

Southampton Solent University

FACULTY OF FCIS

Sports Journalism

2012-2013

Luke Augustus

"Racism in football at a grassroots level is a prevalent theme, yet it is slowly being tackled by footballing institutions and the expansion of an ever growing multi-cultural society."

Supervisor : Jim O'Brien/Steve Menary  
Date of presentation : May 2013

## **Acknowledgements**

First of all I would like to thank my dissertation tutor Steve Menary who has helped me throughout the process of producing this body of work.

I would also like to thank my unit leader, for the module, Jim O'Brien who has also aided me in structuring this dissertation.

Additionally I would like to thank my family for their continued love and support throughout and in particular my sister Keely for her encouragement all the way through writing.

Finally I would like to thank Sheffield and Hallamshire FA - especially staff members Richard Finney and Rob Wharton, Glenn Bowie, Timi Oluwole, Tony Rana, Howard Holmes, Piara Powar and Brian McDermott who all had the time and courtesy to speak to me about my hypothesis.

I'm very grateful to everyone who has helped me along to produce my findings. Their words have helped me conclude the work I have submitted.

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## 1. Abstract

The issue of racism has always been a fascinating subject to me. Being of black origin myself, I have always found the subject quite sensitive. When this issue is raised though through sport, and football in particular, these are always done via the professional ranks where the media can profile and report it at the very elite level.

Having suffered racial abuse on a football pitch myself, I wanted to do something different to what is usually done on this matter. I wanted to provide the perspective of how racist instances are dealt with at the amateur side of the game. Personally, I think this is important because although the high profile instances at the professional level get rightly condemned, there are always countless examples of players at the grassroots game having nowhere and no-one to voice their displeasure at the abuse they have just received. Often they just sadly accept it.

Consequently this led me to undergo my research as I look at this issue from various perspectives from national and local football associations, participants who have been directly involved and anti-racism organisations that look to counter this discrimination completely.

I feel it was important to highlight issues surrounding racism from the other side of football. The heart of the sport is at the grassroots level and yet if there are tensions there – why does this not get profiled and what can be done about it?

## 2. Introduction

In this dissertation there will be three key aspects looked at with regards to how racism is being tackled at a grassroots level.

Chapter one tries to show where governing bodies, such as Sheffield and Hallamshire FA, are at in terms of dealing with this issue. How do they report racial instances? How does the disciplinary procedure work? What initiatives and schemes are they currently working on to tackle the issue?

Chapter two and the case study tries to show how those involved in the game, in a playing or managerial capacity, are affected by the consequential actions of those in charge. Do they feel what the governing bodies are doing is working? Or alternatively do they feel they aren't doing enough and if so what can be done?

The final chapter in this dissertation assesses the role of anti-discrimination charities. Their sole purpose is to stem this discriminatory poison so how do they try to? Does it work? Do they need more support from the governing bodies?

All three chapters provide different viewpoints, thus giving a broader and more in depth read at the true problems with racism at a grassroots level in football and what the wider societal impacts have on the future of eradicating this discrimination.

### 3. Methodology

In my findings for my hypothesis, I underwent several different techniques to aid my resulting conclusion.

The main use of gathering information was through primary research.

These came in the shape of interviews – some face-to-face with the rest directly on the phone. The first interview I conducted was with the Sheffield and Hallamshire FA. I travelled up to their offices to catch a glimpse at first-hand how they approached to combat this issue. As a County FA, they are responsible for thousands upon thousands participants every week, so I deemed it was essential to know how they process and sanction racist incidents.

From the participant perspective I conducted a further three interviews. These were with Glenn Bowie – a former manager at Sunday league level whose team fielded a multi-cultural side, Timi Oluwole – an active footballer of Nigerian descent who has been racially abused in the past playing the sport and Tony Rana – Chairman of Sikh faith club Guru Nanak – a team heavily involved in the community. These three interviews were particularly important as they have all had to deal with a racist incident at grassroots football at some point in their lives. I thus accordingly wanted to know what their subsequent emotions were, how did they deal with them and did they report the form of discrimination.

My final formal primary interview I recorded with was with Howard Holmes. Mr Holmes was the founder of FURD (Football Unites Racism Divides) – a local anti-discriminatory charity that has now expanded onto a global capacity. Interviewing him benefited my findings as I learnt how the organisation works with footballing authorities and various other communities.

In addition to those views, I managed to gain the thoughts of former Reading manager Brian McDermott as well as Piara Powar, executive director of FARE (Football Against Racism in Europe) on the issues of racism in football.

All of the above mentioned interviews also double as qualitative research as I gained my subjects insights.

To aid my primary research, I have also undergone secondary research in the shape of reading books and online material as well as archival data such as the Sheffield and Hallamshire FA Handbook. These have all aided my learning as they have provided an academic backdrop to my dissertation – which is very current. Interviews wouldn't have sufficed and these other sources of material have aided my learning.

By researching data such as national censuses, this provided both content analysis and quantitative research as I was comparing and contrasting numerical figures over different years.

#### 4. Literature Review

The nature of my hypothesis meant that there was a heavy focus on the interviews I had conducted as opposed to the books that I had read, as my topic was current and so there was at times little historical perspective that could be added. Nonetheless here are four books that helped me in my findings.

**BACK, L., T. CRABBE, and J. SOLOMOS, 2001. *The Changing Face of Football - Racism, Identity and Multiculture in the English game*. Oxford: Berg**

I found this book useful as it covered in depth the notion of anti-racism and multi-culturalism. The only negative to this book was that it was heavily centred towards the professional game. However it did provide examples of the xenophobic tensions that existed in the 1970s and 1980s, thus providing me with an historical context as to what and why there are racial tensions in the present day.

**BURDSEY, D., 2007. *British Asian and Football – Culture, Identity, Exclusion*. Oxon: Routledge.**

This book was found very useful as it covered deeply the problems Asian ethnicities have with being included in football. This was particularly poignant to me as it provided me with a deeper understanding as to the problems that this particular ethnic minority has with being accepted into football. As I produced a case study about Guru Nanak FC, a predominant Sikh-based team, this helped me gain a further insight into the problems that they and many Asians face at a grassroots level of football.

**CARVER, M., J. GARLAND and M. ROWE., 1995. *Racism, Xenophobia and Football – A Preliminary Investigation*. Leicester: University of Leicester**

This research paper gave me a wider societal picture with which I could add depth to my hypothesis. It gave examples of relating football, racism and society together – something which I found rare in all my other books which would contain one or two elements but not all three. Being a research paper it provided me with some good statistics to aid my learning as well. The only negative about the paper is due to its date it could only provide me information about the early formation of Kick It Out, as opposed to how it continued to develop as well.

**VASIL, P., 2000. *Colouring Over The White Line – The History of Black Footballers in Britain*. Edinburgh: Mainstream**

On a personal note, this book was the most invaluable throughout my learning. As my hypothesis was on grassroots football and racism it was very hard to find books that focus on that aspect. The great thing about this book is that it covers the grassroots side of the game and provides examples of where there have been signs of a discriminatory action by a player or a club. This aided my learning as it enabled me to use these examples as a further tool to back up my hypothesis. If there was a weakness to the book, then there is a heavy focus on the professional game, but like most books I had read this was too be expected.

## 5.1 Chapter One - The Role of the People in Power

Football is governed by a set of ethical codes of conduct to resemble order and semblance to the sport. The consequence of this sees the national FA and the local FA Counties take responsibility on all matters of the game – including racism.

Over the last 18 months this issue has been focused heavily in the spotlight through the John Terry and Luis Suarez examples on a national level in the UK, and further abroad with scenes in Italy with Ghanaian international Kevin Prince-Boateng. The action undertaken by these cases has received a lot of scrutiny from anyone involved in the game, from the elite level to the grassroots. At the Football Association their equality policy states “the FA’s commitment is to confront and eliminate discrimination whether by... race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour...”<sup>1</sup> This mission statement underlines their objectives to tackle the issue of discrimination work and immediately gives depth to the hypothesis as it indicates a desire is there to rid these issues from the sport.

Sheffield and Hallamshire FA are one county at the forefront of this issue. A diverse area, the region covers South Yorkshire cities Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield and amongst that the County FA governs 75,000 players, 18 leagues and 2600 clubs in total. Within South Yorkshire, and Yorkshire as a whole, there are pockets of different ethnic minority groups. However the area itself is predominately white with the national census for 2011 showing that ‘the white population of Sheffield was up to 79%, Barnsley 96.6-98.2%, Doncaster 92.5%-96.6% and the same with Rotherham.’<sup>2</sup> In order to help tackle the issue of racism, the County FA are following FA directives and are working towards the Preliminary Level award of the Equality Standard initiative. The scheme was set up for all sports by UK Sport and immediately this shows that footballing institutions are working towards tackling racism as the hypothesis suggests. So far Sheffield and Hallamshire FA have reached the Foundation level and have set up an Equality Advisory Group to help them achieve their next target. Again the formation of this group would indicate the willingness of this organisation in combating racism from football as they are using their own initiative approach to formulate ideas to keep on improving.

Richard Finney is the county’s FA Marketing, Communications and Charity Officer and he is clear in the stance his organisation is making. He said:

“The fact that county FA’s are down the route of equality and diversity, having appropriate standards that are acceptable to the Football Association and to society in general and being able to embrace everybody. I suppose when it’s all said and done, one of the targets for the Football Association, and filtered down to the county FA’s, is growth and retention. It’s like when they didn’t allow females to play football you straight away got rid of half the population. The same applies to people with different nationalities, backgrounds etc. you’re making it difficult to yourself to do what you want to do.”<sup>3</sup>

Helping the county FA’s role is their co-operation with anti-discrimination charities. In the late 1990’s, the County FA aided FURD – Football Unites Racism Divides, see chapter three for more about them, in dealing with their disciplinary cases as Howard Holmes the founder of FURD states:

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<sup>1</sup> (Sheffield and Hallamshire FA Handbook 2013, p.231)

<sup>2</sup> (National Census, 2011)

<sup>3</sup> (Finney Appendix 2013, p.33)

“The Sheffield and Hallamshire County FA got involved with the project early on. They allowed me to go in as an observer and support and speak on behalf of teams that weren’t connected with FURD. That was quite revolutionary in 1998/99, they were quite progressive.”<sup>4</sup>

Although it would be wrong to suggest that Sheffield and Hallamshire FA have guided FURD throughout all their collaborations, the admission by Holmes shows how vital it is for governing bodies to get involved in this issue. With their help and guidance it makes things a lot easier to be dealt with than without. When in terms of reporting a racist incident, they are all dealt as misconduct charges and if found guilty the offender can expect their ban to double or even treble. On average the County FA receive 10-12 complaints a year and the process of charging someone can take up to 6 months. Rob Wharton is the County FA Football Administrator and he deals mainly with these issues. He states that racist incidents are not always reported by the intended victim as the legalities mean that anyone can report it if they find it offensive.

“I had a situation in a semi-pro match where there was a black guy and white guy on opposing teams. The black guy was the white guy’s best man at his wedding; they had nicknames for each other which an independent panel would deem racist. They were calling each other these names throughout the game. Someone in the crowd heard what the black guy called the white guy and because he was offended by it, I had to raise the charge. Now it’s a mitigating factor just because I raised the charge, and it was an individual charge for that particular player, and he went nearly as far as saying ‘yeah but look what he was calling me, but I don’t want to get him into trouble because I know what game we’re playing’. It’s a mitigating factor nonetheless, I can’t remember what punishment we gave him, but like anything if I abuse you on the pitch I will get a two game suspension and if it’s a racist comment, depending on your record, it will automatically double or treble to four or six games.”<sup>5</sup>

This example is another good illustration of adding depth to the hypothesis as it shows the zero-tolerance policy that footballing bodies are using. As Wharton mentioned above, the offender may have meant it as a joke but to others they did not find it funny. It just stresses the importance to tackle racism completely from the game and exemplifies the governing bodies’ stance relating back to the hypothesis on this subject. Racial abuse, depends on how the person reporting it, perceives it. The FA’s stance in this case point to any abuse will not be tolerated. Yet despite this, footballing governing bodies have still come under pressure and at times have undermined their work. The handling of the John Terry case, for example, had detrimental effects that reverberated across the sport and none more so than at the grassroots level. It hindered the work of anti-discrimination charities in what they had done to date to break societal barriers, see chapter three, and it damaged participants views on the progression of where the issue is today, see chapter two. For Wharton he believes this will have a negative effect that will trickle down to the grassroots football.

“I definitely think they will directly affect the grassroots campaign and especially the RESPECT campaign. In my opinion things have to trickle down from the top first and it will clear it up. There’s a code of conduct we all have to abide by like any kind of job.”<sup>6</sup>

The words of Wharton then suggest that despite all the work the governing bodies have done, their work too has been undermined by the handling of this case. If the powers at the top have handled the situation poorly then one must assume that this will trickle down and smaller governing bodies will

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<sup>4</sup> (Holmes Appendix 2013, p.53)

<sup>5</sup> (Wharton Appendix 2013, p.34)

<sup>6</sup> (Wharton Appendix 2013, p.33)

take note. Thus consequently it could imply against the hypothesis as there would be evidence to suggest otherwise.

With regards to multi-culturalism, Finney's viewpoint supports the hypothesis in believing that the expansion of this has helped matters rather than hindered them.

"Things have moved on since the 1970/80s, the concept and the introduction of chartered standard clubs has helped tremendously. It will and I think it will continue to move in the right direction. With advisory groups set up here for equality and diversity, the target is 2015 we're meant to have the lot by, but we're actually in front already. In comparison to other FA's it's difficult to gage as the country is different. With what happens in Sheffield and Hallamshire is probably entirely different to Dorset or London."<sup>7</sup>

As he quite rightly points out the xenophobic undertones that existed vehemently in public, in the 1970's and 1980's, have been quelled down as the growth of multi-culturalism has helped to break down societal barriers. However, Wharton is less sure of the future. The fact that he is, adds doubt to the hypothesis as Wharton's role sees him dealing with disciplinary cases that include racism. With football being a highly-charged emotive game it's clear he believes these emotions will always lead people to sadly spill over and potentially say something racist towards another player.

"Doing what I do I'm more pessimistic because a lot of it has to do with ignorance. Whether it's got a racist overtone, it's verbal or physical etc., society is changing but I do always back the thing that people have that 'Jeremy Kyle factor' now where everybody has an opinion and they forget so a lot of it is misguided. When I was a manager, the best thing for me was that the whole team worked as a collective from the players and parents. The main benefit is that the kids learn massive life skills, they all learnt some respect. If every team could be like that then I would have no job. In five years' time, it would hopefully all be gone and we live in a utopian society. However, sadly people on this planet are always having a go at others – whether that be violent, physical or racist. To put it into context I have an example for you. We had two teams in 2011 who had the match abandoned because of one the players hit the referee. Our historian had researched that the same thing happened between the two teams in 1901 – with my point showing that nothing had changed."<sup>8</sup>

Finney is clear in his ideology as to where the game needs to head to continue tackling racism at a grassroots level. He believes educating people through football can be used as a tool to make people aware of right and wrong – and not just through their clubs but through other institutions such as schools.

"Within football I think it has to come from all sources. In a sense schools have a different role to play, in my opinion, because that has to be a general bit. Now you can pick the general bits out with what you tell them at football but what you want anybody to be is a better citizen. It's not just about playing football it's about people skills. One of my sayings has always been win modestly and lose graciously – that's how it should be. The only way that football can grow in this country is by through embracing more people in. You can only do that by making them feel wanted. If you have a racist problem in a particular town, city or whatever, and that stops them coming in, then you're defeating your own object. As football's grown since the 1970's onwards, what has made this easier is that teams became more multi-cultural. As a result you

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<sup>7</sup> (Finney Appendix 2013, p.35)

<sup>8</sup> (Wharton Appendix 2013, p.35)

become more understanding about their cultures, as they were your teammates. Football recognises it has a part to play integration and this is exemplified by equality and diversity.”<sup>9</sup>

It appears then that the FA and County FA’s are heavily involved in trying to tackle racism at a grassroots level then as well as at the professional game. With schemes such as the Equality Standard created and a clear emphasis on equality and diversity – it shows that footballing institutions are trying to tackle racism; supporting the hypothesis. The question is how have the actions of the governing bodies’ consequence on those who take up the sport – the participants?

