



# Discrimination in Sport



I'm a football fan myself, and I'm already aware that the Football Association (FA) has two ongoing campaigns: 'Respect' which is about creating a fair, safe and enjoyable environment in which the game can take place and 'Show Racism the Red Card', the latest in a number of campaigns designed to eliminate racism from football.

Having said that, racism has raised its head again this week when a Brazilian player in the team that played Scotland at Arsenal's Emirates Stadium was allegedly subjected to racial abuse.

I should perhaps also mention Andy Gray and Richard Keys, Sky Sports pundits who were sacked and resigned respectively over sexism allegations in January of this year.

However, discrimination against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Trans individuals in sport has not caused similar outrage; it is often excused as being just 'a bit of banter'.

Try telling that to Justin Fashanu. Justin was Britain's first £1m black footballer when he transferred to Nottingham Forest in August 1981. However, his professional relationship with manager Brian Clough soon began to deteriorate; Clough discovered Justin's homosexuality and, allegedly, barred him from even training with the rest of the side.

In 1990 Justin publicly declared that he was gay; his brother, John, also a professional footballer, later called him 'an outcast'. Justin's career in football had become erratic and in March 1998 he was investigated for the sexual assault of a young man in America. Although the charges were dropped for lack of evidence, Justin committed suicide in May 1998. His suicide note said: "I realised that I had already been presumed guilty. I do not want to give any more embarrassment to my friends and family."

Although statistics suggest that between four and six per cent of the population of Britain are LGB or T, it is rare for a footballer to be openly gay.

On Monday 14 March 2011 the UK Government, together with major sporting bodies including the FA, launched a Charter calling for anyone and everyone with an interest or involvement in sport to unite in a common cause to tackle homophobia and transphobia in sport.

Equality & Diversity embraced for everyone...

## HOT TOPIC

Click here to view this months topic (opens as .pdf)

Beneast Training actively promote Equality & Diversity throughout the organisation. Each month the E & D team at Beneast will focus on a "HOT TOPIC" to encourage discussion and awareness of the subject to all staff members, learners and employers.



You can register your support for the Charter by **CLICKING HERE** or visiting the following site: [http://www.equalities.gov.uk/news/sports\\_charter.aspx](http://www.equalities.gov.uk/news/sports_charter.aspx)

At the site you can also download a copy of the charter. Here's what it looks like:



HM Government

### Tackling Homophobia and Transphobia in Sport: The Charter for Action

- 1) We believe that everyone should be able to participate in and enjoy sport – whoever they are and whatever their background.
- 2) We believe that sport is about fairness and equality, respect and dignity. Sport teaches individuals how to strive and succeed, how to cope with success and disappointment, and brings people together with a common goal.
- 3) We are committed to making these values a reality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. We will work together, and individually, to rid sport of homophobia and transphobia.
- 4) We will make sport a welcome place for everyone – for those participating in sport, those attending sporting events and for those working or volunteering in sports at any level. We will work with all these groups to ensure they have a voice, and to challenge unacceptable behaviour.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Founding signatories:



April 2011 dates for your E&D diaries are:

- 7th April World Health Day
- 23rd April Saint George's Day (England's National Saint)
- 25th April World Malaria Day

There are also a lot of religious festivals in April, from the Sikh, Christian, Hindu, Jain, Buddhist and Jewish calendars.