylum seeker from Burundi, attended a FURD summer coaching session and was referred to Sheffield United by Luis. Desbon has since played three times for the reserves.

FURD's other regular coach is Ahmed Abdi Jama, who played 266 matches for Somalia in the 1960's and 70's. He went on to coach both the youth and full national teams of Somalia, but the civil war intervened and in 1989 Jama applied for political asylum after working in Brazil. Jama gained his UEFA 'B' licence in Denmark, and now coaches for FURD in Broomhall and Burngreave, mostly with Somali youth.

In 2000, 25 FURD-sponsored young people successfully completed the FA's Junior Team Manager course, whilst Paul Lawrence and Fayaz Khan went on to achieve the Coaching Certificate. In addition Abbas Shah and Zahid Saleem qualified as Class 3 referees.

FURD has identified the lack of local, safe, all-weather facilities as a major obstacle to ethnic minority young people progressing further in football. We are working in partnership with community groups, schools, and Sheffield Leisure Services to consult, plan, and secure funding to radically improve this situation as quickly as possible.

## case study



Desbon Bushiri leaves the pitch after scoring a goal on his debut for Sheffield United reserves

**Desbon's story** "I arrived at my Shoreham Street flat, behind Sheffield United's Kop, in July 2000. I didn't know anybody in Sheffield. After a few days I started to look for somewhere to play football.

Eventually I found Mount Pleasant Park in Sharrow, where Luis Silva and Keith Ward (MV) were running the FURD summer coaching scheme. Luis saw me playing with a ball, and liked what he saw.

Soon I met Kamran (MV) and Alan from FURD, who were starting a new Sunday league team, 'Sharrow United'. They signed me up for the team, and as a Millennium Volunteer, and I scored two goals in our first game, which we won 3-1.

Next Luis recommended me to Sheffield United and I trained with the juniors, and played 3 times for the reserves, scoring on my debut against Bury.

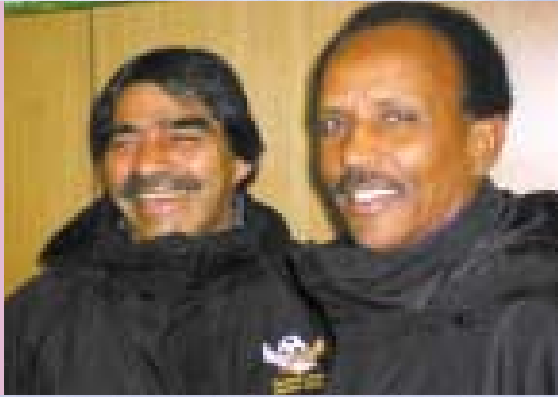
After 4 months, United decided they would not offer me a contract. I was very disappointed, but soon met Tommy Spencer, who signed me to play for Matlock Town in the Unibond First Division.

I've met lots of different people at FURD, whereas in my own country, Burundi, I was often afraid of people I didn't know. FURD has given me a lot of help, and it's nice to come to The Stables to meet everyone, and read books from the library.

I have a special memory of driving with Howard to the grave of Arthur Wharton, about 30 kilometres from Sheffield, and laying some flowers on his headstone.

I still hope to become a professional footballer, but I worry about my family back home. I am the first-born, and I pray that we will soon be together, safe".

FURD coaches  
Luis Silva (left) and  
Ahmed Abdi Jama (right)



Luis Silva coaching  
in Shirecliffe



## case study

**FURD coaches, Luis and Jama** (Extract from an article by Peter Markie in the Sheffield Telegraph, February 2000)

Meet Ahmed Abdi Jama, from Somalia, and Luis-Eduardo Silva, from Chile, who between them have clocked up thousands of miles escaping torture and injustice until fate handed them cards to meet up unbelievably in Sheffield. Under, in fact, the umbrella provided by Football Unites, Racism Divides.

