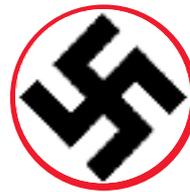




ANTISEMITISM IN EUROPEAN FOOTBALL

A SCAR ON THE BEAUTIFUL GAME

by John Mann MP and
Johnny Cohen







The oldest hatred - antisemitism - continues to rear its ugly head in Europe. This report highlights how far-Right thugs and other extremists have attempted to pollute the beautiful game. Football is at the heart of our thriving European Culture providing entertainment and excitement - uniting fans from around the world.

Bigots and racists who seek to contaminate the game are unwelcome. They must face the full force of the law which means that football authorities must act.

This short report, written with anti-racist activist Johnny Cohen, details just a few of the most recent disturbing incidents of antisemitism in European Football during the early stages of this season. This should act as a wake up call for those who believe that antisemitism is confined to history.

It also describes some of the leadership and good practice that must be replicated across the board if we are to take back the people's game from these thugs.

Football should be a no-go area for racists.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Mann".

John Mann MP

Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group against Antisemitism



On 14 July 2007, in a match at Austria Wien, LASK fans displayed a banner with the word “Schalom” and sang “You are only a Jewish association.” No action was taken by the authorities. ¹



In January 2006, fans of 4th division club FC Braunau (Hitler’s birthplace) posed for photographs outside Mauthausen concentration camp and put them on the fanclub’s website, showing members making Nazi salutes. ²



Fans of Siroki Brjeg shouted “Sieg Heil” and made Nazi salutes towards visiting Israeli supporters of Hapoel Tel Aviv during a UEFA Cup qualifying tie in Bosnia on 16 August 2007. The Israeli fans responded by throwing firecrackers onto the pitch. ³



During an international friendly match in Livorno Italy in August 2006, a group of more than 60 visiting Croatian fans deliberately stood in positions to form a human swastika and made Nazi salutes. ⁴



Czech Republic, France

In August 2007 the Jewish community in Prague complained openly to Sparta Prague for not dealing with fans' antisemitic chants. On 10 October Czech TV channel CT cut the sound from a live match transmission when Sparta fans chanted and displayed banners with "Jude" aimed at city rivals Slavia. CT have threatened to ban Sparta.

A Slavia spokesman said the Czech Football Federation should give a clear signal to fans by banning clubs from competitions.⁵



GOOD PRACTICE

The Czech football association fined Sparta Prague, Czech international Pavel Horvath 7,000 Euros for repeatedly raising his right hand like a Nazi salute towards fans during a match on August 25 2007 against Viktoria Zizkov. Horvath denied any racist intent and the club backed him. The referee interrupted the match in the 13th minute upon hearing Sparta fans shouting 'Jude Slavia'.⁶



After a UEFA Cup tie on 23 November 2006 against visiting Hapoel Tel Aviv, some 100 Paris Saint-Germain fans shouted vulgar antisemitic insults and made Nazi salutes. They attacked a Hapoel supporter, shouting 'Death to the Jew.' A plainclothes police officer, who sought to shield him, shot into the mob, killed a PSG fan and seriously wounded a second.⁷ Five "supporters" were arrested for racist and antisemitic insults.



GOOD PRACTICE

FARE's partner in France, LICRA reports that most stadia of professional clubs are now equipped with CCTV.



LICRA also say that "We regularly witness signs and insults in reference to Hitler in amateur and professional games".⁸



During a game between Dynamo Dresden and FC Energie Cottbus in December 2005 TV viewers saw Cottbus fans display an antisemitic banner with the word "Juden" (Jews) flanked by two stars of David that was not confiscated by the police or the marshals. No penalties were imposed.⁹

GOOD PRACTICE



Exhibits for the 2006 World Cup in 3 German cities on the history of Jews in German football, aimed to counter the growing problem of antisemitism.¹⁰



Players of Jewish club TuS Makkabi left their Berlin district league game at VSG Altglienicke on 26 September 2006, after officials ignored chants of 'Gas the Jews' 'Synagogues must burn again' and 'Auschwitz is Back.' The Berlin Soccer Association (BFV) sports court did not deduct points or impose a fine but ordered Makkabi to pay half the legal costs, the match to be replayed at a neutral venue, Altglienicke players and coaches to attend racism seminars and the club to play two matches behind closed doors and provide five stewards to monitor fan behavior for the rest of the season. The referee was banned for life, for failing to stop the game, but was reinstated on appeal.