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<sup>9</sup> (Finney Appendix 2013, p.35-6)

## 5.2 Chapter Two - 'The Beautiful Game' in the Eyes of its Amateur Participants

The encouraging pleas of the authorities in charge of football point towards an ever-more inclusive involvement of differing ethnicities in the sport. With structures in place such as the Equality Standard awards across the County FA's, the notion of racism at a grassroots level being dealt with can be deemed as plausible. Schemes such as these, add weight to the hypothesis but only time will tell if they prove to be successful or not.

To get a true representation of how racism, is at the amateur level, you have to also gain the perspective of those who are affected the most by these issues – the participants. These people are who and what makes grassroots football survive and more often than not they get a first-hand experience of the racism issues that are not brought to the forefront to everyone else's attention.

Glenn Bowie is a former Sunday league manager in Kent and he has witnessed at first-hand how racism, in tandem with the growth of multi-culturalism, is being handled. He strongly believes that regardless of the FA promises, a lot more could be achieved by them and that the issue is bigger than what they perceive it to be. He stated:

“I do believe the FA and FIFA are weak and that change will come through grassroots football by people mixing at the sidelines and working together. Integrated schools and society will change it. FIFA and those bodies won't ever change it as they are money driven. If it isn't in the heart it isn't worth having.”<sup>10</sup>

Bowie's words imply that it will eventually be society as the axis to change racism rather than footballing institutions. He has witnessed at first-hand a racist incident with one of his players being abused for the colour of their skin before. The player in question was Timi Oluwole – a male of Nigerian heritage. At the time of the incident, Oluwole didn't report it to the officials as he felt he would get nowhere far on the issue, believing it wouldn't have made much of a difference. He said:

“I can't imagine it would have made much difference. It would have put him [the referee] on the spot. Even in professional football you can report it to the FA and they report it to UEFA and they get a ban. That means nothing, so imagine what it means at this small level of playing.”<sup>11</sup>

Oluwole's comments are truly harrowing as it could be interpreted that racism will never be truly tackled by footballing institutions. It's clear in his thoughts that he feels the powers that be at the top are not doing enough at the top level and their actions will only be replicated down to the grassroots. Furthermore he is clear in his thoughts that incidences like what he went through are not isolated. He said:

“Yeah, [it's] really common. I have quite a few friends that it's happened to. I've been on a pitch with some of them, and this is against a team with some black players. It doesn't make a difference; if they're racist they're racist. It's going to come out at the end of the day.”<sup>12</sup>

Oluwole's words are supported by Long et al. who wrote:

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<sup>10</sup> (Bowie Appendix 2013, p.43)

<sup>11</sup> (Oluwole Appendix 2013, p.46)

<sup>12</sup> (Oluwole Appendix 2013, p.46)

“Experiences are perhaps even more common at amateur level where on pitch-racism and discrimination by local leagues and county associations are similarly endured by all minority ethnic groups.”<sup>13</sup>

The statements of both Oluwole and Long indicate then that there are fundamental flaws still within the sport’s aims at quashing racism. This would suggest that there are still clear tensions within Britain’s multi-cultural society, not just against the different ethnic minority groups but also within them. As a result the realisation that there could be far wider societal issues than there initially seems arise.

Additionally there also appears to be a correlation between Bowie, Oluwole and Tony Rana – Chairman of Guru Nanak FC (see case study) with regards to issues that are hindering the work of football organisations. The first is the stance of the professional game on the matter of racism. The high profile separate race rows involving Luis Suarez and John Terry will unequivocally have an effect on the development of anti-racism work according to all three, who believe this will just set the game back, especially following the improvements that have been witnessed over the last 10-15 years.

The second, and probably more harrowing theme, is the lack of structure with regards to reporting a racist incident. This questions the pace at which racism is being tackled, as all three agree on that the departmental structure of this is poor. This is epitomised by Bowie’s words where he states that racism isn’t as high on the agenda as the people in power make it out to be.

“When I was training they had a bit of information about racism in there. They don’t give you an understanding of racism and don’t educate you with talks or seminars where black players talk about how it’s affected them first hand. Even videos would work. They were more concerned with trying to win the World Cup. Years ago they were a lot stricter as they had a moral code, but now that’s gone as now it’s just a money machine.”<sup>14</sup>

Again this asks the question about the effectiveness of some footballing institutions on the matter as if the powers-that-be at the top are not making a clear and concise example how is it expected to trickle all the way down the football pyramid? To Bowie, he is certain it doesn’t as he states:

“The issue comes down to gamesmanship, winning at all costs, money, survival. It’s amazing what people are willing to accept e.g. Cole and Terry. How will you succeed with racism in football when people shake hands as issues boil down to money. Ashley Cole is rich so he doesn’t see it as a racial attack. They don’t live in the real world and see what their actions are doing further down at grassroots. It doesn’t affect them. They set a precedent that, that behaviour is allowed. The decency is going. They haven’t beat racism or tackled the problem.”<sup>15</sup>

A prevailing theme from all three interviews that were conducted was that a fundamental education on racism would help combat this issue. To not stigmatise people due to their physical characteristics though, was something all felt had to be done through societal institutes such as schools as opposed to footballing ones. The outcome of this would see a more equal multi-cultural society. Playing under Bowie, Oluwole felt at ease as he knew he was being judged solely on his footballing abilities rather than his racial background.

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<sup>13</sup> (Burdsey 2007, p.107)

<sup>14</sup> (Bowie Appendix 2013, p.39)

<sup>15</sup> (Bowie Appendix 2013, p.39)

“Yes he treated us all the same. I know then that if he said something bad about me it would be a fair reflection of me and not my colour or background. I think he’s the best manager I’ve had in that sense. If you didn’t play well then you weren’t in the team - he was solid all the way through. Other managers get opinionated and base decisions on how they feel about people, and this affects the football. It can be racist, but I’ve always been lucky to be on teams with fair terms.”<sup>16</sup>

The example Oluwole highlights here shows the integration of a multi-cultural society reflecting through his football team and how race didn’t play a part in his manager’s football decisions. Once more this adds depth to the hypothesis that slowly issues are being tackled with regards to racism. However Oluwole is sceptical himself with regards to what needs to be done to educate people on this matter further from the footballing authorities themselves. He said:

“Personally I think making people aware of racism is a waste of money as everyone knows what racism is. The most effective thing would be to ban teams from competitions as at the end of the day you can’t change thinking. It’s the only fair way. We need to make them aware that racism isn’t acceptable. On a grassroots level I think we need to throw them out of the league, but I’ve heard of teams who have been thrown out and there’s not much more they can do about it.”<sup>17</sup>

Bowie echoes Oluwole’s thoughts by believing that the authorities have dealt with the issue poorly and in fact it will be society that will change the outcome of racism in football instead.

“I don’t think the FA have been good at tackling racism, they’ve plastered over it. They’re ineffective. FIFA control football now, rather than the FA. It’s down to money. FIFA are meant to be multinational but the countries like Russia, Poland don’t care about racism. They’re saying they’re against racism but they’re just PR exercises. They’re not taking the proper stance. I think racism will evolve out of football due to integrated society. Nothing to do with what the FA are doing. As there’s a larger migrant population in Europe, it has changed the ballgame and lowered racism in the country. Now you have people of white colour coming into the country, so what can the racists do now? They can’t tell if they’re from Poland, or Germany, or France, and they can’t tell them to leave. In the Premier League there are more mixed players coming in from different countries and cultures, as in society as there’s a massive influx of migrants moving around the country people now accept them.”<sup>18</sup>

The expansion of a multi-cultural society has led to the formation of some teams and leagues being of one ethnic grouping – see chapter three. Created to form a collective identity as well as to distance themselves from racist abuse, these initiatives can have a positive or negative effect. For Bowie he believe these clubs are doing more damage than good as it causes segregation – something society and footballing institutions are trying the opposite to do.

“I don’t like that idea as it causes segregation. We don’t want that, we just want ‘Rochester Invicta/ Sheffield Tigers’. We don’t want to bring exclusivity into teams as that causes isolation. If you called a team ‘The Caribbean Twisters’ then no white players would join as they’d think it was only for black players. People would make stereotypical comments behind their back.

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<sup>16</sup> (Oluwole Appendix 2013, p.48)

<sup>17</sup> (Oluwole Appendix 2013, p.46)

<sup>18</sup> (Bowie Appendix 2013, p.42)

Trevor McDonald is from the Caribbean but he speaks wonderfully, so you can't put people in boxes. That's why you can't segregate it."<sup>19</sup>

Again Bowie's points are valid as linking it back to the hypothesis; it could be argued that if more teams did this then the idea of inclusivity would seem remote as football teams would be made of one ethnic group against another. It would be highly conceivable to imagine that tensions would then spill over in a football incident during the game which could result in a racist remark being made at one team. Although a fantasied example, it just shows how all the work that has been done so far could be undermined.

The findings from Oluwole and Bowie indicate a slightly different viewpoint to what was given in chapter one. Their viewpoints are expressed from the first-hand perspective of being on the touchline and having witnessed how racism at a grassroots level is dealt with. A fairly bleak outlook they provide at times, but they both feel that the issue of racism in football can get better – with their differing views both relating to the hypothesis. While Oluwole believes it's dependent on what the major footballing bodies do, Bowie is more forthright in his views that it will prove to be the development of the ever-growing multi-cultural society.

"I think racism in football will eventually get better. The minority footballers in the game means that people can't oppose it as it's everywhere. Society will change it, not the law of society. The problems with racism are proof, an intent, and the missing penalty for racism. Racism is a hard process to prove. Most racists are secretive cowards who hide. They aren't out in the open; they don't wear a flag or a badge, or a label. That's why people have to be on their guard. When you do see it then you have to report it, and not be frightened. It's a waste of time going to the FA as they can't prove it, and they don't want to. Unless you have proof you have two options; don't let him bother you or sort it out between you after the game. Reporting it doesn't always work, it takes ages."<sup>20</sup>

It is clear every participant at grassroots football has mixed fortunes with regards to racism. A good example is Guru Nanak FC – a team that has been on the end of derogatory abuse for its background and beliefs. The club based in Gravesend, Kent looks to help eradicate racism from the game in the future in numerous ways.

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<sup>19</sup> (Bowie Appendix 2013, p.42)

<sup>20</sup> (Bowie Appendix 2013, p.43)

### 5.3 Case Study - Guru Nanak FC

Continuing to focus on Kent, as a footballing county; and one of its affiliated clubs are the epitome of a team at the heart of its community. Guru Nanak FC was first formed in 1965 and started off as predominately a Sikh team in order to give Asian footballers the chance to play the sport. At the time the club received a lot of racial abuse at the grassroots level. These xenophobic tones could be traced to the possible fact that Britain was starting to see an increase in migration that would change the mono-cultural society, of back then, to the multi-cultural one at present. With clubs such as Guru Nanak trying to break down these barriers on the football pitch at the same time – it can be seen clearer why these instances occurred. As Ian McDonald and Sharda Ugra write, “there is wide spread ostracisation of Asian footballers, at all levels, from recreational to professional.”<sup>21</sup> This is a common conception and one that suggests that the ideology of multi-culturalism has not filtered through to football for Asian ethnicity.

Nearly half a century on and the growth of a multi-cultural Britain has played a big part in the team’s longevity. The club are based in Gravesend – a very diverse town known for its strong Asian population. The 2011 national census figures for ethnic minorities’ supports this view as they reveal that over 9.4% of its population are Asian.<sup>22</sup> Having the largest percentage for this ethnic grouping within Kent will therefore help the club sustain its core values. However these values have changed as the club and its chairman, Tony Rana, recognise that they have to move with the times and that racism is a two-way street. As a result, the club does not discriminate against anybody and embraces all creeds to their team so much so to the extent that some of their youth teams contain players of a primarily white background. Around 70% of the players throughout the club in total Indian, with the 30% non-Indian – consisting of Pakistani, English and Nigerian backgrounds to name a few. This example provides evidence towards the hypothesis as it shows that there are clubs who are focused on making the sport inclusive rather than exclusive.

In contrast to the policy of Guru Nanak, across the country there are several all-Asian leagues set up across Britain ensuring for the clubs that their interests are not marginalised and they are treated equitably. As Daniel Burdsey writes, “racism remains deeply rooted and pervasive in contemporary amateur football.”<sup>23</sup> This is supported by the words of Johal who states:

“There is an almost Machiavellian tautology that operates where South Asians are forced into creating their own mono-ethnic football teams in order to protect themselves from racial abuse and still partake of the sport.”<sup>24</sup>

Relating this back to Guru Nanak and the hypothesis this proves the difficulty that still remains today with racism at the grassroots level. As well as being chairman of the club, Rana is also the manager of the under 12 side where his team were recently racially abused in a match. The incident was reported, only for Rana to find out that there was not a department that existed for it to be dealt with. Subsequently the Kent County FA sought to rectify this and set up the Kent Equality Group which Rana heads as chairman. This example again shows that although this was done as a reactionary move, slowly but surely the right steps were put in place in combating racism. Yes theoretically one may deem that it should already have been in place with a structure prior to that incident, but it shows the footballing institutions willingness to seek change.

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<sup>21</sup> (Burdsey 2007, p.173)

<sup>22</sup> (National Census 2011)

<sup>23</sup> (Burdsey 2007, p.52)

<sup>24</sup> (Burdsey 2007, p.53)

The consequence of this makes people like Rana confident in a positive future on the subject of racism. He stated:

“There are clubs like us who are pushing the agenda. Society plays a large part in what’s happening in football today, but if you have steps which can be taken to eradicate it like fines or bans, then that’s helps to improve the whole aspect of racism or equality.”<sup>25</sup>

Contextualising this further this adds to the argument in favour of the hypothesis as it hints that the work of clubs and institutions are uniting on this issue. Yet this can’t be taken for granted though as there are still clear societal lines that need to be crossed. As Rana states, opposition teams are still fairly ignorant when they visit Guru Nanak.

“We get it every Sunday. The teams come and play next to the Sikh temple. They call it a mosque, a Hindu temple, they don’t realise it’s a Sikh temple. You have an education mismatch straight away as they don’t know what religion we are.”<sup>26</sup>

This view of Rana has similar connotations of what Timi Oluwole and Glenn Bowie both state when they first encountered the club in a fixture. Curious as to who they were playing against both admit they didn’t know what to expect as Oluwole stated:

“It was strange as you never really heard of a team with any religious links to it; you normally get standard football team names like Real 60 etc. It was new so I didn’t know what to expect until the first time we played them.”<sup>27</sup>

Bowie echoes his views as he added:

“There was an inquisitive side as we’d never seen an Asian team. I was more surprised that they had mostly white players in their team.”<sup>28</sup>

Although both Bowie and Oluwole had no racist preconceptions towards the club, it can show that others could have though and assume stereotypes, thus pointing to the fact that racist incidences stem from a lack of education and appreciation of other ethnic backgrounds. On this Rana said:

“You’re never going to totally eradicate it, but if you have ways and means of stamping it out and reporting it, then it makes it a lot easier, and places people in a better position than what they are in now. It’s only through hard work that you’re going to get it done. You have to knock on a few doors, break down a few doors and put people’s noses out of joint, but that’s life. Change is never received with open arms, it’s only when the status quo is broken. I’m the second Sikh that’s the chairman of the equality board with a turban and it shocked people. We need to represent today’s society and what’s out there now.”<sup>29</sup>

It appears that status quo could be the continued expansion of multi-culturalism in society rather than footballing institutions. If that is the case then one would assume that tackling the issue of racism at a grassroots level would be a quicker process than it is now for clubs like Guru Nanak and differing football bodies. This would make the process quicker as the sport wouldn’t have to be used as a platform to combat racism, but instead be an example.