So how did Jama and Silva, from worlds apart find common ground in South Yorkshire? Well Silva arrived first, 25 years ago, having previously played for Chile and as a midfielder professionally in Peru, Brazil and Argentina. That pedigree didn't prevent torture as a prisoner under Pinochet's dictatorship and escape to England in 1975 as a political refugee.

He surfaced in a North Derbyshire village and worked as a miner until the pit closures. Silva decided education was the way back and coaching was another driving force. At Sheffield College he gained certificates in sport and recreation with distinction and through the offices of MP Richard Caborn, the powerfully-built Chilean was directed to FURD to help out in sessions.

Jama, a shorter, lighter character, played 266 matches for Somalia at centre forward with a tally of 92 goals. He was leading scorer in the 1975 African Cup. In the 1980's he coached both the youth and national teams of Somalia.

Something of a legend in his own country, he looked further afield in 1989 when he took up a coaching post in Rio de Janeiro. At this point, with civil war breaking out in Somalia, he knew he wouldn't be safe to return home and requested political asylum at the UN. Result: A refugee camp in Copenhagen. His wife and four children joined him in Varde and he started out trying to win a new reputation as a coach with teams across Denmark.

With Alslev he had success on the pitch and won over the locals with his dedication, never missing a training session. On one occasion he went by moped from Varde to Alslev arriving with his face turning white from the frost! He heard from friends in Sheffield and visited on holiday. "I was immediately struck by the number of Somali youngsters playing football but without proper organisation or coaching."

Jama, now 56, has passed his UEFA B coaching licence and is desperate to forge a new career in England. He is currently helping FURD, Sheffield United School of Excellence and Somali youngsters in the Burngreave area.

Can they make it here? "All we ask," says Silva, "is the chance to prove ourselves. If we don't make it for whatever reason, at least we can say we had the opportunity."



## CONCESSIONARY TICKET SCHEMES

One of the main means by which Sheffield United have been able to contribute to the achievement of the project's objectives has been the ticket distribution scheme in conjunction with FURD. The initiative has enabled hundreds of local Black and Asian young people to experience a live professional football match, leading to an increase in self-confidence and security amongst those attending, shown by the number of participants who have made return visits!

The value of the ticket initiative was shown in December 2000, when the club ticket office, having decided that no free tickets would be available for the local derby with Sheffield Wednesday, worked out a system which enabled 30 local Black and Asian Unitedites to pay for their tickets in advance through FURD.

In 2000, perhaps related to the appointment of Owls fan Alan Rhodes to the post of Youth Worker with FURD Ed, the project has also distributed free tickets for a Sheffield Wednesday game. Finally, Barnsley Football Club provided complimentary tickets for all the finalists in FURD's 'Streetkick' tour of Barnsley in the spring.



## case study

**Abbas Shah:** I have been involved with 'Football Unites' for a number of years. Initially contact was minimal, when I received complimentary tickets for Sheffield United home games. However as I became more aware of the objectives of FURD and what their involvement was within the community, I decided to approach them for help.

In the first instance, FURD was able to send myself and a colleague on an FA Coaching Course with a view to setting up a local Asian-based football team, Highfield FC. Upon completion of the course FURD provided training equipment for coaching the team, and helped us obtain lottery and council funding. Once the season had started FURD donated further match equipment.

During May 2000 FURD were able to send me on a FA referees course, which I successfully completed and passed. I have been refereeing every Saturday this season in the Sheffield leagues, and suffered all the highs and lows a match official can go through! I am hoping to achieve my Grade 2 status for the 2000/1 season.





Sharrow United celebrate promotion in their first season



Blades Enterprise Centre

## SHARROW PARTNERSHIP

FURD is a member of the Sharrow Partnership, which is made up of representatives from Sheffield United Football Club, Sharrow Community Forum, Sheffield College, FURD, Asian Welfare Association 96, and the Federation of Stadium Communities. Its combined efforts have brought in £1.8 million in grants, as well as helping secure planning permission for the Blades Enterprise Centre and Community Hall, which will open in 2001.