GOOD PRACTICE



Makkabi became the first sports club ever to go outside the sports court to resolve a dispute. On 10 August 2007, the Berlin District Court found that the sports court had made procedural errors and issued a temporary injunction, promoting Makkabi to a higher league.



14 year-old visiting players from Chemnitz playing in Wurzen on 17 May 2007 were taunted by home fans "We'll build a subway from Chemnitz to Auschwitz." The goalkeeper was targeted "Jewish pig, go f..k your Jewish Mother." Even a linesman's offside flag earned him "Get it right Jew, or we'll come and pull your foreskin off." Players too shouted abuse. The crowd ignored referee, Christine Weigelt's appeals but she handed a report to the police.

GOOD PRACTICE



In June, the sports court ordered a fine, point deductions and suspensions.¹¹



GOOD PRACTICE

Three former East German clubs have banned supporters from showing symbols of extreme far-right groups or brands of clothing associated with racist speeches or antisemitism.





Leaders of the Federation of Hungarian Jewish Communities say that antisemitic abuse has not been this widespread since the 1940s. Football supporters shouted obscenities telling Jewish players that their ‘train is departing for Auschwitz’.



GOOD PRACTICE

For the 2007/08 season, the Hungarian FA introduced a “zero tolerance” policy, asking referees to interrupt games at the first sign of racism and award 3 points to the victimized team if it doesn’t stop.



In the UEFA Cup match in Budapest between Honved and Hamburg on 16 August 2007, Honved fans displayed a banner featuring the Nazi emblem “Wolfsangel,” (“Wolf’s Hook”) which was the emblem of the organisation which later became the Hitler Youth.

GOOD PRACTICE

In May 2007, the Hungarian FA became the first country to deduct points under FIFA’s revised Article 58 of the Disciplinary Code, penalising Ujpest for racist taunts. ¹²



The New Israel Fund joined the UEFA campaign to stop antsemitism and racism on the field and in the stands.



GOOD PRACTICE

Observers attend grounds every week, with weekly reports published, naming and shaming the worst offenders and a new law carrying up to two-year prison sentences for racist behaviour. The number of incidents classified as racist fell by 25% last season and there were some arrests. ¹³





On 29 January 2006 antisemitic banners were displayed when Rome hosted Livorno, but the referee allowed the game to continue.



GOOD PRACTICE

Rome was ordered by the Italian Football League Disciplinary Committee to replay the game behind closed doors at a different venue. The Minister of the Interior ordered the suspension of future matches when Nazi, fascist and/or antisemitic symbols are shown.¹⁴



On 1 October 2006 during a match against Ajax Amsterdam, Utrecht fans shouted "Hamas, Hamas, Jews to the gas." Fans have traditionally expressed their allegiance to Ajax by waving Star of David flags and screaming "Jews! Jews!" Although Ajax no longer has Jewish connections, opposing supporters shout antisemitic slogans or hissing sounds imitating the flow of gas. Recently there have been no major incidents, but such slogans have spread into the wider community.¹⁵



GOOD PRACTICE

Rules exist to allow referees to stop matches in the event of racist problems unlike other countries including the UK, where security issues are police responsibilities.



In summer 2007, during a UEFA Cup qualifier at Ekrana in Lithuania, two Valerenga players were subjected to massive racist abuse by home fans, which the referee denied hearing.



GOOD PRACTICE

Valerenga complained to UEFA and decided to donate the return match receipts to FARE's fight against racism. They also agreed to grant free admission to all children and young people who brought a drawing against racism to the game.¹⁶





In Polish matches fans routinely call each other 'Jews' as a term of abuse.

In October 2005 it became known that antisemitic "jokes" about soap from Jews, cyclone B, crematory stoves and Auschwitz concentration camp had been allowed to remain on an official Zaglebie Lubin fan forum since June.

On 31 May 2006 during a Polish Cup-tie against Resovia Rzeszów, "supporters" of Stal exhibited a huge flag with the motto: "H5N1 – not only one Jew will die" and a banner with a Celtic cross – a racist symbol of "white power".