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<sup>25</sup> (Rana Appendix 2013, p.58)

<sup>26</sup> (Rana Appendix 2013, p.60)

<sup>27</sup> (Oluwole Appendix 2013, p.49)

<sup>28</sup> (Bowie Appendix 2013, p.40)

<sup>29</sup> (Rana Appendix 2013, p.60)

## 5.4 Chapter Three - The Impact of Anti-discrimination Organisations

Following on from the views expressed in chapter two, it appears clear then that those who are directly involved in football at a grassroots level feel that there are still clear issues and tensions with regards to racism. It seems to them, that the role the governing bodies have taken has not set a clear enough example which can be filtered down from the professional level to the amateur game.

Two independent anti-discrimination organisations that have tried to tackle this issue are Kick It Out and FURD – Football Unites Racism Divides. Both charities have been working hard in fighting racism since the early 1990's, and to a fair success, but there are still underlying problems to be solved. In 1998 Piara Powar, who was working for Kick It Out, at the time, addressed the mission statement of the organisation as:

“Currently, Kick it Out is addressing issues of minority under representation in coaching, racism inside the sport and the importance of anti-racist codes and the importance of anti-racist codes of practice which serve the amateur game.”<sup>30</sup>

15 years have subsequently passed since Powar released that mission statement and although there have been improvements at the amateur level of the sport, there are still clear tensions of racism – as chapter two highlights prior with ethnic minorities still subjected to racial abuse. There are various reasons which ultimately lead to a societal and cultural deficiency that mirrors and reflects through sport as Frank Kew concurs:

“Ideally multiculturalism suggests recognition of cultural diversity without using the values of one culture to judge the worth of another. This level of tolerance and consequent absence of an ethnocentric perspective is difficult to achieve, and the practice and organisation of sport is but one area which falls short of the ideal.”<sup>31</sup>

At FURD, Howard Holmes has played an integral part in breaking down these racial barriers. One of the founders, of the charity, this project has evolved wonderfully from its local roots in Sheffield to global recognition. As FURD's website rightly acknowledges his contribution they state:

“He has steered the project from its beginnings as a local initiative tackling problems of racism in the Bramall Lane area of Sheffield, to its current position as a multi-faceted organisation with a local, national and international profile working in the areas of youth inclusion and community cohesion.”<sup>32</sup>

For Holmes, the reason why he started his involvement is simple. Having grown up in an English fan culture that could be seen as xenophobic in the 1970's and 1980's, he felt a change was needed to stem the tide on the issue. Having been part of BIFA (Blades Independent Fans Association), he then help set up FURD in 1995 in response to incidents of racist harassment in and around Sheffield United's Bramall Lane stadium, on nights before games and on matchdays.

As a partnership approach, he incorporated the aid of fans, youth workers, community groups, councillors, churches and the mosque, as well as contacts he had made in the professional game in a bid to improve racial equality. The consequence of this saw positive and negative outcomes on the issue of racism that filtered down to grassroots football. For example as Holmes states before FURD's

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<sup>30</sup> (Powar and Tegg 1998)

<sup>31</sup> (Kew 1997, p.88)

<sup>32</sup> (Football Unites Racism Divides Website 2013)

intervention “there was quite a lot of evidence of ethnic minority families staying indoors on a matchday, or going out for the whole of the day until everyone had left.”<sup>33</sup> This suggests then that Kew’s views could be seen as symptomatic to the task FURD and other anti-discrimination bodies have faced because it is clear that a ‘level of tolerance and consequent absence of an ethnocentric perspective’ was not achieved as differing ethnic minority groups did not feel comfortable attending a football match.

However as Phil Vasili counteracts, he highlights the effects that organisations such as FURD can have on breaking societal barriers.

“Sheffield United, through FURD, provide over 100 complimentary tickets for people in the Sharrow district of the city – in which the club is based – who have traditionally felt excluded from Bramall Lane, such as Asian women and the sizeable group of Somali refugees who live around the ground.”<sup>34</sup>

Vasili’s evidence adds weight to the hypothesis of this work, as it shows how footballing institutions have found ways to make football inclusive rather than exclusive – albeit at a professional level. Regardless though, this positive effect did filter down to the grassroots level as Vasili went on:

“Indeed on 2 May 1999 the club [Sheffield United] hosted a multi-cultural community day, organised by FURD at which local youngsters played small-sided games on the pitch and the Anti-Racist World Cup final between the Somali Blades and the Abbeydale Asian Youth Project was replayed after a drawn match...”<sup>35</sup>

The formation of clubs such as Sharrow United, are another example of proving that the prevalent theme of racism is being tackled by footballing institutions at the grassroots level. Before FURD were formed there were no predominately ethnic minority sports team set up bar the outfit Caribbean Sports. Through FURD though this changed with the creation of two Sunday league teams of a predominant Asian background, called Highfield and Sharrow United, at the turn of the millennium. Creation of clubs such as these are key into stressing the growth of multi-culturalism as it shows that level of inclusivity that football has lacked when it comes to participation from different ethnic backgrounds.

Furthermore, while the increase in inclusivity may have come with its problems from right-wing xenophobic participants, which saw FURD having to become heavily involved in disciplinary issues - such as the abandonment of two Sharrow United games due to fighting induced by racist provocation, Holmes has figures to cement the notion that racism is being tackled. Annually he believes FURD received instances in their double figures when they first started, something which can probably be halved now at present.

“If I say we had 12 in a season in the 1990’s, there’s probably five or six now – probably less now actually maybe three or four a season and that could concern one team sometimes getting into trouble over and over again.”<sup>36</sup>

Although the figure is still not ideal, it does show the progression that is being made with anti-racism initiatives set up. Furthermore this correlates with Sheffield and Hallamshire’s views that racist

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<sup>33</sup> (Holmes Appendix 2013, p.51)

<sup>34</sup> (Vasili 2000, p.192)

<sup>35</sup> (Vasili 2000, p.192)

<sup>36</sup> (Holmes Appendix 2013, p.53)

incidents have decreased over the last 15-20 as previously referred to in Chapter 1 (p.9). Despite the expansion of multi-culturalism, it is still discouraging to see that this figure has not been eradicated – with the likelihood that it will one day seemingly bleak. Looking at the wider societal picture Vasili states, “racism is still used to create inequalities between people – in employment, housing, education – whereby pigmentation determines life chances and experiences.”<sup>37</sup> The examples demonstrated by the struggles of Guru Nanak FC particularly, in the case study, again support the notion that societal barriers are still prevalent in all forms of life and as a result football.

Consequently it can be viewed that football is a reflection upon society. As Vasili writes “slowly the divisive weapon of racism is being blunted”<sup>38</sup> and that is being aided by the campaigning of institutions such as Kick It Out and FURD. Football and sport, in general can be used as a double-edged sword, in terms of tackling anti-discriminatory work. It can either be passive on the matter, or be active and seen as the tool that can help spark change. Ultimately it is the ideology of the latter that sees anti-discrimination campaigns work furiously in fighting it. Fundamentally football can be deployed as a communication tool across different ethnicities and religions – in the right hands.

The John Terry racism case against Anton Ferdinand had a detrimental effect throughout all differing sectors within grassroots football as expressed in the previous two chapters. Its role on anti-discrimination organisations was equally as damaging with Howard Holmes declaring that it has “set everything back.”<sup>39</sup> The hard work that these organisations put in local communities at the grassroots level can be quashed immediately with examples mentioned above by people at the top. The views of Powar on this support the view as he believes “that what happens at the top does influence the bottom. The incidents such as John Terry’s do filter into the grassroots level more than you would imagine.”<sup>40</sup> The words of Glenn Bowie and Timi Oluwole, shown in chapter two, validate Powar’s words.

A clear sentiment of educating people on the subject is expressed in chapter two and this is echoed by the words of Holmes. He believes racism in football runs deeper than an emotive action which can cause a discriminatory word to be said as he states:

“Racism in football often comes from badly behaved teams because they’re badly behaved in other ways. I was at a match yesterday and there were blokes on the sides intoxicated, and that’s the sort of environment that can lead to other things such as racist comments or abuse. The more you treat the whole of the game, the more it should be better for everybody.”<sup>41</sup>

On this subject Power adds support to Holmes views:

“I think it is probably the problem of reflecting local tensions. Issues are spinning around a local community and that would mean that there are issues that bounce into all areas of life including grass roots football.

“It’s about 22 guys on the pitch, with a few people on the sideline, no police there, there’s no means of enforcement there; so when it kicks off it probably kicks off quite badly.”<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> (Vasili 2000, p.199)

<sup>38</sup> (Vasili 2000, p.199)

<sup>39</sup> (Holmes Appendix 2013, p.55)

<sup>40</sup> (Powar Appendix 2013, p. 27)

<sup>41</sup> (Holmes Appendix 2013, p.54)

<sup>42</sup> (Powar Appendix 2013, p. 27)

The issue that the pair then again raises shows the difficulty anti-discrimination charities have in dealing with the topic. Their words imply that the xenophobic problems that occurred in the 1970's and 1980's can still persist in 2013 at a grassroots level. In addition what both Holmes and Powar say suggests that despite the expansion of multi-culturalism there are still tensions between different ethnic groups within society. Looking at the Guru Nanak FC case study – this provides further evidence of this being prevalent. Likewise with the findings of chapter two, it would then appear relevant that educating people on this issue is a must to help tackle racism in and away from football. It can be established that football is a tool that can reflect wider societal aspects as well as change them as Holmes acknowledges:

“I think it's both really. It does reflect, but that's why we called the project FURD as we believe it's got a great power for good as well as bad. There's good and bad things in football. Fundamentally underneath all the rubbish that happens, football is still a mass method of communication between people all over the globe. I definitely see it as a tool.”<sup>43</sup>

Holmes viewpoint supports the hypothesis in that although there are racial tensions expressed in football, the sport can be used as a tool to break down these societal barriers. As the case study in chapter two exemplifies, with Guru Nanak FC, football can be used to educate people on and off the pitch about different cultures. Looking forward, with how the topic of racism at a grassroots level will be in the next 5-10 years, and it is clear though that there are still pessimistic views on this topic. As Holmes rightly points out it is hard to predict where racism will focus on next.

“Well the thing about racism is that you can't really predict how it's going to change. When we first started there was nothing about asylum seekers or refugees in 1995, that wasn't a big topic. There was nothing about Romanian or Bulgarian people coming over which is now a hot topic. You can't really predict, unfortunately racism is there and it keeps changing its spots. It just emerges in different ways. It's very hard to say where it'll be in five years. I'm not incredibly optimistic as the world is getting meaner and with the economic climate people are looking to blame others when things are hard, so I'm not incredibly optimistic to tell you the truth.”<sup>44</sup>

Powar is a bit more certain with what he thinks needs to be done via the FA.

“One of the things that the FA needs to be clear about is that as we see these issues at the top level, the agenda doesn't move on entirely, there is still the need to tackle issues at a grassroots level. Sometimes it is quite easy to follow the media focus and to jump around from grassroots to professional, stay there for a while and then think 'Ooh we've got a problem with the grass roots'. So again, I advocate a strong governing body in this country that does things that are required and needed rather than things that are a reflection of politics and football or of media attention.”<sup>45</sup>

The words of Holmes in particular, provide relevance to the hypothesis. He quite rightly points out the fact that one cannot predict where racism will rear its ugly head upon next. His example of Eastern European migration is case in point. The expansion of a multi-cultural society in Britain saw the mass migration of black and Asian ethnic groups originally targeted, which culminated in fierce racism from staunch nationalists as mentioned prior. However the last decade has seen an influx of Eastern Europeans in British society, and they too have been met with some strong xenophobic protests. This

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<sup>43</sup> (Holmes Appendix 2013, p.54)

<sup>44</sup> (Holmes Appendix 2013, p.54)

<sup>45</sup> (Powar Appendix 2013, p.38)

begs the question then whether or not truly racism can ever be eradicated? Holmes statement would make it appear highly unlikely as it suggests that racism will always be about waiting to target the next influx of an ethnic minority. It would then be plausible to presume for these tensions to be reflected in football as a consequence.

However, putting this in a footballing context and suggesting that the work of anti-discrimination organisations hasn't helped to change this would be wrong. In December 1994 "approximately one third of respondents who felt that levels of racism had declined cited the CRE's Let's Kick Racism Out of Football campaign and 44% of respondents felt that it had raised peoples' awareness of the problem."<sup>46</sup> Nearly two decades later, it would be fairly accurate to state that both these figures would have probably increased. The expansion of mass-media in this time would make people more aware of the issue and any hegemonic positive tones the media portrayed should have spilt out to the public and to those who play grassroots football. It's clear that there is still a lot of work to be done by organisations such as FURD and Kick It Out and it will take time, but they are slowly helping to tackle the issue of grassroots football. The formation of clubs such as Sharrow United and Highfield, through anti-discrimination organisations, prove that football and an ever-expanding multi-cultural society can fuse together to tackle racism at a grassroots level.

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<sup>46</sup> (Carver, Garland and Rowe 1995, p.16)

## 6. Conclusion

The findings in each chapter provide different viewpoints to the hypothesis. While they do all share common themes, ultimately they do also have different perspectives on the issue with racism at a grassroots level. Fundamentally this all boils down to the perception of these people and their different roles within the sport at that level. Chapter one tries to show where governing bodies, such as Sheffield and Hallamshire FA, are at in terms of dealing with this issue. As the law makers of the game, they initiate the stance on this topic and how others should follow them. Consequently it could be deemed that they will naturally not be too self-critical of themselves as they set out the precedent on how to manage the topic and therefore must clearly have faith in what they are trying to achieve. Chapter two and the case study tries to show how those involved in the game, in a playing or managerial capacity, are affected by the consequential actions of those in charge. The overriding sense from the findings here were that there is still a lot to be left desired contrary to the sentiment of chapter one. Chapter three, and the final one, ascertains a common ground between both previous chapters. Based on the viewpoint of anti-discrimination campaigns, it provides evidence of the work that has been undertaken to fight against racism. The statistic that FURD has halved its annual complaints points to the facts that chapter one portrays, however they too admit that there are still clear problems and thus allying themselves to chapter two.

To conclude, the evidence that has been collated would suggest that the hypothesis is fairly accurate in that racism in football at a grassroots level is a prevalent theme, yet it is slowly being tackled by footballing institutions and the expansion of an ever-growing multi-cultural society. Looking at the examples shown by the work of FURD, in tandem with Sheffield and Hallamshire FA, this would show the work footballing institutions are doing to help solve the issue of racism. The fact that the formation of ethnic minority clubs such as Sharrow United and Highfield came out about through FURD shows that football is being used as a tool to reflect change in society and become all inclusive rather than exclusive. Yes one could argue that both these teams have met racial undertones since they've formed, but as the hypothesis states racism is 'slowly being tackled', thus implying that it will take time for the full effect of a potential utopian stance to happen. Again the fact that both clubs are still operating, over 10 years since they were founded, speaks volumes of football becoming a tool to break down these racial barriers. Furthermore the case study of Guru Nanak FC adds to this notion somewhat. Having been founded for nearly 50 years, they have overcome years of racial abuse and to Tony Rana's admission – the racism he received at the club in the 1980s has vastly improved to the present day.

