



The importance of sporting fair play, even in high-pressure situations, was emphasised once again in September – with the latest round of World Cup qualifiers also designated as FIFA Fair Play Days.

FIFA Fair Play Days have been part of the international match calendar since 1997, and many associations around the world take advantage of the annual support of world football's governing body to promote fair play on and off the pitch. This year, 69 associations organised fair play activities to coincide with matches, using promotional material such as flags, T-shirts, caps and stickers provided to them free of charge by FIFA. FIFA also issued instructions for a fair play ceremony to be held before the matches, a declaration to be read by the captains of both teams and a message to be announced in the stadiums. The Fair Play Days have made an extraordinary contribution towards promoting the spirit of fair play and creating awareness of FIFA's "My Game is Fair Play" campaign. →

In early September, FIFA President Joseph S. Blatter urged footballers around the world to show "More fair play, please!". The FIFA President has always been resolute in his support for FIFA's Fair Play campaign, pointing towards the vital role of fair play in football and the need to increase fair play in sport, especially among children and young people. "Through football, we protect and communicate the strong basic values that children and young people need, such as solidarity, tolerance, respect and discipline. Football is a school of life," said Blatter. "It teaches us how to win as a team, but also how to lose as a team." The FIFA President stressed that fair play should encapsulate the sporting, moral and ethical principles for which FIFA has always stood, and also leave a lasting impression.

The FIFA President is one of many to support FIFA's Fair Play campaign. For example, during this year's Fair Play Days, Roda Antar, a Lebanese player on the books of Chinese team Shandong Luneng, said:

"The key to fair play is that players learn to overcome racial, linguistic and cultural differences by playing together. In this way, whether you are African, Asian or European, you feel that you are judged on your qualities as a player, as long as you're playing well for the team. That's the beauty of fair play."

Alain Giresse, the coach of Gabon, described fair play as "the bedrock of all sport". "Nowadays, there is a tendency to mix sport with other issues, but it must not be influenced by politics or religion. Fair play enables us to watch players who may share very different beliefs playing together in harmony." Diego Monserrat, Uruguay's beach soccer goalkeeper, believes that football should not be about winning at any cost, and that instead, "emphasis must be placed on honesty and integrity rather than individual qualities and flaws, or defeat and success".

FIFA's Fair Play campaign is based on the ten-point Fair Play Code (full text below). FIFA has presented a

Fair Play Award to players, teams, fans, associations and some famous names from the world of football every year since 1987. Last year, the award went to the associations of Armenia and Turkey, who, at a FIFA World Cup™ qualifier in September 2008, managed to break the long political tension between the two countries. Turkish President Abdullah Gül accepted an invitation from his Armenian counterpart, Serzh Sargsian, and spent eight hours in the Armenian capital of Yerevan. The two men also attended the match between Armenia and Turkey.

In previous years, the award has also been given to sets of fans who contributed to the success of a match through their impeccable, peaceful behaviour, as well as to football communities whose extraordinary hospitality not only helped to bring people closer together, but also contributed towards making an entire tournament a success for society. Other recipients have included associations and officials for having

## FAIR PLAY CODE

The FIFA Fair Play Code for football encapsulates all of the sporting, moral and ethical principles for which FIFA has always stood and for which it will continue to fight in the future, regardless of the influences and pressures that may be brought to bear.

The ten golden rules not only serve as a credo for FIFA as world football's governing body, but they also reinforce the sense of fraternity and cooperation among the members of the worldwide football family.

### 1. Play fair

Winning is without value if victory has been achieved unfairly or dishonestly. Cheating is easy, but brings no pleasure. Playing fair requires courage and character. It is also more satisfying. Fair play always has its reward, even when the game is lost. Playing fair earns respect, while cheating only brings shame. Remember: it is only a game. And games are pointless unless played fairly.