On 10 September 2006 during a 6th Orange Ekstraklasa match involving Wisla Kraków and Pogon Szczecin, Nazi fans held up a Celtic cross flag and another flag with "Anti-Jude".

During a UEFA cup tie between FK Austria Vienna and Legia Warszawa on 28 September 2006 in Vienna, Legia fans held a large banner saying "White Legion" featuring the "Wolf's Hook" Nazi emblem of the organisation which later became the Hitler Youth. ¹⁷

In Krakow on 2 March 2007 during an Orange Ekstraklasa match between Cracovia Kraków and Legia Warszawa, the Warsaw fans chanted at the hosts: "Jews, Jews, Jews, whole Poland is ashamed of you".¹⁸



Legia fans display a banner with a Wolfsangel (wolf's hook), a forbidden Nazi symbol

GOOD PRACTICE

At the annual Przystanek Woodstock rock festival on 2-4 August 2007, attended by some 100,000 people, the Polish Never Again Association organized the Anti-Racist Football Championship of Poland and a mass action about the dangers of racism and xenophobia. ¹⁹





Nazi and antisemitic symbolism is often part of the football hooligan culture in Russia.

On 28 March 2006, during a match in Moscow between Dinamo Moscow and Israeli club HaPoel Migdal, fans shouted antisemitic slogans against the Israeli team and held a sign threatening to hang 'Dirty Jews.'



In a first division match between Borac Cacak and Vozdovac on 14 October 2006, 37 Borac supporters donned Ku Klux Klan hoods, raised banners against a home Zimbabwe player and shouted various pro-Hitler and Sieg Heil obscenities



GOOD PRACTICE

In this case, the Police intervened immediately, interrupting the game and removed all the fans. Eight people were arrested.



On 20 April 2007, Hitler's birthday, football supporters from Slovan Bratislava displayed a banner with the words "Happy Birthday Adolf", and a Hitler smiley-head face during a match against FC Senec; racist chants were also heard.²⁰ But players and club officials neither said nor did anything. The Slovak FA too failed to upgrade its previous passive approach.



At Slovan's UEFA Intertoto Cup match against FC Differdange 03 in Luxembourg on 23 June 2007 many of the 120 Slovan fans wore Thor Steinar clothing, a German street wear brand closely linked to the far right, or wore shirts with "88" the neo-Nazi code for "Heil Hitler". Furthermore, the Ultras Slovan web-site displayed pictures of the fans.



The Slovak Football Association has failed so far to implement article 58 of the FIFA Disciplinary Code.²¹ However, at Slovan's next round game away to Rapid Vienna on 15 July 2007, FARE observers witnessed small groups of fans making the Nazi salute, wearing neo-Nazi shirts with the numbers 88 and displaying a Celtic Cross.²²



Spain, Ukraine

In November 2006, during a game against Deportivo La Coruna, Osasune fans shouted antisemitic abuse at Dudu Awate, an Israeli Deportivo player. Awate has been insulted in the past by Osasune fans. ²³



Right wing groups dominate the fan culture in Ukrainian stadia, and Nazi and antisemitic symbolism is usual every weekend.



FIFA and UEFA disciplinary codes are sometimes featured in match programmes and club websites, but they are violated weekly without reaction from the authorities.

GOOD PRACTICE

In August 2006 the Professional Football League fined Dinamo Kiev \$5,000 for fans' antisemitic insults during a game against an Odessa club. ²⁴



On 14 September 2006 Hapoel Tel Aviv fans were assaulted in Odessa after their team beat Chernomorets in the UEFA Cup. Several Israelis were injured. ²⁵



These photos were kindly provided by the Never Again Association





During Arsenal's match at Manchester United on 17 September 2006, a few Arsenal fans chanted "Send the Jews to Auschwitz." One Arsenal fan insisted that his club took disciplinary action, after the court had imposed a trivial sentence.

GOOD PRACTICE



Millwall, Ipswich Town, Nottingham Forest and Southampton have introduced text messaging services on match days for supporters to report any forms of racist or anti social behaviour to Club officials in confidence.



UEFA dropped its probe into complaints about Nazi-style salutes by Glasgow Rangers fans during their match in Israel against Hapoel Tel Aviv in February 2007, accepting Rangers' explanation that fans had given their Israeli hosts the "Red Hand of Ulster" and not "Heil Hitler" salutes.