However, there are still obvious issues at a grassroots level that need addressing with racism. Ultimately there appears to still be a greater effort of work done by governing bodies to help combat this discrimination. Despite the good work and intentions that have been set, there are still obvious alarm bells at how the amateur game gets overlooked for the professional level. This was exemplified by the fact when Guru Nanak FC went to report a racist incident to the Kent FA – they alarmingly found there wasn't an actual department who they could report it to. This feeling resembles those of Timi Oluwole and Glenn Bowie who both feel the governing bodies have to do more to rectify this issue. In a wider context, Phil Vasili writes:

“The higher you look – in terms of money and power – the whiter, more grey masculine and privileged the occupants... Players, fans and clubs and their representative bodies cannot

destroy racism within football but they can diminish it. A racist at boardroom level has the power to affect a person's livelihood. It is just prejudice plus power, a deadly combination."<sup>47</sup>

Vasili's words imply that despite a multi-cultural society, this is not reflected in the delegating of power. Delving further it suggests that as a result, it may be beneficial for the governing powers to have a figure of an ethnic minority high up within the hierarchy. This may speed the development of tackling racism at a grassroots level as they may 'get it' in terms of how it feels to be discriminated against and therefore act more forcefully on the matter. Piara Powar echoes these thoughts when he states:

"I know that one of the stumbling blocks there has been with the county FA's is that they have trouble engaging with these sorts of agendas because the way in which the demographics and people in power there are. It's governing white men who don't really understand and engage with that part of their community. In general I think there are enough paper policies out there to deal with this stuff it is just a question of limitation."<sup>48</sup>

The fact that Kick It Out is given £500,000 to operate with per year is truly staggering. With the soar of the Premier League finances still trending upwards it is shocking how this organisation only receives that little funding considering it is now a well-established charity that has been running for over 20 years. Ultimately though in the research that has been foregone; the words of Ava Vidal, a patron of Show Racism the Red Card, stood out in defining this hypothesis.

"When it comes to racism there's a massive, massive culture of denial and I think it's worse in football. I think football is reflective of society. The fact that football transcends certain class, colour, religion and creed etc., I think it should be pioneering things when it applies to race, but they're not doing it. They're not doing it because they're comfortable because no one's really objecting."<sup>49</sup>

Quite rightly her words symbolise the state society is today. Football can embody a popular aesthetic of collective endeavour, but it can also encourage prejudice, discrimination, stereotyping and ethnocentrism. It can bring different cultures together in common celebration, but it can also provide the basis for extreme and very public forms of xenophobia and racism. Football is a microcosm of society and as a result sadly to date there is racism in all walks of life. With the sport reflecting society then, it is clear that it will indeed take time to break down these societal barriers. As a consequence, as hard as one may try via footballing institutions, it is also necessary for the development and embracement of a multi-cultural society. If this was the case then the consequence of it would hopefully see a turn in fortunes in tackling racism at a grassroots level as well.

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<sup>47</sup> (Vasili 2000, p.194)

<sup>48</sup> (Powar Appendix 2013, p.27)

<sup>49</sup> *Is Football Racist?* (2012)

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Brian McDermott

**Conversation: Luke Augustus, Brian McDermott – then football manager of Reading FC**

**Recorded: Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2013**

**Luke:** You mentioned Jason Roberts earlier, also with the recent KPB racism stance and with FIFA and UEFA condemning his actions for walking off the pitch, what approach would you take as a manager?

**Brian:** I'd support the player 100%. I supported Jason in his action. When Ferguson didn't, I did. I won, he didn't. I was right, he wasn't. To be fair he had to retract which is very unusual for Ferguson to have to retract but he was wrong. I'd support my player. That's massively important to me.

**Luke:** You said you'd support the player but is that because you agree with them or is that because he's your player.

**Brian:** No I'd agree with them. I'd agree. If you look at the Boateng incident, I saw that. That was outrageous. I saw what happened in Serbia, it was outrageous. I wrote to Danny Rose after what I saw in Serbia. It was outrageous. It was just outrageous. No just not because he's my player. It's any player.

## Appendix B: Piara Powar

### Conversation: Luke Augustus, Piara Powar - executive director of FARE (Football Against Racism in Europe)

**Recorded: Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

**Luke:** Do you think there is a problem with racism at a level such as the grass roots?

**Piara:** I think there has been, and I think it is probably the problem of reflecting local tensions. Issues are spinning around a local community and that would mean that there are issues that bounce into all areas of life including grass roots football.

It's about 22 guys on the pitch, with a few people on the sideline, no police there, there's no means of enforcement there; so when it kicks off it probably kicks off quite badly.

From what I see, I think it is better than it ever has been before because there is a reflection of community that as Britain's race relations has generally got better, then that area has got better as well.

**Luke:** Do you think it is working from top to bottom, or bottom to top?

**Piara:** I've always used to think that they occupy different spaces, but then you realise that what happens at the top does influence the bottom. The incidents such as John Terry's do filter into the grassroots level more than you would imagine.

**Luke:** What's being done at Grass Roots level to try and tackle the issue?

**Piara:** You need to talk to the FA and Kick It Out. I know that one of the stumbling blocks there has been with the county FA's is that they have trouble engaging with these sorts of agendas because the way in which the demographics and people in power there are. It's governing white men who don't really understand and engage with that part of their community.

In general I think there are enough paper policies out there to deal with this stuff it is just a question of limitation.

**Luke:** Where do you see, in the next five to ten years, in regards to Grass Roots football combating racism?

**Piara:** One of the things that the FA needs to be clear about is that as we see these issues at the top level, the agenda doesn't move on entirely, there is still the need to tackle issues at a grass roots level. Sometimes it is quite easy to follow the media focus and to jump around from grass roots to professional, stay there for a while and then think 'Ooh we've got a problem with the grass roots'. So again, I advocate a strong governing body in this country that does things that are required and needed rather than things that are a reflection of politics and football or of media attention.

## Appendix C: Sheffield and Hallamshire FA

### (i) Questionnaire

**Conversation: Luke Augustus, Richard Finney – Sheffield & Hallamshire FA Marketing, Communications & Charity Officer**

**Recorded: Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2013**

- **When did you start anti-racism and equality schemes?**

The County FA had always followed directives from the FA and we are now working towards The Preliminary Level of The Equality Standard as which was introduced for all sports by UK Sport. Sheffield and Hallamshire CFA have already successfully attained the Foundation Level Award.

- **What triggered these schemes?**

Again these schemes have been introduced across football and all County FA's are charged with working through a process that eventually sees Advanced Level achieved.

This will obviously take time to achieve and embed across the County FA's and eventually its member clubs.

- **What has been done?**

The County FA now has an Equality Advisory Group that meets at the moment on a monthly basis to prepare the way to the next stage of the quality standard.

It is envisaged that over the next two/three months the membership of it will increase in number.

- **How can/do you educate players, managers, fans, parents and referees on racism?**

All clubs and leagues are encouraged to work towards achieving Charter Standard status, particularly clubs that have teams from under 7 to under 16.

Part of the standards for this status relates to Equality and Diversity.

On all courses, i.e. referee courses, coaching courses there are elements of how to deal with situations that may arise relating to Equality and Diversity.

- **As a County FA what are the expectations of your clubs and players on this stance?**

As you can imagine, all clubs/teams are expected to abide by what is acceptable/not acceptable regarding appropriate behaviour both in and outside of football.

- **How can a player or a team report a racial incident to you?**

All teams/players are able to report any incident relating to Equality and Diversity to the County FA. Whilst initially the report could be made verbally to the office, this would normally necessitate a written report.

- **What methods would your FA use to investigate the alleged incident?**

The reporting procedure for all incidents whether for misconduct on or off the field or in this case for a racial issue, would follow a similar pattern – i.e. both parties would be invited to put forward their case. Initially this would be in writing, then if required and/or appropriate a personal hearing could take place.

- **What punishments could be expected if the alleged defendant is found guilty?**

This totally depends on the nature of the incident whether other people/institutions need to be involved, e.g. the police, and of course may be subject to an appeal etc.

If found guilty any punishment would normally be double or treble any “football” punishment that is the norm for the case.

- **Has your county worked closely with schemes such as 'Kick it Out' or are you given guidelines by the National FA?**

Yes and yes.

- **How many leagues, clubs and players are affiliated with your FA?**

Approximately – 75,000 players.

Leagues – 18

Clubs - 2600

- **What are the proportion of ethnic minorities within those leagues and teams?**

At present no specific records are kept but (and in answer to the question below) it probably reflects the racial make of the area in general. South Yorkshire has “pockets” of where the proportion of ethnic minorities is greater than in other areas.

- **Does that reflect the societal racial make-up of the area in general?**
- **Have there been any reportable instances to your FA in the last five years?**

Yes.

- **If so, how many and what were they?**

Around 10-12 instances each season fall into this category.

- **In your opinion has racial instances at a grassroots level reduced in the last 15-20 years?**

Yes.

- **Why for yes or no?**

A greater awareness of the need generally to be more accepting of people and individuals from other countries.

- **Do you think more can be done by your FA and national FA in general?**

The FA and the County's work closely with appropriate bodies e.g. Kick It Out nationally, FURD locally.

- **In the next five years where do you see grassroots football moving with racism?**

I am sure relevant strides towards even greater integration will take place over the next few years.

- **Do you think the professional game's stance on racism has influenced the amateur game positively or negatively?**

Positively. Role models are an important aspect of life.

- **Are there more instances reported at an adult, youth or women's level?**

Adult male.

- **Can you expand about your County FA four-year plan? What does it involve?**

With regards to Equality and Diversity, the County FA is clear in its stance and will work towards achieving the standards stated earlier in the relevant time period. Indeed the Advisory Group is looking to achieve the next standard a good six months before the suggested deadline.

- **In comparison to other counties where do you see yourself in tackling racism at a grassroots level?**

I would suggest we are in the upper quartile of success in tackling racism when compared to other counties. Our Board and Council are very keen what we maintain and develop our knowledge and expertise in handling any incidents and work towards ensuring our clubs, teams and players are aware of their own individual responsibilities in this area.

(ii) Meeting

**Conversation:** Luke Augustus, Richard Finney – Sheffield & Hallamshire FA Marketing, Community & Charity Officer, Rob Wharton – Sheffield & Hallamshire FA Football Administrator

**Recorded:** Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2013

**Richard:** I'm fairly new to the post as I've only been here since November, the Chief Exec is new also, but needless to say is that we follow directives from the FA. The answer is at the minute now we're working towards the sports equality standard.

**Luke:** That's part of your four year plan isn't it?

**Richard:** Yes, that was done by UK Sport for all sports. The FA then decides which route to take. It begins with foundation, preliminary, intermediate then advanced. We already have foundation level, there's now an advisory group of us that meet monthly. We then take the organisation from foundation to preliminary to intermediate to advanced. The FA have said by 2015, our target is to not take that long. We're one of the larger county FA's but as we're so tightly-knit it's a bit easier and we have organisations that helped us along the way. Locally from the 1980/90's a foundation called FURD – Football Unites Racism Divides. Howard Holmes started the work in an area of Sheffield called Sharrow – which was mainly ethnic. It's become well-known for this particular area. Back in 1998, one of the lads at a local school in Sheffield was West Indian and at a table football competition there was 26 different languages spoken in Sheffield – there's probably more now but that's how many the council recognised. In each of the four major towns Doncaster, Rotherham, Sheffield and Barnsley the socio-economic background is different.

**Luke:** The national census shows the white population of Sheffield up to 79%, Barnsley 96.6-98.2%, Doncaster 92.5%-96.6% and the same with Rotherham.

**Richard:** When you think there's only 4% that aren't white in Barnsley it isn't surprising. But in each of the towns, for example my town Rotherham, there are pockets. We had a women's England match in Rotherham and we helped to co-ordinate the attendance for it. What happened was we had two England players come down to help promote the game. They went to two of the nearest schools closest to the ground and if you go into those schools you'll see everything and everybody. You go a mile or two up the road and it'll be a white only school. In Rotherham there's certain areas, there's a road called Fitz-William Road heading towards Doncaster with one side of it Asian and the other side is basically Eastern-European. One school on the East-European side literally had 36 new youngsters arrive in one go – not in September either. They were put in social housing in the Eastwood area of Rotherham. I live in an area called Thorpe Hesley and there is probably about 4000 people living there now. If there are 10 people that aren't white – that will be it. It's a predominately white area.

**Luke:** Where I come from in Kent, there's an area called Gravesend which has a large Asian population. From that area there is a team called Guru Nanak with a main Asian core with a few white players.

**Richard:** In Sheffield, and quite famously as well – FURD would have helped them at the time, there is a sports club. It's mainly football and cricket and they got funding for a specific sports field and to build their own facilities. They're called Caribbean Sports. They're still going. The 1<sup>st</sup> team football team play at County Senior standard – just below getting paid. They have a successful cricket team also. Their team is mixed now. Originally when they started it was for just black people.

**Richard:** The disciplinary process is the same, regardless of what colour you are. We get on average 10-12 racist reports a year. The same procedure would be followed if it was me be and foul and abusive to someone who was black, Asian or white. However, if you are found to be guilty – the punishment is likely to be two or three times more. If someone is reported then they have to have the opportunity to defend themselves.

I don't think we have ever had any instances reported on a women's level.

Society has changed so that is one of the reasons that racism in football has changed. And yes I would say that is because of the growth of multi-cultural area.

**Luke:** Do you think many ethnic minorities play grassroots football or go into other sports?

**Richard:** It often depends on their schools and their families as well. Even though we are now talking about second and third generations, that will have an effect. It partly depends on what friends you make also. For example, my old school has had a big influx of Eastern Europeans joining and often football is there way out. You often don't have to talk to play football in a sense. Communication comes through sport.

**Luke:** So it's almost like the migration of ethnic minorities are being reflected in football?

**Richard:** Yes and it will continue to do so. There is an East European team called Tusaale in our leagues, for example.

**Luke:** Have there been any reportable racist instances to your FA in the last 5 years?

**Rob:** Yes. They are rare, but as Richard said there are around 10-12 a year annually. Compared to what one may class as a standard sending off, two yellow cards or calling the referee something and you get a red card, they're classed as misconduct as there is usually a lot of groundwork to do.

One of the cases I've had this year was difficult as no-one had heard it. Ideally you get someone independently to verify it, and in an ideal world you get someone who admits it – that would make my life so much easier. Unfortunately with the stigma of coming out with a racist comment people are happy to say sometimes 'yeah I did call him this' but with the racist comment it's sometimes difficult to prove. The majority of them are a player walking by and being getting called something by an opposing player. The thing is who's heard that? Well you will have as you're the victim and the opposing player has because he said it, but has the referee, have your teammates, have the supporters? From our point of view that is difficult because we are going into a battle. We deal with the written complaint and any written complaint will have a consequence. I mean there was one guy with three different instances and two I could prove, one came back saying 'no it was him that called me this', but then it's like why have you not reported this?! You have to take it on the chin but you're thinking he's a racist. But then again you're thinking I'm going to have charge him for both but I can't tell you

what I did in the end, but it is difficult at times. I've had police working in tandem with us at times on these cases and they are very difficult to prove sometimes. I mean the Luis Suarez one for example; we have a guy here who was on there and you have a lot of third party comments 'did he say that', and people who can read lips get involved. I don't have that but the bottom line is we try to be fair and we always try to come up with an answer. Alright it may not be an answer that everybody wants but we try our best.

**Luke:** Touching upon that, have there been any cases that have taken so long to prove?

**Rob:** The stock answer I would give is that if I get a complaint from you today and I acknowledge that, then I have a deadline straight away. I have 90 days to investigate and come out with a charge. Once I've charged someone, I've got six months from the day of the original complaint to finish it.

**Richard:** If someone is charged, do they automatically stop playing?

**Rob:** Yeah they can be. In football law it can be really good. In all sports, you're guilty until proven innocent. That's why if you hit a referee, for example, we could suspend you straight away. Now if it was a criminal case it would be the other way round and you could still play. If you take athletics as an example and you get a dodgy B sample and it's not you, a third party tainted it or something, then you're suspended straight away and you have to down and prove to me why you're innocent.

**Richard:** The fact that county FA's are down the route of equality and diversity, having appropriate standards that are acceptable to the Football Association and to society in general and being able to embrace everybody. I suppose when it's all said and done, one of the targets for the Football Association, and filtered down to the county FA's, is growth and retention. It's like when they didn't allow females to play football you straight away got rid of half the population. The same applies to people with different nationalities, backgrounds etc. you're making it difficult to yourself to do what you want to do.

**Rob:** That's a good point. We have to be fair, whether it's going down a racism or assault case.

**Luke:** Talking about role models and looking at the recent John Terry and Luis Suarez cases, do you think they're isolated incidents that won't reflect on the grassroots game or not?

