

# Football

## From UK: Trash Culture, Nov 26 2004

By Vexen Crabtree

Football has become an institutionalized sport in England. Major matches are almost national holidays, with nearly all employees and their bosses finding ways to, almost religiously, watch the game live. It is the trademark of English yob culture. Our fans are the most violent, least respectful, most disruptive and worst behaved in the world. It seems that it attracts the worst types of people, frequently sending them abroad en masse, crowding them together in the worst possible ways. But worse of all the culture around football doesn't only attract these personality types, it seems to develop them. It has become a self-indulgent sport of national moral decadence; around football you will find the worst violence, hatred, racism, xenophobia and homophobia. The most ignorant people will be commended in their stupidity, the entire culture of football is the tallest tower that trash culture can manufacture.

The attitudes surrounding football have become an ugly monstrosity that overshadows what would otherwise be a sport concentrated on tremendous skill. But English trash culture, stupid, irresponsible, uncaring and violence, has made this sport its mascot and its primary recruiting ground. English youths are pressurized into football culture by peer pressure as much as they are sucked into trash culture; the two are both symptoms and causes of an inherently dysfunctional central-mass of the English populace. Major international distrust of the UK, and our culture, comes from our pitiful public displays during football matches, especially abroad. Jeremy Paxman is only stating obvious and well-known cases when he spends multiple pages listing the atrocious activities of British hooligans abroad and at home, fighting with visiting fans. "The English Problem is the hooligan problem". [Paxman, p244] Amongst the "horrifying" things Paxman mentions... in the Summer of 1985 May, "when a major disturbance between Liverpool and Juventus fans left nearly forty Italians dead on the pitch".

Drunken English youths throw chairs, stones and anything, at anyone, especially at opposing fans, shops and police. No other country has fans that act in the same league as ours. Other fans, even Scottish fans inside the borders of Britain, behave well "capable of drinking vast amounts and merely sleeping off the after-effects". Our good-natured fans do little or nothing to restrict the bad ones; football culture is beyond repair, an international bother, an embarrassment, and no-

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one has the societal know-how to do anything about it. Clearly the "scum of the Earth" lowest-of-the-low recruits that were once indulged to join the Army have now found a new societal outlet: Football, under the protection of trash culture, is Britains' belated Hitler Youth movement.

**"In Turin in the late 1980s, the writer Bill Buford watched with horror as a group of bloated Manchester United football fans staggered off the aircraft that had brought them from England [...]. The fans colonized the town center, sitting in their tattoos in sidewalk cafes singing "Fuck the Pope" over and over again, occasionally getting up to piss in the street. And that was when they were being well behaved, and not attacking the 'fuckin' eyes' with sticks, knives or bottles. [...] Certainly, you don't expect to find plane-loads of Italians pouring into the centre of London and behaving in a similar fashion. [...] In Sardinia for the 1990 World Cup, Bill Buford watched as a mass of English football hooligans fought a pitched battle with the Italian police. [...]"**

The problem is not exclusively English - Dutch and German fans have developed their own versions of the sickness in which puffy-faced young thugs proclaim their loyalty by kicking or stoning anyone who speaks a different language or wears different colours. But the truth is that the English gave the world soccer. They also gave it hooliganism."

Less serious than that is simple football mania. Charlotte Church, singer, said

**"I just can't stand the UK's obsession with football. It's on the telly all the time. Saying that, I'd be the first to admit David Beckham really is very**

**gorgeous. But men who talk football, football and nothing else - no thanks! They're such a bore."**<sup>1</sup>

The television, largely catering for trash culture types, but especially pubs that show all football matches, have created classes of people who drink, eat, talk and sleep football. It forms a barrier against friendly social contact with non-fans in the same way you can't really talk to a raving fundamentalist Christian about anything else other than his own strong opinions. Socially, it causes alienation of the British public that so many of us are football mad, especially when the very same people are frequently the ones to deride USA patriotism... they don't see their own fandom as the same thing, the same personality trait that sweeps up fans into aggressive fan-hood also whips many Americans into fervent and unreasonable patriotism. Football is the UK's answer to patriotism, the only problem is that those involved don't admit it. Hypocrisy!