The Blades Enterprise Centre has set targets for the number of local and ethnic minority small businesses that it needs to attract as clients, and a Community Hall for use by local residents will be situated underneath the corner of the Kop and John Street stand. It is anticipated that a hotel will follow the completion of the BEC, and the Sharrow Partnership has developed plans to ensure that local people receive the relevant training required for the jobs that will come with the ground development. FURD played a key role in the drawing up of Sheffield United's equal opportunities policy, which was formally adopted in May 1999.

The Sharrow Partnership has gained a national reputation as a model for other clubs and their communities to follow, and the 2000 conference of the Federation of Stadium Communities was held at Bramall Lane.

## SHARROW UNITED AND HIGHFIELD FC

FURD has worked hard to create the necessary conditions which will encourage Black and Asian teams to set up and join organised local leagues. These efforts bore fruit during 2000 when two teams, Highfield FC and Sharrow United, affiliated to the Sheffield and Hallamshire County FA, and joined different Sunday leagues in time for the 2000-1 season. FURD provided support in the shape of coaching, venue hire, league and FA affiliation fees, balls and kit.

Highfield FC are made up mainly of older Asian players, who have been able to organise themselves, whilst Sharrow United are the younger side. Indeed many of the Sharrow United players have signed up as FURD Millennium Volunteers, and the FURD Youth Worker has shared club secretary duties with MV Kamran Khan.

## case study

**Kamran Khan :** Kamran has been involved with FURD for over 5 years. He made contact with the project through a FURD Soccer School in a local park while he was still at school.

He has carried out over 300 hours voluntary work with FURD as a Millennium Volunteer in the last year.

During this period he has trained as a Junior Team Manager as well as taking up the role of Trainee Secretary for Sharrow United FC. He is also a regular in the team. Kamran represented FURD as part of a Pakistani team which travelled to Italy in June/July 2000.

Together with his close friend Idris Amin, he made a Video Diary about his love of Sheffield United that was filmed live at the Fulham home game for the National Football Museum in Preston. He began watching The Blades by getting tickets through FURD's Concessionary Ticket Scheme.

Kamran and Idris were also contributors to a BBC documentary about Asians in Football and have attended meetings of the National Civil Rights Movement. He recently moved from long-term unemployment into work at two local schools as an Assistant Learning Mentor.

# The Streetkick Experience - by Ralph Hancock

StreetKick is one of the great stadiums of the World  
more dreams per square centimetre than the Maracana  
and it fits in anywhere  
anywhere can be Bramall Lane, Hillsborough  
Sharrow or Sheffield Show  
where the roar of the crowd is hip-hop from Hoodz  
the competition is 'taking ferrets for a walk for 50p'  
Streetkick is free  
the ferrets are on leads  
(they are cute though)  
there's a girl with a shirt with a number '9'  
and a name beginning 'FE'  
I hoped it was FERRET but it was FERN

Chorus  
StreetKick the view from behind the net,  
families wind up their clockwork kids and set them  
loose  
watch their own  
one girl, ten guys  
StreetKick he kicks he kicks she waits  
she kicks and scores  
he, he and he kicks she waits  
she kicks just wide  
he, he and he tackle in a corner she waits  
they don't tackle her  
StreetKick he kicks he kicks she waits  
she kicks and scores  
Chorus end

## STREETKICK

Streetkick is FURD's mobile football game. Measuring 12 metres by 8 metres, with boards one metre high, the game can be erected on any flat surface. It is an excellent method of reaching significant numbers of young people with information about the anti-racist campaign in football. In 2000 the number of events increased by approximately 50% (25 events, compared to 17 in 1999).

Streetkick achieved a good geographical spread around the city. This included events at each of the Sheffield College sites, and being present at many of Sheffield's large-scale events, such as the Sheffield Show, May Fest and Sharrow Festival. A number of Streetkick events have also been held outside the city, predominantly in Barnsley and Rotherham.

Our 2 main aims in relation to Streetkick are:

- **Combating Disadvantage** (targeting areas of high Black and ethnic minority populations - where young people get few opportunities to play in organised tournaments)
- **Anti-racist work/education** (targeting areas with known racial tensions/problems).