### 2. Play to win but accept defeat with dignity

Winning is the object of playing any game. Never set out to lose. If you do not play to win, you are cheating your opponents, deceiving those who are watching, and also fooling yourself. Never give up against stronger opponents but never relent against weaker ones. It is an insult to any opponent to play at less than full strength. Play to win, until the final whistle. But remember nobody wins all the time. You win some, you lose some. Learn to lose graciously. Do not seek excuses for defeat. Genuine reasons will always

be self-evident. Congratulate the winners with good grace. Do not blame the referee or anyone else. Be determined to do better next time. Good losers earn more respect than bad winners.

### 3. Observe the Laws of the Game

All games need rules to guide them. Without rules, there would be chaos. The rules of football are simple and easy to learn. Make sure you learn them; it will help you to understand the game better. Understanding the game better will make you a better player. It is equally important to understand the spirit of the rules. They are designed to make the game fun to play and fun to watch. By sticking to the rules, the game will be more enjoyable.

### 4. Respect opponents, team-mates, referees, officials and spectators

Fair Play means respect. Respect is part of our game. Without opponents there can be no game. Everyone has the same rights, including the right to be respected. Team-mates are colleagues. Form a team in which all members are equal. Referees are there to maintain discipline and Fair Play. Always accept their decisions without arguing, and help them to enable all participants to have a more enjoyable game. Officials are also part of the game and must be respected accordingly. Spectators give the game atmosphere. They want to see the game played fairly, but must also behave fairly and with respect themselves.



**Youngsters unfurl a FIFA Fair Play flag in Turin prior to Italy's meeting with Bulgaria.**

acted in the spirit of fair play, and for putting social responsibility ahead of profit, for example

"Fair play is fundamental to the popularity of sport and it is expected of players and everyone involved in the game," FIFA's Head

of Corporate Social Responsibility Federico Addiechi told *FIFA World* following the successful completion of September's Fair Play Day activities. "Football's importance in society has increased enormously over the last few years, and it is essential that we

protect the spirit of fair play both on and off the pitch in view of the ever more complex influences on the game. This year, once again, the Fair Play Days helped to spotlight fair play and we thank all the participants for their support" ■

### **5. Promote the interests of football**

Football is the world's greatest game. But it always needs everybody's help to maintain its greatness. Think of football's interests before your own. Think how your actions may affect the image of the game. Talk about the positive things in the game. Encourage other people to watch and play fairly. Help others to have as much fun from football as you do. Be an ambassador for the game.

### **6. Honour those who defend football's good reputation**

The good name of football has survived because the vast majority of people who love the game are honest and fair. Sometimes somebody does something exceptional that deserves our special recognition. They should be honoured and their fine example publicised. This encourages others to act in the same way. Help to promote football's image by publicising its good deeds.

### **7. Reject corruption, drugs, racism, violence, gambling and other dangers to our sport**

Football's huge popularity sometimes makes it vulnerable to negative outside interests. Watch out for attempts to tempt you into cheating or using drugs. Drugs have no place in football, in any other sport or in society as a whole. Say no to drugs. Help to kick racism and bigotry out of football. Treat all players and everyone else equally, regardless of their religion, race, sex or national origin. Show zero tolerance for gambling on games in which you participate. It negatively affects your ability to perform and

creates the appearance of a conflict of interests. Show that football does not want violence, even from your own fans. Football is sport, and sport is peace.

### **8. Help others to resist corrupting pressures**

You may hear that team-mates or other people you know are being tempted to cheat in some way or otherwise engage in behaviour deemed unacceptable. They need your help. Do not hesitate to stand by them. Give them the strength to resist. Remind them of their commitment to their team-mates and to the game itself. Form a block of solidarity, like a solid defence on the field of play.

### **9. Denounce those who attempt to discredit our sport**

Do not be ashamed to stand up to anybody who you are sure is trying to make others cheat or engage in other unacceptable behaviour. It is better to expose them and have them removed before they can do any damage. It is equally dishonest to go along with a dishonest act. Do not just say no. Denounce those misguided persons who are trying to spoil our sport before they can persuade somebody else to say yes.

### **10. Use football to make a better world**

Football has an incredible power, which can be used to make this world a better place in which everyone can live. Use this powerful platform to promote peace, equality, health and education for everyone. Make the game better, take it to the world, and you will be fostering a better world