**Rob:** I definitely think they will directly affect the grassroots campaign and especially the RESPECT campaign. In my opinion things have to trickle down from the top first and it will clear it up. There's a code of conduct we all have to abide by like any kind of job.

**Richard:** A code of conduct is across everything, not just different communities. You should be treated on the pitch equally. If a racist incident takes place and, as Rob said earlier, if you the problem that only have two people hear it, the person who said it and the person who heard it, it then it becomes difficult. But you can have that comment made between two black people, two white people or whatever and it may not be deemed racist but it can be seen as personal – you still have the problem of proving.

**Rob:** With racist abuse it depends on how the person, the victim reporting it, perceives it. So a racist comment that you think, 'wow you shouldn't have said that', and the other guy is thinking 'I know this guy well, you should see what he calls me', but it may have offended someone in the crowd and then suddenly becomes a racist incident. The legalities of it are quite tricky; I just

want to get a fair result. If that means signing a guy inside forever then that's it – done. If it's no further action then that's it. A lot of the time I'm on a knife-edge as there is always someone I won't please, but as long as I'm happy and I think I have been fair, what else can I do?

**Luke:** It's interesting you just mentioned the legalities of the crowd. Have you ever had instances like that?

**Rob:** Yeah I had a situation in a semi-pro match where there was a black guy and white guy on opposing teams. The black guy was the white guy's best man at his wedding; they had nicknames for each other which an independent panel would deem racist. They were calling each other these names throughout the game. Someone in the crowd heard what the black guy called the white guy and because he was offended by it, I had to raise the charge. Now it's a mitigating factor just because I raised the charge, and it was an individual charge for that particular player, and he went nearly as far as saying 'yeah but look what he was calling me, but I don't want to get him into trouble because I know what game we're playing'. It's a mitigating factor nonetheless, I can't remember what punishment we gave him, but like anything if I abuse you on the pitch I will get a two game suspension and if it's a racist comment, depending on your record, it will automatically double or treble to four or six games.

**Richard:** It's about the written law; you have to do what's laid down. He may not have meant it, but he said it.

Thankfully there aren't many, in 10-12 in the amount of matches played in this area, that isn't many. There is the opportunity for good role-models sometimes. Don't forget football itself is an emotive game, played at speed no matter what level you play at, it is a physical game. My wife always asks 'why is there trouble on terraces at football but never at rugby?' I reply to that by saying at rugby all the trouble is played out on the pitch with players slugging it out.

**Rob:** Where's that old adage that football's a gentleman game played by thugs, whereas rugby is a barbaric game played by gentleman.

**Richard:** Yeah that's just the way it is. Rugby is very stop start, whereas football is very quick.

**Rob:** Let me ask you then, do you think everyone guilty of an E3 of improper conduct and racism charge is a racist?

**Richard:** Probably not.

**Rob:** I've got an incident where I have had to work with FURD. An Eastern-European team had two players sent-off, and rightly so, so after the game one of the players came up to him and accused him of being a racist. Technically that is intimidating the official and being racist by accusing him of that. The worst thing you can call a referee is a cheat. Is that referee a racist? No, but I think the player said it because his English was so limited; he didn't how to get back at the referee. We suspended the player for what he said.

**Luke:** With multi-culturalism continuing to grow with migration etc., what are your thoughts on where we'll be racism at a grassroots level in five years' time?

**Richard:** The main thing is that society is different to what it was 20 years ago and racism is perceived differently. It's about chartered standard clubs and educating people. That's not

the easiest route, but it's about people on the touchlines, i.e. parents, who have to set the example and not abuse people but rather encourage them to play. But it's this idea of winning at all costs, and it's getting better because the people at the top are having to make it.

**Rob:** You see, doing what I do I'm more pessimistic because a lot of it has to do with ignorance. Whether it's got a racist overtone, it's verbal or physical etc., society is changing but I do always back the thing that people have that 'Jeremy Kyle factor' now where everybody has an opinion and they forget so a lot of it is misguided. When I was a manager, the best thing for me was that the whole team worked as a collective from the players and parents. The main benefit is that the kids learn massive life skills, they all learnt some respect. If every team could be like that then I would have no job. In five years' time, it would hopefully all be gone and we live in a utopian society. However, sadly people on this planet are always having a go at others – whether that be violent, physical or racist. To put it into context I have an example for you. We had two teams in 2011 who had the match abandoned because of one the players hit the referee. Our historian had researched that the same thing happened between the two teams in 1901 – with my point showing that nothing had changed.

**Richard:** Things have moved on since the 1970/80s, the concept and the introduction of chartered standard clubs has helped tremendously. It will and I think it will continue to move in the right direction. With advisory groups set up here for equality and diversity, the target is 2015 we're meant to have the lot by, but we're actually in front already. In comparison to other FA's it's difficult to gauge as the country is different. With what happens in Sheffield and Hallamshire is probably entirely different to Dorset or London.

**Rob:** It should all be the same though, but some counties are better than others. Some county FA's, I don't think they do it on purpose, aren't as strong certain aspects. We've now got Uriah Rennie on our disciplinary board to help us on issues, for example.

**Richard:** It's all about as a county how you look at things. With equality and diversity, as an FA our work is done internally at the minute, with five of us on the committee - and four of us being staff and the other one being a council member. The idea is now to get other people outside the organisation to be part of the advisory group. They will be carefully selected, for example FURD, because they have a more hands on approach as to what goes on and why.

**Rob:** In a race or misconduct incident it is nice for me to have ex-players, council members who are unique to help me as I'm meant to be totally independent.

**Richard:** I think there's a general feeling that as an organisation that we must move towards embracing everything.

**Luke:** About educating players on racism, do you think it's yourself as an FA that have to do that or is it parents that have to do that as well as schools?

**Richard:** Within football I think it has to come from all sources. In a sense schools have a different role to play, in my opinion, because that has to be a general bit. Now you can pick the general bits out with what you tell them at football but what you want anybody to be is a better citizen. It's not just about playing football it's about people skills. One of my sayings has always been win modestly and lose graciously – that's how it should be. The only way that football can grow in this country is by through embracing more people in. You can only

do that by making them feel wanted. If you have a racist problem in a particular town, city or whatever, and that stops them coming in, then you're defeating your own object. As football's grown since the 1970's onwards, what has made this easier is that teams became more multi-cultural. As a result you become more understanding about their cultures, as they were your teammates. Football recognises it has a part to play integration and this is exemplified by equality and diversity.

What comes down from the top is the fact as a county you have to make sure you integrate societies. I'm sure if Sheffield and Hallamshire weren't doing things appropriately then people from the FA would come up and tell us that we're doing things wrong.

If you look at the national figures it will probably say 11% ethnic population throughout the country.

**Rob:** Football is emotive, emotions can spill but it needs players as well to referee.

## Appendix D: Glenn Bowie

**Conversation: Luke Augustus, Glenn Bowie (Former manager at grassroots level)**

**Recorded: Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2013**

**Luke:** What are your thoughts on the way they dealt with Terry and Suarez?

**Glenn:** The way they dealt with them was totally wrong. That was the time when they could have made a statement. That set the so called FA cause against racism way back. They decided that because of the European Championship they needed John Terry. He got kicked out anyway because he did a dirty tackle. I watched that game live when it happened and I said to my son 'he just called him a black cunt.' I saw it as clear as day. I thought he'd get done for that as you saw it, unlike with Suarez. He definitely said it and got nothing. He was still treated as a hero. That's where they should have said he'd never play for England again. He was a captain of England. He said the words. What made it worse is that after the game he made a statement saying he didn't say anything, and then he changed his statement to say he called him a 'blind cunt.' No way. This is the problem we have because it comes down to money. If that had been Joey Barton, they'd have kicked him out of the league. The FA would have banned him for two years with a £200'000 fine, but because John Terry was such an important player they delayed the trial because it comes down to money. It's a terrible thing to say but even the black layers accepted it and they shouldn't have done. Ashley Cole went to court to stand up for him. He would have been better admitting that he said it in anger, lost his temper and it came out, and that he apologises. People would have forgiven him. It happens a lot when you're angry; you say things to your wife, wives to husbands etc. When you're angry you say things in anger that you don't mean. Sometimes people say they're going to kill someone but it doesn't mean they will, they've just said it in anger. I'm not condoning it but he would have been better if he stood up like a man and admitted he said it as he was wound up. That would have been better as now people think he's a racist for what he said, especially as he tried to worm his way out of it. That makes it worse and they're not putting the penalties on there that are stiff enough. They're still letting the Galatasaray teams play in European football when they should be banned. Why is FIFA not banning them with a yellow or red card? That would give a bigger signal to Europe and the teams and fans would get angry that they're not playing, and understand why.

I think it was dealt with totally wrong. I think it should have been harsher. They had the prime example, the perfect opportunity to make it a serious statement and they messed it up. It made a mockery of the law as the law found him not guilty, and the FA found him guilty. Law courts are all about the best solicitors and money, so racism in court becomes a perception and it has to be proven with intent.

It works the other way too. It doesn't help when Chelsea accused that referee [Mark Clattenburg] of being racist when he wasn't. Action should have been taken against the Chelsea players as they suspended that player straight away. They didn't do that with Terry, but the referee went through months of hell until Chelsea admitted it wasn't said and they didn't hear it. They just said it to create a scene. The referee was mic'd up and everything's recorded. If you call a false call then they should be punished too. You can't have people using the race card. Now it's made the issue go back in the favour. It should have been hard

for Suarez and he got a bigger ban than Terry. Terry should have been stripped. He can still play for England, and to me that's totally wrong. The moral code is missing.

Racism comes down to morals. Now we put greed and fame above everything else. We accept them if they're famous, rich, powerful, in favour. When they're out of favour we come down hard on them. That's what we need; we need to have a set of rules, regardless of position, saying this is what happens and if you're guilty you're not playing. That's what we're lacking.

Racism in the stands has reduced dramatically. I used to go to games and some of the things you would hear were awful. When people call it 'banter' that's rubbish, it's just nasty and rotten to the core. There's a limit to banter, and people know when it's banter. Black players make black jokes in the changing room as that's an acceptable bit of banter between yourselves. When you say it in the street and think the other person doesn't mind, maybe he does mind being called that. So why do you think it's alright? Just don't say it. It's up to people to speak up and say 'I don't appreciate what you're saying.' People have to learn to speak up, because the more people that do, the better. It will be awkward; who wants to have a confrontation every time someone says something. It's difficult but people need to stand up and make it clear cut.

When we played Guru Nanak, the religious side [the name] of it I didn't agree with, but I had no problem with the manager and players. I didn't look at our team and theirs based on ethnic background, I saw it as Real 60 were playing their team and I wanted to win as I wanted to win the league. It was a team of players for me that I wanted to look after. Some other managers would say 'oh yeah you played the paki team.' It's difficult for me as I told them they were a good team, and played great football. Once they realise you're not going to be racist too, they stop the subject. They're looking for people to agree. I reminded them that I was professional by saying 'Who, Guru Nanak? Yes they're a great team, good manager.' By saying that I made it clear I wasn't going down that road and I didn't have to get into an argument. That same guy will then be two-faced to Guru Nanak. That team ended up winning the league and they were ruthless players. The team sent abusive text messages to me on my mobile years ago and I put a stop to it.

For me, football is about getting the most out of my players. I wanted to get commitment, passion, aggression – that's what it should be. I never looked at you as a black player, you were just a member of my team. You all worked hard or got told off. That's the way people should be treated. The word 'black' shouldn't come into the occasion. Don't label yourself. Why should you have to fill your skin colour in on a census form? What has it got to do with anything? It shouldn't be on there.

The only time we had a racist problem was with Timi. At half time I went to see the manager and said it's not acceptable. He tried to justify it by saying his player was a hot-headed player. I told Timi to play the game and beat him in the game, but never let anyone bully you. I'd rather you got sent off for defending yourself. If someone punches you, punch them back. Don't let the referee deal with it, you're letting the cowards get away with it. They're using the referee and the system because they can. Racists are cowards; they won't stand up and say it as they're frightened. I told Timi he had to rise above it and beat him on the pitch. Don't shake his hand if you don't want to- show that on the pitch. The FA shouldn't have made Ferdinand shake hands. They should have got serious and taken action. Why would anyone

want to shake John Terry's hand anymore? Somebody should have told the players that no one was to shake the hand of John Terry. That would have sent a clear united message to the FA that no one would have shook hands with a racist. That would have sent a powerful message through a peaceful stance. Gandhi wanted change through peaceful means, but through change there was always violence.

**Luke:** Do you think the John Terry and Suarez incidents will have a detrimental effect on football at a grassroots level?

**Glenn:** Yes, absolutely. It sent totally the wrong signal. It's just saying if you're a good player then you'll get away with it. When Wayne Rooney was corrected for discipline, he had a three-match ban for a sending off and the FA fought to get him in the Championships. He kicked someone in the leg and they should have stopped him going.

It comes down to what the clubs want, and money and revenue. What message does it send to people? They had interviews and even now he [Suarez] could get player of the year. What will they do then? The FA should remove them from competition of receiving any award. If Terry goes through and they win the championship then you're having a confirmed racist lifting the cup. They could win the European Cup too. They're contradicting themselves by trying to rule out racism yet letting the culprit lift the cup.

**Luke:** When you were a manager did you get any directions from the league or FA about how to handle racism?

**Glenn:** No, not at all. Not even in the Kent league. They had the 'Fair Play' award where they pushed respect for the referee and spectators. When I was training they had a bit of information about racism in there. They don't give you an understanding of racism and don't educate you with talks or seminars where black players talk about how it's affected them first hand. Even videos would work. They were more concerned with trying to win the World Cup. Years ago they were a lot stricter as they had a moral code, but now that's gone as now it's just a money machine. At what price do we have this new football? The issue comes down to gamesmanship, winning at all costs, money, survival. It's amazing what people are willing to accept e.g. Cole and Terry. How will you succeed with racism in football when people shake hands as issues boil down to money. Ashley Cole is rich so he doesn't see it as a racial attack. They don't live in the real world and see what their actions are doing further down at grassroots. It doesn't affect them. They set a precedent that that behaviour is allowed. The decency is going. They haven't beat racism or tackled the problem.

**Luke:** Because society's changed?

**Glenn:** They're pushing the issue underground. They haven't stopped the racist guy; it's just that he's on CCTV. There need to be more education about racism to try and stop that culture.

**Luke:** How did you educate your team that racism is wrong?

**Glenn:** I'm Scottish, but I moved down here and my parents told me I was Scottish. When I went back to Scotland people said I wasn't Scottish, and it made me wonder who I was. I knew all the Scottish songs, battles etc. but no one cared. That made me realise how it felt to be isolated as all my friends told me I was English. I used to fight those that told me I was English. I've now made a rule with my children so I don't push their culture on them. In life

we have to make people belong and take them as we are. That's the secret for racism. We need integration in society to say these are the rules, and they will abide by those rules- there are no exceptions for race, creed, colour etc. I disagree when they call it a positive discrimination e.g. 'we should have more black MP's.' That's reserve discrimination. I grew up with the first woman prime minister, and Margaret Thatcher is my heroine. Very few people would say that. I believe in the right people for the right job, regardless of sex, creed and colour but I don't believe in a special helping hand as it makes people think you've only got the job based on your colour, sex, gender etc. You should get the job on merit only. Everyone should be entitled to the same education, the same job; there should be no discrimination or favouritism. You shouldn't tick boxes and not take the best candidates. It's a selection process to point scores and that's not right. You need people to believe in your cause. We have our own minds and beliefs and we should be individual in our own life, but a collective for the good of the country. There's nothing wrong with trying to be better for yourself, if along the way you try and help someone. It's about sharing the wealth. It's not fair that people who earn a good wage lose 50% on tax.

Bredhurst had some black players and they were a nasty bunch. One of the players called our player a racist name. People tried to justify it by saying he came from a dysfunctional family, but I told them it doesn't make a difference.

I have a problem with rap music. Most songs say 'nigger' so many times. That word is wrong. I don't understand it. Record companies allow people to label themselves. All the time it's being used in music then people in society ask why singers can say it but they can't. If a white person says that word to a black guy then it annoys them, but yet it's allowed in music. It should be banned straight away. Kanye West says that word a lot. We're in a strange period at the moment where people are unsure about how they can speak.