Re-emphasis of the anti-racist element is being addressed in a number of ways:

- **A short speech is delivered by a member of FURD relating to what the organisation 'stands for'.**
- **Examining ways of increasing anti-racist imagery during events – banners, flags, sidepanels etc.**
- **The need to develop our own anti-racist material (and be less reliant on national organisations such as 'Kick It Out') has also been highlighted.**

Volunteer involvement has been a major success this year. A wide-range of volunteers (particularly FURD's Millennium Volunteers – MVs) have taken lead roles in the planning, organising and running of both high profile events such as the Sheffield Show and May Fest and also short-term projects like the work at Barnsley and Sheffield College.

The involvement of young women has increased significantly on last year, with a small number of young women MVs being involved in events during the summer and a group of young women taking a lead role in running an event for the Indian Welfare Association at Barnsley in August.



The tour of Barnsley took place in March/April 2000, and consisted of 6 tournaments in different areas of the city, with the winners of each event progressing to a final at Barnsley Football Club (Oakwell). The tour was organised and run in partnership with the Multi-Agency Piloting Project Against Racism (MAPP), consisting of the Police, Barnsley Youth Service and a number of other organisations – with the aim of increasing racial awareness/tolerance amongst young people city-wide.



Somali referee, Asian commentator '11-3'  
 suddenly the whistle stops  
 the microphone drops to the ground  
 they can't resist joining in with all  
 the other kids in the World  
 no names  
 for five minutes  
 drift in drift away  
 you see through the net bulging with its catch,  
 look no further for the energy  
 that powers the tides  
 The drown sound from the floodlit stadium  
 as I arrive late for the match  
 StreetKick immortalised  
 in one of the four huge curling stones  
 of the National Centre for Popular Music  
 the aluminium skin is warm to the touch  
 slowly rotating  
 as it heats and melts the ice  
 to a penalty shoot-out

quicken  
 Sharrow Junior Lassies win 2-1  
 we take off like a flying saucer  
 and have not come back to earth yet  
 a boy with sublime skill wants to hide  
 I want to disappear inside the photograph of Jimi Hendrix  
 be there at the Mojo Club in Sheffield in 1967  
 his autograph  
 'Stay Kool  
 Jimi Hendrix  
 Exp.'  
 The boy can't Jimi  
 rolls his foot over the ball again and again he cannot lose  
 I imagine the sound of one note of 'The Star Spangled  
 Banner'  
 paradoxically free and trapped for ever  
 I am imagining 'Purple Haze' at Maine Road and the sound  
 of 5-1  
 against the Scum  
 free  
 more than a decade in my head.



## Women in football

FURD successfully bid for a grant from the Football Association to develop footballing opportunities amongst Asian women. As a result of this we have run a series of coaching sessions at both indoor and outdoor venues in Sheffield attended by ethnic minority women and girls.

Four teams of young women from schools and youth groups played on Sheffield United's pitch at Bramall Lane as part of the Community Day in July 2000. Off the pitch several of FURD's female Millennium Volunteers were involved in the planning and running of the Community Day including creating anti-racist banners, working on the FURD information stall, contributing to the MV newsletter and performing on stage in the entertainments room.

Since becoming an MV, one of our female volunteers took up a paid job with Sheffield College where her role was to encourage participation of Asian women students in sporting activities. Unfortunately funding problems have meant that this post has since ceased.

A number of young women have taken part in Streetkick events. A girls' team from Sharrow Junior School beat 7 boys' teams in a 3-a-side Streetkick tournament at the National Centre for Popular Music in Sheffield in October, that took place as part of the Lovebytes festival of sports-related arts events, and female Millennium Volunteers have been involved in running Streetkick tournaments.

FURD has sponsored two more women to gain the Football Association Junior Team Managers Award, the first rung on the coaching ladder, joining the seven Asian women who successfully gained the Award in Sheffield in 1999.