GOOD PRACTICE



Rangers' Pride Over Prejudice & other initiatives in Scotland to stamp out racism and other discrimination encouraged UEFA to recommend Euro countries, where racism is widespread, to adopt similar schemes.²⁶



On 4 March 2007, some 30 West Ham fans were captured on a cellphone video chanting "I'd rather be a Paki than a Jew...I've got a foreskin haven't you, f...g Jew" during the team's game against Spurs. The video was posted on a website by "cockneymatt88".²⁷

GOOD PRACTICE



After a police investigation, the ringleader was convicted of inciting racial behaviour and sentenced to 100 hours community service and £87 costs. This incident raises issues including (in)effectiveness of security and stewarding training to stop chanting; use of CCTV film for investigations; enforcement/leniency in prosecution and banning order sanctions; and club reactions: West Ham "will not tolerate racist behaviour of any kind"





During Barnet's friendly match with Arsenal on 14 July 2007, antisemitic chants about gassing, Hitler and Yids compelled an Arsenal fan to seek out police and stewards. Other than deploying two extra stewards, no real help was forthcoming and the fan complained later to both clubs.

CCTV footage enabled the identification of the ringleaders and 14 other people. Had identification been impossible, it was hoped that Arsenal would have agreed to seek legal go-ahead to publish a photograph in their match programme.²⁸

In September 2007, Rangers banned a fan for displaying Nazi salutes at the Rangers v Stuttgart Champions League game.²⁹

Extremist material on internet sites followed Chelsea's managerial appointment of Israeli Avram Grant in September 2007. One portrayed "an army of faceless Jewish lickspittles scurrying around behind the scenes humming Fiddler on the Roof. And I can't help wondering if the Sp*rs fans will now feel the need to chant 'Grant's Yiddish Army!' at us when we play them next."³⁰ The apparent delay in editorial control of the forum raises concern. There have been numerous occurrences where groups of Chelsea fans sang "Gas a Jew, Jew Jew, put him in the oven, cook him through".

GOOD PRACTICE

In a club match programme, Chelsea's chairman robustly stated the club's view about racism and antisemitism. The club has been one of the few to back its high-profile stance challenging racism, but identifying abuse is one thing and tackling it another.

In an expression of solidarity against antisemitism, a friendly game was played between Israel and England fans two days before the Euro 2008 match in September 2007, including a unique training session, run by Football4Peace coaches, and a fans' forum providing an opportunity to exchange views.

GOOD PRACTICE

The FA's "Report Racism Project," specially targeted at grassroots, publishes a freephone Report Racism number and an e-mail reporting facility. Posters and cards, explaining how to report abuse, have been distributed to every club in the country.

Conclusion

Across Europe a variety of different tactics have been pursued by those who are willing to stand up to football bigots and racists. The contribution made by anti-racist campaigners, FARE and its partners including Never Again, FairPlay and Kick It Out, the Jewish Community, and the authoritative determination of leading Football Associations like the English FA is immeasurable. Even if the success of their initiatives is difficult to quantify, they have increased awareness and moved towards a more systematic co-operative approach across the continent.

It may not be possible to quantify the true extent of antisemitism in European football but each incident should be condemned and inspire people to act.

Our challenge must be to:

-  **Isolate the ‘90 minute bigot’ who joins the racists in their chants of hate but outside the stadium are law-abiding citizens;**
-  **Confront those who organise the antisemitism in the game by keeping them out of the stadia, utilising the full force of the law and the football authorities;**
-  **Hold to account those clubs who do not challenge the behaviour of their fans. The ultimate sanction – deducting points in the league – should not be off limits from the football authorities.**

The words and photographs in this report depicts the ugly reality that antisemitism remains a scar on the beautiful game across Europe. None of us should rest easy whenever we see or hear about Jews being abused, vilified or demonised. The recent upsurge in incidents is aggravating an already disturbing problem, which must be confronted.

Football should be a no-go area for racists.

Acknowledgments, information, footnotes

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John Mann MP, Chair of the Parliamentary Committee Against Antisemitism, commissioned the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism in 2005 following increasing public debate about a rise in antisemitism in the UK

In March 2007, the Government presented to the House of Commons, its response to the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism.

Footnotes

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