**Luke:** Do you think that most people thought Guru Nanak were a soft touch to begin with as they were Asian?

**Glenn:** I think everyone thought they'd be rubbish and a 'stereotypical Asian,' with turbans and unfit. Then suddenly we saw them and we knew they were good players getting good results and beating everyone. I told the team we need to win this game to win the league, and we did. I hope none of you at any time thought anything about them being Asian players. There was an inquisitive side as we'd never seen an Asian team. I was more surprised that they had mostly white players in their team. I remember that they were good players. They met you who were a physical team; we were hard but fair and determined to go for the ball.

**Luke:** I remember Guru Nanak's first team was against Swallows. My friend thought they'd all be Asian.

**Glenn:** Sikhs don't often wear their turbans in football. Their religion also takes up a lot of their time, so it used to be a problem. Through sport and music you can mix cultures in a better way than anything. It's a good thing. You have a level playing field to integrate people. Imagine being one black guy out of 200 players, you'd stand out, but you'd have to be good to be part of the team. It makes you wonder how the first manager who chose the first black player felt. Eventually players don't see colour, they see individuals on the field. You're seeing the person, not the colour. When John Barnes played for England, I saw him for him and not colour. We need to stop labelling; it's about being a footballer. The Music of Black Origin

awards and Black Footballers Lawyers Association causes a division with people as they are only looking after black people.

We're moving towards a better unity. The Olympics had a big unity- disabled, black and white etc. Daly Thomson used to be my hero. He didn't see himself as black, just the best athlete in the world. We have to be careful it doesn't become a PR matter. We can do this by placing strict rules into the game and not making exceptions for people. Everyone would appreciate that.

**Luke:** Did you consider reporting the Timi racism incident to the FA?

**Glenn:** I didn't report it as I didn't see or hear it, and it becomes hearsay. They'd say they didn't say it. I spoke to the manager. I reported an incident in the past at Faversham when someone threatened to shoot Carl in the first season, and it cost me £200 and a hearing as I pulled everyone off the pitch. I knew they were out there to hurt you all and I got penalised for protecting the team. Even the referee apologised to me.

**Luke:** Do you think they're hypocritical?

**Glenn:** Yes, that's the problem Luke. They see racism on the on the beat. There was another incident at Cuxton [vs Cuxton 91] where the dad was persecuting two black players. I spoke to the dad and told him to keep his thoughts to himself or take it up with me – don't intimidate my players. One of our black players, Ryan, scored the winning goal. I may be wrong in the way I do things but I do believe you have to stand up to bullies, protect yourself. I'm not saying to be a bully or to risk your life, but be willing to stand up for what you believe is right. Colour is irrelevant; you need to have a moral code.

**Luke:** Were you sceptical when we played Fulston again?

**Glenn:** We played them again in the same season. I told Timi to play his game and if anyone was racist then Timi could tell him they'd take it up after the game, with support from the team. Calmly walk up to him and explain. Don't give him attitude as that's how people like him win. If Timi had rushed up to him and punched him then he'd have been seen as the aggressor. You need to show the racist for the coward he is. Let the other team see how good you are at sport. That's the thing with sport- people have to validate how good you are. Work together as a successful team.

**Luke:** Did you feel like you had to speak to the other black players on the team and tell them to stay calm?

**Glenn:** Yes, you were all friends and if someone upset you then you all wanted to protect each other. I told you to win it through clean football instead, no tackles or backing down, and we beat them well. They were upset and tried to blame it on the referee. It worked well as you went out with a desire to show them how good you were.

**Luke:** The racist one tried to join our team.

**Glenn:** Yes he came for training and Timi said he didn't want him to join. I told him I knew who he was but if he comes on our team then perhaps we could educate him. I do believe that racism is taught, so it can be untaught. It's not a natural reaction. You're not born with it, and as you age you can realise there's no need for it. You need to show these people you're a person the

same as him- with worries and the same hobbies. I told the team to vote on it, but personally I thought we needed to teach him about a team.

**Luke:** Every team I've been in with you has had a majority of black players.

**Glenn:** But I didn't see it that way with you. I saw players and talent, not colour. It was nice to see a passion and belief. We were beating teams from the Kent League. That's because we worked hard as a unit. We didn't even have a goal keeper but still did well. It wasn't anything to do with culture. Football evens things out, that's why sport is so good. There needs to be an embedded rule so people know it's a clear line in racism.

I don't agree with people voting for Barack Obama just because he's the first black president. It overshadows the actual person and the policies. We want to hear about his beliefs. He's an effective speaker, but what has he done for the country, especially black people? Where's the people choice? Surely racism is a big issue in today's society, but where is that on the agenda?

**Luke:** Look at the Di Canio thing at the moment? [Reaction to his appointment as Sunderland manager]

**Glenn:** Same problem – he says he's a fascist but not a racist, which you can be. Mugabe is a fascist dictator. I don't agree with fascism, but at least he's not denying it.

**Luke:** Where do you see racism at a grassroots level in five years time?

**Glenn:** I don't think the FA have been good at tackling racism, they've plastered over it. They're ineffective. FIFA control football now, rather than the FA. It's down to money. FIFA are meant to be multinational but the countries like Russia, Poland don't care about racism. They're saying they're against racism but they're just PR exercises. They're not taking the proper stance. I think racism will evolve out of football due to integrated society. Nothing to do with what the FA are doing. As there's a larger migrant population in Europe, it has changed the ballgame and lowered racism in the country. Now you have people of white colour coming into the country, so what can the racists do now? They can't tell if they're from Poland, or Germany, or France, and they can't tell them to leave. In the Premier League there are more mixed players coming in from different countries and cultures, as in society as there's a massive influx of migrants moving around the country people now accept them.

**Luke:** When I went to Sheffield to interview them they said there are two clubs, a Caribbean sports team and a white Slovakian team.

**Glenn:** I don't like that idea as it causes segregation. We don't want that, we just want 'Rochester Invicta/ Sheffield Tigers'. We don't want to bring exclusivity into teams as that causes isolation. If you called a team 'The Caribbean Twisters' then no white players would join as they'd think it was only for black players. People would make stereotypical comments behind their back. Trevor McDonald is from the Caribbean but he speaks wonderfully, so you can't put people in boxes. That's why you can't segregate it.

**Luke:** Do you disagree with Guru Nanak's stance that the team is mostly Asian orientated and that they integrate other races into it.

**Glenn:** Yes. Fair enough if you start a team that's open to everyone. To set one up solely for one race is wrong in my opinion. It creates more segregation when you don't need it, and it stops people joining that team. We thought they'd all be Asians.

**Luke:** Especially as when you approached you saw the temple right by the grounds.

**Glenn:** Yes, so you would think that team aren't for you. As people evolve they'll realise it's just a name, but that hinders the team and joining it. In that time a lot of damage will be done and it will stop a lot of people joining. How do Asians training together mix with other teams? They'll be alienated and they're not letting them mix. It's a lot to do with religion and fear. They force them into religion. A lot of Sikhs don't wear turbans now, and cut their hair instead. Religion is weakened as people want to fit into the society they're in – they want to have the nice haircuts and be accepted. It's down to peer pressure. I feel sorry for those who can't wear what they want due to their religion, its more segregation.

**Luke:** I noticed that at university on my course, as I'm from the South and they don't see many black people in the area.

**Glenn:** Exactly, it shouldn't be a problem. The media are making it difficult. People don't know how to speak to people in case they say the wrong thing. We should just integrate and be seen as a person rather than the colour. It's a perception.

I think racism in football will eventually get better. The minority footballers in the game means that people can't oppose it as it's everywhere. Society will change it, not the law of society. The problems with racism are proof, an intent, and the missing penalty for racism. Racism is a hard process to prove. Most racists are secretive cowards who hide. They aren't out in the open; they don't wear a flag or a badge, or a label. That's why people have to be on their guard. When you do see it then you have to report it, and not be frightened. It's a waste of time going to the FA as they can't prove it, and they don't want to. Unless you have proof you have two options; don't let him bother you or sort it out between you after the game. Reporting it doesn't always work, it takes ages.

Why do you think the travellers and Asians are tolerated in society? The travellers are accepted through a fear. They're scared of attacking them in case they all attack. It's a fear where people are standing up for themselves. Your parents Luke probably had a hard time in Kent when they first moved here. You have to be brave enough to stand up and say you're not accepting it, as eventually you will win. I don't mean for you to be aggressive. Be an honourable kind man, but don't tolerate abuse in life.

It will get better. It's hard for me to fully understand the way black people must feel in this country. I think black people get a harder time than the Chinese or Asian. It's purely as skin colour is an easy target. It's getting a lot better. You can't beat nice people, nice people always win. Don't ever change, always think of the positive and be strong enough to get over that. By mixing with people and showing who you are, people will see the person. Ensure you get things in life because of who you are, not your colour. First impressions are always weird but get people to see who you are. Be yourself, believe in who you are and your moral code and you'll be fine.

I do believe the FA and FIFA are weak and that change will come through grassroots football by people mixing at the sidelines and working together. Integrated schools and society will

change it. FIFA and those bodies won't ever change it as they are money driven. If it isn't in the heart it isn't worth having.

## Appendix E: Timi Oluwole

**Conversation: Luke Augustus, Timi Oluwole (Footballer at grassroots level)**

**Recorded: Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2013**

**Luke:** So Timi, have you ever been racially abused playing football?

**Timi:** Yes.

**Luke:** Could you describe the incident.

**Timi:** It was near the end of a game in an under 15's match. Me and another player went in for a 50/50 and he came off a bit worse. He started swearing at me so I ignored it. Then he said 'dirty nigger'.

**Luke:** This may be a dumb question, but at the time how did you feel? Were you shocked that he called you that, or just pure angry?

**Timi:** I don't know really. He seemed that kind of person, so it threw me off but didn't really surprise me.

**Luke:** Did you feel that way because he had a nasty side to him? Was he a hot head?

**Timi:** Yes. Sometimes when I'm playing games I have to watch myself so I don't get into a situation where things happen. I'm playing a game and I want to win, so I'm not going to make myself play worse so I get in that situation, so if it happens, it happens.

**Luke:** There was a breakout caused by that. How did you try and recompose yourself and concentrate on the game? Do you feel that you were still upset and lost your rag, or did you blank it and try and concentrate on the rest of the match?

**Timi:** I let the ball go past me to clear my head and make sure I was still in the position to get the ball later. After that I went into things much harder. After that what's the worst thing that could happen? The worse thing would be that he could say it again. It doesn't make a difference to me.

**Luke:** Did anyone else hear it?

**Timi:** It was just me; he muttered it under his breath as he was running away. It wasn't like he squared up to me and said it or anything.

**Luke:** How did your team mates react to it?

**Timi:** I didn't mention it until the ball went out of play, as I wanted to concentrate on the game. I didn't tell the whole team, I told you and the captain. Callum told Glenn, and I told Glenn again at half-time.

**Luke:** What did Glenn say, as when I spoke to Glenn he said to me that he had a word with the manager or the player at half-time? What did Glenn say to you?

**Timi:** I think he told me it wasn't great that it happened, but to just concentrate on the game. This is what I was trying to do anyway, so it didn't really change anything to be honest.

**Luke:** Were you tempted to report it to the referee at the time?

**Timi:** I'm not sure. I can't imagine it would have made much difference. It would have put him on the spot. Even in professional football you can report it to the FA and they report it to UEFA and they get a ban. That means nothing, so imagine what it means at this small level of playing.

**Luke:** Yes. I asked Glenn if he wanted to report it, and Glenn said he felt that your team couldn't win as it was your word against the opponent's, and there was no physical evidence to prove it to someone that wasn't there. Did the player ever apologise?

**Timi:** No

**Luke:** Did he try and wind you up throughout the game?

**Timi:** No, it's the way I play. I blank out everything and concentrate on the ball and make sure I win it. I wasn't anywhere near him.

**Luke:** In your opinion do you think these incidents are common in an amateur game?

**Timi:** Yeah, really common. I have quite a few friends that it's happened to. I've been on a pitch with some of them, and this is against a team with some black players. It doesn't make a difference; if they're racist they're racist. It's going to come out at the end of the day.

**Luke:** Why do you think people say stuff like this? Do you think it's because you're better than them on a football pitch?

**Timi:** Yeah. It's not like I enjoy racism but if someone's saying it then I'm obviously getting in their head. Or other times it just happens because you threaten them and the first thing they say is 'nigger you've done this.' You can't really stop them can you?

**Luke:** When I spoke to Glenn, I asked why people said things like this. He said no one is born a racist, it depends on how they are brought up, and it's based on society and not football. Do you agree with this?

**Timi:** I don't know, it's hard to say. I think everyone's different. Some grow that way due to their parents, but some parents have no racial issues with any ethnic group. It's just up to the kid most of the time.

**Luke:** Do you think there's an overall issue with racism at a grassroots level?

**Timi:** I'd say yes but comparatively no. If you look at any other country in Europe we still have a way to go.

**Luke:** What do you think needs to be done? Better education from the FA towards teams and managers?

**Timi:** I don't think so. Personally I think making people aware of racism is a waste of money as everyone knows what racism is. The most effective thing would be to ban teams from competitions as at the end of the day you can't change thinking. It's the only fair way. We need to make them aware that racism isn't acceptable. On a grassroots level I think we need to throw

them out of the league, but I've heard of teams who have been thrown out and there's not much more they can do about it.

**Luke:** Glenn said to me that it's not about football teams; it's about teachers in schools. We were lucky that we went to a school with little ethnic tension. Do you think it's more about teachers and making them aware?

**Timi:** A school operates on a system where there's usually a group of people against one person. He could report it and be a snitch or deal with it. It's whether you're willing to deal with it. I think schools should deal with it by giving the students a choice of whether they want to deal with it or accept it.

**Luke:** Where do you see racism in five years time at a grass roots level? Improved or still problematic?

**Timi:** I think it will depend on what major bodies do, like UEFA or FIFA. Everyone watches football and will copy them. If they say it isn't acceptable then it will put pressure on the lower levels to do the same thing.

**Luke:** The recent incidents with Louis Suarez, and John Terry – do you think this will affect the amateur game? Glenn said to me that he thinks that Terry should never have had the opportunity to play for England again after he said that about Ferdinand, as it was clear he said it and had lied. Do you think children growing up who are Liverpool fans will stick by Suarez and be influenced by how he acted?

**Timi:** They're always going to be on his side if he's doing well for Liverpool. It blocks their view from the actual issue. Obviously he's a good player. It's hard to know when it happens as it's normally only the two players who ever really know what happened on the pitch. When it happened to me I could have told someone, but it's always your word against theirs and they always deny it so what's the point?

**Luke:** When I spoke to Sheffield FA they said they received 12 complaints a year and the problem with hearsay is that it takes up to twelve weeks. Twelve weeks is a long time and he could still be playing. Do you think it's worth reporting?

**Timi:** Yes it's annoying at the time but I get over the comment.

**Luke:** When we played the player in the cup game, what was going through your mind the next time we played them?

**Timi:** I was angry but I'd never go out of my way to intentionally hurt them, but I'll let him know I'm there. It's the only way I can win.

**Luke:** Did he make any more comments after that?

**Timi:** No that was the only time he said something

**Luke:** Your team supported you. Did that make you proud?

**Timi:** Yes that's the only way to deal with it. I knew the team had my back and were supporting me. It makes everyone play a bit better with intention.

**Luke:** When the player tried joining Borden on the training session, please tell me your thought processes. There was no referee and he was training with us. I know [Ryan] Emblen dealt him the final blow and took him out for four months, so what was going through your mind when he tried to join us? Did you think he was a hypocrite?

**Timi:** No, I take everything with a pinch of salt. I wanted to get my own back; of course I was going to give him a hard time.

**Luke:** Was it retribution for you?

**Timi:** Yeah I let him know I was there a little more than the regular game.

**Luke:** When games are heated – any game, for example the summer game when we thought someone was going to racially abuse you and Jordan and I were ready, do you think confrontation will always resort to racial insults?

