



Global express

The rapid response information series for schools
on world events in the news

Football

A game for change



How football is bringing people together.



Kicking racism out of football.



A growing sport for women.

WORLD CUP MANIA has sent football fans across the globe crazy during recent months. Now, as the long-awaited tournament kicks off, **Global express** takes a different look at the world's most popular sport and examines the wider issues surrounding the 'beautiful game'.

What is *Global express*?

Global express helps you teach about topical global issues and events.

Contains

Instant photocopiable classroom activities for 8 to 14 year olds.

Primary

Activities for literacy; geography; design and technology.

- Find out about countries in the World Cup
- Caption a photo and write a news report.

Secondary

Activities for English; design and technology; modern foreign languages.

- Discuss footballers' comments on racism
- Make your own football
- Qu'est-ce que sont les légendes de la Coupe?

The Global Game

Football fever is gripping fans around the world as thousands converge in France for the World Cup. Although many are only interested in seeing their country get to the final, there are other sides to the sport which go beyond the winning itself.

Football is played in at least 178 countries making it the most popular sport in the world. It is played across many social stratas and by both men and women. This World Cup lives up to its name with teams competing from Europe, North and South America, Africa, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Asia and the Caribbean. The fact that football can cut across all these divides makes it a useful tool for international development and makes it far more than just a game.

Scoring Positive Goals

Though football is about two sides competing, it is also about team work and fun.

The power of football to transform communities can be seen in the Mathare Valley slums on the outskirts of Nairobi, Kenya. Children here, faced with poverty and few opportunities, often became involved with crime and drugs. But after some of the kids were given a real football to replace the one they had made from polythene and string, they decided to organise into proper teams. That was ten years ago. Now, the Mathare Youth Sports Organisation has a total of 8,500 boy and girl members. The organisation has attracted international attention and sponsorship, and some of the team have become influential role models after being invited to speak to children in neighbouring African countries.

[Source: Orbit 66/third quarter 1997.]

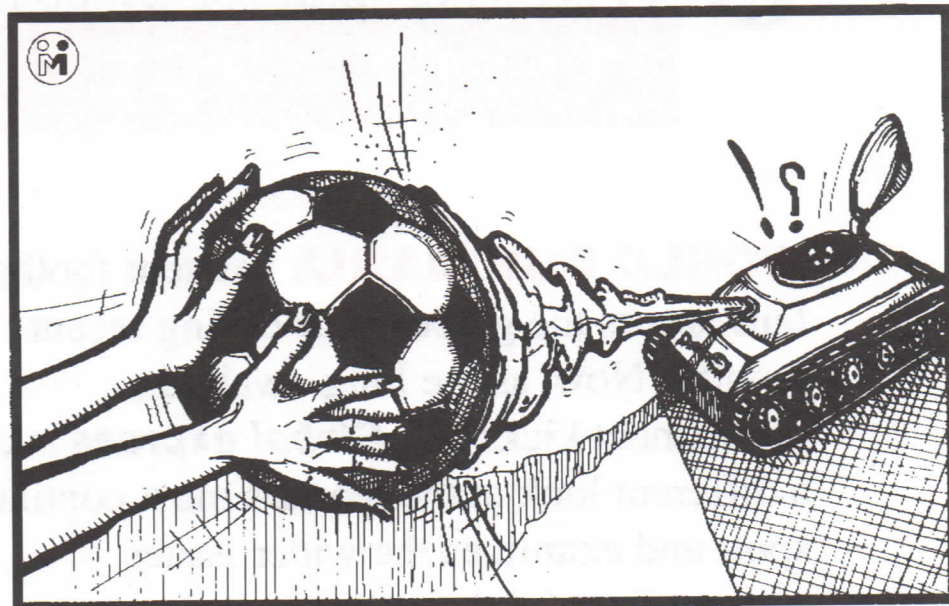
Playing for Peace

Aid agencies, too, are realising how football can bring communities together - particularly those who have been involved in violent conflict. For people caught up in war, it is often difficult to find a way to meet and talk about their differences. Now many are realising how football can be a positive force for breaking down fears and encouraging people to communicate.

In Burundi, for example, the aid agency ActionAid is using football as a way to bring children together to get to know and trust each other after their lives were torn apart four years ago by civil war. For these children, though the war may be over, the effects of living through extreme violence have to be dealt with every day - some even live alongside people who may have committed atrocities against their families. Children from opposing sides come together on the football pitch where, miraculously, they are able to put aside their differences and look towards a more peaceful future.

In the city of Medellin in Colombia, gang fighting in some of the city's poorest areas means many young people are involved in crime and many die in gang wars. But when Soccer for Peace, an organisation that teaches peace and conflict resolution through sport, started in Medellin two years ago, gangs that had been shooting each other started playing football instead. In one area, there has not been a gang murder in six months in a city which suffers 5,000 murders a year.

But in communities everywhere, including here in the UK, football can also lead to dispute instead of resolving it. People will side with local and national teams, often taking their support to extremes. As we have seen too often on our television screens, violence has occurred both on and off the pitch all over the world with evidence of both racism and nationalism. However it is used, the potential and influence of football is powerful.



GEMINI NEWS SERVICE



If you would like to gain access to the full version of this Global Express edition please sign up to a DEP subscription. You can find more information about DEP's subscriptions at www.dep.org.uk/about and click the Subscription section.