**Timi:** In that situation, three of our team were black so I knew the second he said it there's a team with support. If you're in a team and you're the only black person, what can you do? I know the team will have your back but it's not really the same.

**Luke:** Glenn said to me that he can relate in some ways, but can never really relate to racial abuse. He was born and raised in Scotland and came to England and school classmates used to pick on him and bully him because of his roots. He's brought his children up to never have to choose between the Scottish and English. His dad still dislikes the English. How did it feel playing in predominantly white teams? Did you ever feel uneasy if racial banter was going around?

**Timi:** I've always known the people I've played with in teams. The racial banter isn't the same as being called the N word by someone you don't know.

**Luke:** Did playing in a black team make you feel more at ease e.g. at Real 60 when there were four black members in the team?

**Timi:** Yeah, it gave me the freedom to play the game and express myself fully without worrying about players turning on me. You get an idea of people's personalities after about ten minutes of playing the game, so when it's a black team then you worry less as if he makes a racial insult he's also taking on half of your team.

**Luke:** At Real 60 you had all your friends. If they were all white, would you have felt less at ease?

**Timi:** They'd still have had my back, but at the same time it wouldn't have been the same as telling another black player. They can't relate to it, they can only imagine how it feels.

**Luke:** Glenn said he didn't see our colour; he treated us all as equals. Are you happy that he treated us all the same and didn't base it on colour?

**Timi:** Yes he treated us all the same. I know then that if he said something bad about me it would be a fair reflection of me and not my colour or background. I think he's the best manager I've had in that sense. If you didn't play well then you weren't in the team – he was solid all the way through. Other managers get opinionated and base decisions on how they feel about people, and this affects the football. It can be racist, but I've always been lucky to be on teams with fair terms.

**Luke:** When you first heard of a team in the league with the name Guru Nanak, what were your initial thoughts?

**Timi:** I thought it would be an Asian team, and it was in the end.

**Luke:** Did you think it would be an easy win against them as they all had turbans on their heads?

**Timi:** It's hard to say. That was my first reaction but then someone said that they were quite a good team even though they were new. It was strange as you never really heard of a team with any religious links to it; you normally get standard football team names like Real 60 etc. It was new so I didn't know what to expect until the first time we played them.

**Luke:** Do you think everyone in the league were curious about their name and identity?

**Timi:** Yes I think they thought that when they stepped onto a pitch with Asians that their status would limit what they could do or think.

**Luke:** We first played them at home and won 4-0. They were top of the league and unbeaten. We played them at Christmas and Glenn said he found it interesting that a few of us said 'we can't give them a corner as they'd build a shop on it.' I can't remember saying that. We may have found it funny, but that's being racist.

**Timi:** We spoke about banter earlier, and if you your friends can take the banter racism, obviously you have to be careful but there's always the chance that someone may take it the wrong way and someone pushes the limit. It's never really okay but it's one of those things that will always be out there.

**Luke:** Do you think white players may be challenged by the ethnic minority of Guru Nanak, and their winning status?

**Timi:** Yes, the majority of them were ethnic, and they were a winning team so it limits people. The best reaction to racism is winning because that's why you're there in the first place.

**Luke:** As a player, if there was a black equivalent of Guru Nanak, would you real pressurised playing for them, or would you feel more relaxed? As a black player, would you feel more comfortable playing as a minority e.g. at Real 60, or would you prefer to be part of the dominant ethnic group?

**Timi:** I'm not sure. It's hard to say. If I ended up in an all black team that's fine and I wouldn't have to worry about racism, but I wouldn't pick a team just for that reason.

**Luke:** Do you think there should be more clubs like Guru Nanak? Glenn doesn't have a problem with the team, but he has a problem with the name of their team as it's a Sikh holy name. If there was an all Caribbean/ African team in the league I think that would cause more racial tension, especially if there was a heated game. I think there should be more integration. What do you think?

**Timi:** It's hard to say. If you put yourself in a situation where most of those people may have been subjected to racial abuse, if you form a group then it won't be an issue, but the tension will always be there. Subjecting groups to their ethnic groups would highlight and build that tension.

**Luke:** In Southampton I played against some Muslim Africans in an eleven-a-side team. Some of them were not familiar with fluent English. They had a large centre mid who was around 6 ft. 5 and I was worried that he's destroy me on the field, but he had no technique with the ball. Some of my team mates were making jibes 'Muhammad'. They weren't being racist, and I definitely agree with all you've said today. It's down to their societal background – where they've been brought up. Glenn said we played against Bredhurst and they had a traveller and we all knew, and he was a dirty player. I don't recall the team abusing him, but Glenn said we did. Glenn confessed that other team managers would approach him and say 'oh yeah you're playing the Paki team soon.' Glenn would say, 'no, we're playing Guru Nanak.' They wouldn't make the same comment twice to him.

## Appendix F: Howard Holmes

**Conversation: Luke Augustus, Howard Holmes – Founder of FURD (Football Unites Racism Divides) & now Chairman of FARE (Football Against Racism in Europe)**

**Recorded: Friday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2013**

**Luke:** Can you tell us a little about FURD?

**Howard:** It was set up in 1995 as a response to incidents of racist harassment in and around Bramall Lane, on nights before games and on matchdays. That's why we did it to try and turn it around really. Fans, youth workers, coming together with community groups, councillors, churches and the mosque therefore it was like a partnership approach.

**Luke:** What personally made you want to get so actively involved in it? Was it the whole issue of racism or the fact that people were coming to you and asking for help?

**Howard:** Both really. I've been involved in anti-racism work for quite a while, with various different projects, and I've been the sort of press spokesman of BIFA – Blades Independent Fans Association. So this was like a national follow on from that really, as they were a very active group who were trying to think about change. In addition I already had some good contacts through football, before we started the project, as result of that sort of work.

**Luke:** At the time do you think racism was a prevalent thing especially at grassroots football?

**Howard:** Yes, especially at grassroots football. The 'Kick It Out' campaign had started a couple of years earlier and there had been other initiatives such as 'Leeds United Fans Against Racism and Fascism', which was even before the start of 'Kick It Out'. That was formed in the 1980's at Elland Road. The emergence of black players at your particular club had an effect. We had a manager called Dave Bassett and as a club we had a few black players, two or three over the years, including the first ever black professional player called Arthur Wharton in the 1884/85 season. Dave Bassett brought in a number of black players such as Brian Deane, Tony Agana, Chris Powell, John Francis – so all of a sudden we had four or five black players in our team. Two of them in particular, Brian Deane and Tony Agana, went onto to be club heroes, so there's this family thing in football, which can work in favour of anti-racist work. People belonging to the same family regardless of colour if you're supporting to the team – so that was already having an effect. There wasn't mass chanting against black players at Sheffield United, in fact there hardly ever was - it was more shouting out of individual comments. It wasn't like at Leeds, for example, or at other grounds where you got waves after waves of racist chants in the 1980/90's. It was just the security around the stadium for people who were visible. There's quite a lot of evidence of ethnic minority families staying indoors on a matchday, or going out for the whole of the day until everyone had left. That was the environment, I wouldn't say it was a very hostile one at the football club, it wasn't, but it was more when you got to the ground. There weren't very many black or Asian faces at the grounds those days.

**Luke:** Would you say this filtered down to grassroots football as well then? Would you say that black and Asian groups were sceptical of joining football teams because of the racism?

**Howard:** Yes they were definitely. There certainly weren't any Asian teams that I knew of before we started. There was a Sunday team that started up called Highfield and some of our younger players went on to form a team called Sharrow United, that we started in 2000, as they were too young to get into that team. So all of a sudden we had two Asian sides when we hadn't had any so that helped matters. However though that was hard at first because we had a number of incidents – we had two games abandoned with Sharrow United largely because of racist comments, which led to fighting.

**Luke:** Do you think it was a good idea for these ethnic minorities to form their own teams or ultimately do you think there should have been more migration, so the teams could integrate and different ethnic backgrounds all combine?

**Howard:** I think the bottom line on that one is that if you want to play football, then you play football with who your friends are – that's what most teams are. So if that means that most of your friends happen to be Asian then fine, but that Sharrow United team had some white kids, African kids, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and some from a Caribbean background. It wasn't just an Asian team. I personally don't think it's a good idea to have Asian only leagues, for example, as that will not do much good for in terms of any development or in terms of any integration with mainstream teams.

**Luke:** Following on from that, do you think because they felt isolated they had to create these teams just to feel at ease at playing a sport they love?

**Howard:** I don't know if it was about feeling at ease, but I think there was something about playing with their mates as I said. It was potentially quite a hostile atmosphere a few years back and still can be but not as much, we like to think we paved the way to a certain extent because people weren't given the chance. There were black players who were playing teams right, but very few Asian players playing. You count them on one hand in local Sunday football so I think we did a bit to help open up a few doors.

**Luke:** When you first initially set up FURD was it hard to receive support or did you have a lot of clubs willing to help and back you?

**Howard:** When we first set up FURD, BIFA were at war with the chairman of the club at the time. Therefore when we first started setting up the project we had to be very careful with Sheffield United, but by the time we launched the project the chairman had handed over his position to a new chairman and Dave Bassett had been replaced by Howard Kendall in charge. Howard Kendall came to our opening event and spoke. In fact he spent most of the time telling everyone he wasn't a racist. There was a wide spread opinion in football that at his previous club Everton, they never signed any black players until the 1990's. He spent all his time speaking defending his decision or the decision of the club not to purchase Dion Dublin, saying that he wanted to buy him but the board stopped him from doing so. We got quite good support from Sheffield United early on, in terms of helping subsidise tickets, space in programmes and running events at their ground and so on. We had the launch of the project at their ground and they let us carry out a big survey via Sheffield and Hallam University into attitudes of fans at one particular home game, collecting questionnaires etc.

**Luke:** Just looking at your schemes, there's 'Streetkick' and the 'Positive Futures' scheme can you just elaborate on these initiatives since FURD has taken place?

**Howard:** 'Streetkick' took place because we got some money from the European Commission early on, as did a project in Dortmund and Bologna as well. The Dortmund project used their money from the European money to create a game called 'Streetkick'. They then brought it over to England and we had an event in Sheffield, Leeds and Huddersfield. One of our volunteers, who was also helping to run Sharrow United, decided that he was going to build one in his own time for FURD and we took that all around England. We then traded that in for an inflatable game which was a lot easier to set up, we took that to community events and has since gone to virtually every European Championships or World Cup finals over the last decade. It's been to Portugal, it went to Germany 2006, Austria and Switzerland, it didn't go to South Africa but it did go to Poland and Ukraine last year and it could possibly go to Brazil next year. We've used that quite extensively to bring people together especially the day before or on actual match days. It gets supporters from rival team to play games against each other and diffuse the atmosphere if a hostile one is building up.

**Luke:** You must be very proud of that alone and the fact that you've gone from taking it onto a global level?

**Howard:** Yes it is good because we've had a lot of people from Sheffield who have had the chance to go abroad to it. We've probably had over 20 people who are quite experienced at being abroad and dealing with foreign fans and knowing how to communicate with them. It is quite rewarding, at the time it is quite tiring, but it's enjoyable as well because it's quite a treat to be part of a major football finals. It's like an added bonus of the project.

**Luke:** Going back to racism at a grassroots level, did you ever have any players or teams come up to you for help?

**Howard:** Yes especially in the early days. A number of teams with black players in would come to us. Basically we had a lot of disciplinary problems. If you reacted to some of the comments then you would end up in a fight and then you would tend to get booked or sent off or even row with the referee as you thought he was being racist. Consequently we spent a lot of time in disciplinary hearings, so I used to spend a lot of time helping teams write their disciplinary cases together and write a proper statement. Also the Sheffield and Hallamshire County FA got involved with the project early on. They allowed me to go in as an observer and support and speak on behalf of teams that weren't connected with FURD. That was quite revolutionary in 1998/99, they were quite progressive as they had a young Chief Executive, who was in his late 20's, and therefore not a stuffy FA Council member or whatever. So yes I did give a lot of support to local teams and I still do now. We're trying to help a Slovakian team who have had a game called off for fighting a month ago – so we're still involved.

**Luke:** How many instances do you think you received annually and would you say that figure has reduced since FURD has started going?

**Howard:** I would probably say we were in double figures when we first started going and that's probably halved now. If I say we had 12 in a season in the 1990's, there's probably five or six now – probably less now actually maybe three or four a season and that could concern one team sometimes getting into trouble over and over again. A lot of it as well isn't just about discipline on the pitch; it's about getting into trouble off the pitch such as not paying your fines on time and getting an extra £50 on top of it – that's the sort of thing that forces

teams to fold. Players lose their registration because they won't pay off their fines, so in essence we do a lot of fire fighting.

**Luke:** Do you think at a grassroots level, football is a reflection of society or it's the tool that can change racism at grassroots?

**Howard:** I think it's both really. It does reflect, but that's why we called the project FURD as we believe it's got a great power for good as well as bad. There's good and bad things in football. Fundamentally underneath all the rubbish that happens, football is still a mass method of communication between people all over the globe. I definitely see it as a tool.

**Luke:** Where do you see the issue in five years time? Do you think it'll be better or do you think we'll still be where we are today?

**Howard:** Well the thing about racism is that you can't really predict how it's going to change. When we first started there was nothing about asylum seekers or refugees in 1995, that wasn't a big topic. There was nothing about Romanian or Bulgarian people coming over which is now a hot topic. You can't really predict, unfortunately racism is there and it keeps changing its spots. It just emerges in different ways. It's very hard to say where it'll be in five years. I'm not incredibly optimistic as the world is getting meaner and with the economic climate people are looking to blame others when things are hard, so I'm not incredibly optimistic to tell you the truth.

**Luke:** What more do you think can be done then? Could the FA and County FA's do more, how should people be educated on the subject?

**Howard:** I think everybody could do more. To be fair to the FA, we're a chartered standard club like many from junior level to adult level, and it is having an effect on matchdays at a grassroots level. Clubs becoming chartered standard is good because it covers areas such as how you should treat your opponent and the roles of parents and so on. It teaches people good behaviour from an early level and fairly simple things you could do to behave better. Racism in football often comes from badly behaved teams because they're badly behaved in other ways. I was at a match yesterday and there were blokes on the sides intoxicated, and that's the sort of environment that can lead to other things such as racist comments or abuse. The more you treat the whole of the game, the more it should be better for everybody.

**Luke:** With the recent professional game instances, such as Luis Suarez and John Terry, do you think that's undermined all the good work you've done and will it have a detrimental effect on the amateur game?

**Howard:** I think it's all been negative. Not so much the Suarez case but much more the Terry case. I think the Suarez one was more a case of Liverpool mishandling the situation with all that stuff about the t-shirts in support of him and everything. I think the Terry case is a lot different as he was the England captain and it was quite clear what he said. Everybody knew what he said but he comes up with some stupid excuse with regards to the context of it, which I don't think anybody seriously believed. The club came out straight away defending him within an hour; you had Andre Villas-Boas at the time saying nothing happened and that's all been sorted out and everything. They had their position of saying that Terry called him that as in asking a question – that was already worked out in a couple of hours. They then just stuck to that. The police then got involved so the FA didn't, wrongly in my

opinion, as they said they'll leave it to the police. Chelsea then intervened and asked can it be put it to the back to the end of the season, meaning so it won't be heard just until the Euros. As a result the FA stripped him of his captaincy and Fabio Capello resigned. The whole thing has been rubbish and the only good thing that has come out of this is that John Terry has lost his cult status and his career has gone downhill since but really it should have been dealt quickly by the FA. He should have had a decent ban for what he did and this would have stopped it all this resentment. That's the one thing that's upset black players like Jason Roberts and others who refused to wear the 'Kick It Out' t-shirt and so on, that's the one thing that's really upset them. It's still going on today with the bonfire chant about Rio and Anton Ferdinand, and stuff like that only definitely sets everything back.

**Luke:** Overall then, comparing it from 1995 to now how big a role would you say that you guys have had on tackling racism at a grassroots level and at the professional game?

**Howard:** Well we're part of other organisations. I think England has led the way and I think that's why the last year has been so difficult. It's a bit of reminder to everybody to not pass comment on other countries, as we need to get our own house in order first. I think we have had a big effect on change though – especially with fan culture. I think that has happened in other European countries as well through the spread of networking through FARE (Football Against Racism in Europe) really. There's things happening in other countries as well now.

## Appendix G: Tony Rana

**Conversation: Luke Augustus, Tony Rana – Chairman of Guru Nanak FC**

**Recorded: Friday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2013**

**Luke:** Do you know how the club was initially received by the other clubs? Were they sceptical of Guru Nanak?

**Tony:** I wasn't around at the time as it started in 1965, but it first started with a video. Go to our website and 'archives' and you'll be able to see a video of the guys. We celebrated 40 years, seven years ago and they made a video interviewing the older guys. You can get information about them from there.

**Luke:** How a big a factor do you think Guru Nanak playing in Gravesend has helped it sustained its growth to where it is today? Obviously coming from an Asian background and now it's a well-established club and has been going for over 40 years.

**Tony:** Within Gravesend it's a large Asian population community, so that's not been an issue unless you look at the demographics of Kent. Asians only account for 1% of the Kent population. So to be around for this long is a major achievement.

**Luke:** Have any players in your time received racial abuse before.

**Tony:** Yeah, a number of times. As a player, in the early 80's we came across it on a number of occasions. Recently this season as a manager I run the under 12's, we experienced it. We reported it and it went out on the Kent Messenger newspaper as the children were quite offended by what had happened. The team were from Strood and we played in the local Medway league. Then we appeared on Radio 5 and BBC Radio Asia, and several from there. It just got bigger and bigger. For the children it was quite disturbing as they didn't receive this at school. Then they got it on the football pitch. Gravesend is quite a large multi-cultural society so you don't experience racism so much. If you look at Strood it is a smaller community so there's an element of racism and the teams don't come across a team playing with a large number of Asians in one team. The team at the time had no black players and our team were either Indian, Pakistani descent, or Turkish background.

**Luke:** Was that from the children or parents?

**Tony:** From the parents.

**Luke:** How did the referee respond?

**Tony:** It was reported after the referee left then we raised it with the KCFA and the local league. We didn't want it to go any further as we found the process for reporting it didn't exist. We discovered that the process of the FA responding didn't exist, so that in itself was quite amazing that it was missing. So we re-played the team. The team took action and banned one or two players from their games. How effective that was we don't know. We said we would take them to the local temple so the children would understand what the Sikh religion was, but that wasn't taken up by the other team. It highlighted a number of issues about what they were missing. It was quite interesting. We've helped to fix some of that stuff. I'm chairman of the

KCFA (Kent Equality group) and I raised the issue there. We had media attention and it highlighted the lack of internal processes and how they responded. We've since written a document about how a club should report an incident, what the questions are and how they should log it etc, and how the KCFA should respond to that. It doesn't have to be just racism; it covers lesbians, gays, all equality issues. From that incident there are a number of things that have snowballed from it. We've been leading the forefront and improving things.

**Luke:** I find that staggering hearing that. I used to play for a team called Real 60.

**Tony:** I've heard of them.

**Luke:** I was one of four black players that have played against Guru Nanak etc. One of my team members got racially abused and I was speaking to him about it yesterday. I interviewed my manager and he wanted to report it but felt it would be hearsay – word against word. He felt that the FA needed more done at a managerial level to educate managers and teams.

**Tony:** Exactly, we felt the same. Even though I was the chairman of the KFCA equality group, I didn't know how to report an incident. I didn't know what number to ring, who to email, and that whole thing was missing.

**Luke:** I know this is a difficult question for you to answer, but what do you think the counties FA should do to address the issue?

**Tony:** The county FA have an action plan and we're presenting that to the KCFA in April 2013 about how they can improve on the equality issue. That's a three year plan. We're already at level one for meeting the equality standards for the FA. We're going for a level two this year and we're one of the leading county FA's. We're at the forefront with Surrey and Lancashire. We're ahead of everyone else and that was a good surprise. It made us realise it must be bad in some of the other counties. So we have a plan which we're going to implement, signed off this month and begin the implementation by the end of the month. One of the points is how to report an incident – feedback, who deals with it, how you interact with the leagues etc. We've been working with the FA as well so the FA has someone looking at it and monitoring how the counties are dealing with the equality issue. So if someone comes up with a good idea, she makes sure the rest hear about it. So the fact that we reported the incident was well received by the FA and they've now sent it to other county FA's making Kent an example. On the KCFA one of the members is involved with 'Kick it out' so we're quite fortunate that way.

**Luke:** I spoke to Sheffield and Hallamshire FA about the issue and they said it can take up to twelve weeks to resolve the issue. Is that the outcome?

**Tony:** Our one was shorter. Within four weeks the KCFA had already made the decision. The lack of witnesses made it an open and shut case. You couldn't pursue it without witnesses. It did highlight process problems within the KCFA and how it should be dealt with and what the local leagues should be doing.

**Luke:** I find that staggering. I don't want to see any racist incidents but if that hadn't have happened while you were managing, there could have still been nothing done about it today?

**Tony:** No, there would but it would take longer to do.

**Luke:** Do you think that clubs feel challenged by the name Guru Nanak and what you as a club stand for? I'm not trying to make excuses for them but do you think that's why some clubs don't understand. Or do you think they should be tolerant?

**Tony:** They're definitely interested about who we are and where we come from, but you get that with the background of the club. Two or three of our teams play in the Kent League so they get teams from Margate, Ramsgate, Dover, all over Kent – so you get a different set of supporters. When you have the temple nearby they are intrigued, so you break down the barrier.

**Luke:** As the team are mainly a Sikh religion, has it been difficult attracting other races to join you and integrating them in?

**Tony:** No, we have a demographic of 70% Indian, 30% non-Indian. That 30% is Pakistani, Bengali, Polish, White, Church of England, and Roman Catholic. You have seven African nationalities, Nigeria, Ghana, and South Africa. We have people from Afghanistan training with us, so we're multi-cultural. We don't turn people away. Whatever colour or creed you are, you're more than welcome.

**Luke:** Would you like to see more clubs adopt your Guru Nanak approach if they're having racial difficulties? For example building a sole black team and then integrating.

**Tony:** Yeah, they should. If you introduce a black team then you're not solving the problem, you're creating a problem. You'll have one team of black players and another team of white. You need to mix it and that's when you start changing things.

**Luke:** I agree. The racism in football, do you think it's not football itself, but a deeper problem in society?

**Tony:** Society drives it, and it's only become an issue again in the last 2-3 years, before that it had died down.

**Luke:** Do you think racism at a grassroots level has improved in the last 10-15 years?

**Tony:** Yes, definitely.

**Luke:** Would you say in general that's there's still a big issue with racism at a grassroots level? Are you worried about what the future holds?

**Tony:** No, I think the future's bright. There are clubs like us who are pushing the agenda. If nothing was going to happen or being done then I'd be worried, but that's not the case. The equality group on the KCFA alone are an organisation group who sit outside the main body of the KCFA and report to the board alone, no one else. So if there's an issue then we can report it to the board and the chief executive sits in on the board meetings, so he's involved. We have discussions on how to improve things, so it's more positive than negative and allows things to happen. Society plays a large part in what's happening in football today, but if you have steps which can be taken to eradicate it like fines or bans, then that's helps to improve the whole aspect of racism or equality. One of the guys on the equality board runs a gay football club in Bexley. Brighton football club play in the league so the group isn't just about racism. We also have representation for women on the board committee too. It's a good positive thing to be seen to be the leading county. The FA recognises us.

**Luke:** I think you should be very proud of what Guru Nanak have done.

**Tony:** We are, and to have Sky come down and do the Kick Out thing with us, it pushed things further. The feedback was very positive from the community and people outside, so we're quite proud of that.

**Luke:** How big a role do you think Guru Nanak has in the Gravesend community and Kent in general?

**Tony:** In Gravesend we've played a large part in the community. We're part of an umbrella organisation connected to the Sikh temple. We play a large part in community based events that happen. We have a procession through Gravesend soon, so a number of players and ex-players will be helping out on the day, so we play a large part.

**Luke:** Have any football charities got directly involved with the club e.g. Kick It Out?

**Tony:** Yes. We're in contact with Kevin Coleman- on the board of Kick it out. Radio shows ask us for interviews so we get a lot of coverage.

**Luke:** Do you think there will be a time in the future where Guru Nanak will have a team that's predominately white?

**Tony:** Yes, we've had it. Two years ago the U16's were one Indian child and the rest were all white. The reason being is they came to us when they were 14 years and they wanted to play in the Kent league and were happy to reside under our umbrella and name. We had another request from U13'S Bridon Ropes club in Maidstone and they've asked to come under our umbrella next year. They won't have any Asian players and we have no issues as that will break down those barriers. Racism is a two way source, people don't realise it. It's not always white against other races; it works the other way too. So if we're seen to be acting in the same manor, we're never going to solve anything. We make sure no-one's turned away- regardless of colour or background.

**Luke:** What impact do you think your club has had in breaking racial barriers, being a role model and showing people you don' have to be a certain colour or creed to enjoy football?

**Tony:** I believe we've played a big part. Our teams play further afield and it introduces different races into football. We could play against a team who haven't experienced Asian people before, apart from the guy that works in the local Indian restaurant and it's a totally different ball game. The same happened in Dover. They do come across us in their day to day life but they never saw 11 of us on a pitch.

**Luke:** I remember Guru Nanak. I was U15's in 2007 and they joined our league. I remember different teams were sceptical as you were new. Some assumed it would be an easy win and then you took the league by storm. The first game Guru Nanak smashed a team called Swallows by 9-0 and Swallows weren't expecting that. It made me chuckle. Some people have stereotypes about what you can do, but if you love a sport and are dedicated to it then you're going to be good.

**Tony:** We've come across it on a number of occasions. We turn up on a pitch and we're third from bottom and they're second, and we walk away 4-2. You can see the anger on their faces, this isn't what is expected. That's football for you. (laughs)

**Luke:** Moving onto the professional game, do you think the incidents with Terry, Suarez, Kevin-Prince Boateng, will impact the amateur side and have a detrimental effect, or will it make them work harder to stamp the incidents out?

**Tony:** They work harder to stamp it out as at that level it hits all the headlines- paper, TV etc. Lower down it exists but nothing is done. We need to remember it still happens at lower league at grass roots league. If it's gone quiet at the premierships, first and second division, it doesn't mean that's not the case at the lower grass roots level. So when the Suarez case came about it was good as it highlighted it hasn't gone away and it affects us. When we are interviewed by Radio 5, they were very surprised. I texted in to say what had happened to the children on the Sunday, and the presenter was very surprised that racism was still happening. The children were called 'a bunch of Taliban's' as a racial insult.

**Luke:** Wow!

**Tony:** The people that called them that didn't understand the background of our players, and our children were offended because they were called Taliban's when they're not Taliban's. It's amazing in that sense.

**Luke:** The ignorance of some people. I've been involved in similar incidents and it makes me laugh at how dumb some people can be.

**Tony:** Yeah very dumb. We get it every Sunday. The teams come and play next to the Sikh temple. They call it a mosque, a Hindu temple, they don't realise it's a Sikh temple. You have an education mismatch straight away as they don't know what religion we are. We tell them that they can have a look in the temple as long as they take their shoes off and cover their heads, and they go on a tour while the children are playing outside. It looks like the Taj Mahal and it's on your doorstep. That opens up education possibilities.

**Luke:** Looking to the future, say in 5 years time, where do you see the issue of racism at a grassroots level? Obviously you have your scheme set in place.

**Tony:** Hopefully it will be in a better position than it is today. You're never going to totally eradicate it, but if you have ways and means of stamping it out and reporting it, then it makes it a lot easier, and places people in a better position than what they are in now. It's only through hard work that you're going to get it done. You have to knock on a few doors, break down a few doors and put people's noses out of joint, but that's life. Change is never received with open arms, it's only when the status quo is broken. I'm the second Sikh that's the chairman of the equality board with a turban and it shocked people. We need to represent today's society and what's out there now.

**Luke:** As a manager, how do you focus your players' minds? I know they're under 12, but how do you get them to play the game they love and ignore the comments?

**Tony:** Put the ball in the back of the net.

**Luke:** (laughter) That's a good answer.

**Tony:** That hurts more than a name. The children don't get that at first until you explain it to them. I say to them, 'What hurts more? You being called a paki or a black bastard, or if they are beaten 5-2 by you. The only thing the kids will remember is the score. If they go into school on

Monday and their peers ask them how they got on and they say 'oh yeah we kinda lost to that bunch of erm' the children are revenged in their own way. It's not fair but there's ways that they can act on that, but not by punching people on the pitch and getting sent off. That's the first thing they resort to, so we educate them to report it to the ref so it's in their hands, and put the ball in the back of the net. Then afterwards when you're shaking their hands and walking off the pitch say 'what was the score mate?' That's it. They like that as that hurts more at the end of the day. They may have called them names but the score is the only thing recorded nothing else. So while we try and fix the issue they can only play the game and win. That hurts more to the opposing team. People try and wind you up and you have to learn to rise above it. We tell the under 12's to not fall for it.

**Luke:** My manager said the same thing when my team mate got racially abused. He told him to concentrate on the game and we won the game. I spoke to my team mate yesterday about it and he said he wanted to hurt him but he concentrated on the football and zoned it out.

**Tony:** Concentrate on the game. Get the result that you want (i.e. win) and afterwards if steps have to be taken then that's up to the league and administrators of the club. I was surprised that was missing here in Guru Nanak. I've only been the chairman for three years. When I was playing in the 90's, we were against it and if we could report racism we would. Then the club turned soft and didn't want to report it if the FA didn't want to do anything about it. You can't bury the issue though in the sand. You can't take that attitude. You take action and find out that half the things don't work properly, and try and fix them. We could have easily turned around and said to the children 'don't worry it happens all the time.' How do you think they would have felt? They would have been let down and maybe tried to punch the player next time it happened. What we do now is report it. Some committee members told us not to but we did. Some players in their 16's went to Brendon Bats in the FA. They were interviewed by Radio 1 and the programme went out over Christmas about racism. There's a recording on Radio 1Xtra by Katherine Godfey. She interviewed people from Sheffield. She interviewed five children and took two to meet Brendan Batson from Wembley. He's great but he was surprised and pleased that Guru Nanak were taking the time and effort to raise the issue.

**Luke:** Do you think the referees are strong enough?

**Tony:** No. If you ask a referee what he's meant to do if someone's racially abused, they don't know what to do because they haven't been trained and told what they have to do. That's part of the process of reporting it. It opens a can of worms. The referee administrator from the KCFA is on the board as well and now they're holding seminars for refs so there's common practice across all referees and the leagues so they know what to do. So you get a child whose 14 who becomes a ref and if a parent shouts out racial abuse, or the child, how is he supposed to react? Is he going to record it, who's he going to report to? We found that was missing. It's the only way you can deal with it; you can't brush it under the carpet. What was the point of going through all the hardship in the 80's and 90's for it to creep back in in 2013? It's meant to be eradicated. We're doing things about it and trying to get it fixed.

**Luke:** Thank you for today, you've opened my eyes wider to the situation. I am shocked. I spoke to Football Unties Racism Divides earlier and they gave me an insight. They said there were still huge problems and issues with racism that will still be present for years. Speaking with you has highlighted the problems that are still present in Kent FA – my local county, your local county it's staggering.

**Tony:** What gets in the news is just the tip of the iceberg. If people really want to know what goes on everywhere else they haven't done anything about it have they.

**Luke:** No exactly. That's why I'm doing this for my dissertation. Everyone always focuses on the professional side but they don't analyse what happens on the grassroots level for ordinary people like you and myself.

**Tony:** Yes, how it affects the rest of us.

**Luke:** Exactly.

**Tony:** I was happy to help.