

Q&A



with Alex Horne, Managing Director, Wembley Stadium

How important is it to have the new Wembley open?

It is now seven years since the old stadium hosted its last game and closed its famous doors. Wembley is now ready to stage world class events and welcome sports and music fans back. It is very important that this country once again has a national stadium of which it can be proud and that will once again be revered around the world.

Now we have a world class national stadium, we can look forward to welcoming The FA Cup and the England team, and help to attract some of the most important international sporting events like the FIFA World Cup™ and the Olympics to this country.

Wembley has always been a very special place but now it has also been re-built into a world class stadium.

When designing the new stadium, we felt it was important to stay true to Wembley's unique heritage by retaining as many of the much-loved features of the old stadium as possible, like the royal box and Wembley's famous trophy presentation route which is now 107 steps instead of the 37 steps in the old stadium. At the same time, however, we knew we wanted to build one of the greatest and grandest stadiums in the world with world class facilities worthy of Wembley's famous name.

The new stadium is spectacular and the arch is now instantly recognisable across London

and can be seen for miles, especially when illuminated at night.

The new stadium has already become a landmark for London and will become an important and iconic symbol in world sport.

What can we expect from the new Wembley?

It is a huge and very impressive stadium yet it still feels very intimate. Many of the players who have visited the new stadium have commented on how close the spectators feel to the pitch and how it still has the same magic about it as the old stadium. The FA Cup Final will be a fantastic opening event followed by England's first game at the new stadium against none other than Brazil.

Wembley is a wonderful example of modern day design and engineering. It has been built to the highest specifications to ensure that it is one of the world's greatest stadiums and that everyone who visits Wembley has a really special experience.

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

DATE	VENUE	EVENT
May 5-11	Solomon Islands	OFC-FA Referee Development
May 14-21	Fiji	OFC-FA Referee Development
May 16	Glasgow	UEFA Cup Final
May 19	London	FA Cup Final
May 23	Greece	UEFA Champions League Final
May 28-June 1	Botswana/Lesotho	FA Women's Football Development
May 28-June 1	Trinidad & Tobago	FA Sports First Aid Course
May 30-31	Switzerland	57th FIFA Congress
June 1	London	Senior Friendly International: England v Brazil
June 6	Estonia	Euro 2008 Qualifier: Estonia v England
June 10-23	Netherlands	UEFA European Under-21 Championship

Raising awareness



Coaching For Hope is The FA's International Charity Partner for 2007. The charity will be expanding its programme of raising HIV/AIDS awareness through football coaching to South Africa this year, building on the success of its current projects in Burkina Faso and Mali. A simple way to support CFH's work is to text GOAL to 82085 or make an online donation at www.coachingforhope.org



COMMUNIQUÉ



COMMUNIQUÉ ISSUE EIGHTEEN

OFC programme underway

TheFA.com

The Solomon Islands receives its first FA Learning workshop as part of the newly-signed co-operation agreement between The Football Association and the Oceania Football Confederation.

- FA supports South African football development
- AFC secures FA expertise for the future
- Ecuador referees progress to the next level
- Focus on women's football in the Caribbean
- Wembley opens its doors to the football family
- Q&A with Alex Horne, Managing Director Wembley Stadium



CAF

FA signs up to assist South Africa



The FA offers its assistance to the South African FA

The Football Association and the South African Football Association (SAFA) have signed a co-operation agreement to promote a mutual understanding of football in England and in South Africa.

The FA's Director of Corporate Affairs, Simon Johnson, and SAFA Chief Executive Raymond Hack put pen to paper on the agreement at Soho Square in February.

The Memorandum of Understanding will span four years from 2007 to 2010 and will specifically support the development of football in South Africa through education and training as the country prepares to host the FIFA World Cup™ in 2010.

By 2010, The FA aims to have assisted in the training of up to 100 new Tutors and to have helped a minimum of 100 individuals

through coaching, refereeing and tailored training programmes in South Africa.

Head of International Relations Jane Bateman said: "We were pleased to be approached by the South African FA to help develop football in the country.

"Whilst most public attention focuses on preparations for the FIFA World Cup™ in terms of stadia construction and other infrastructure projects, SAFA is making the development of people skills a priority.

"The FA-SAFA programme addresses the broader benefits that this World Cup brings to South Africa, more specifically the opportunity to capitalise on the spotlight it has brought on football in the country and to pro-actively seek to develop new and existing referees and coaches."

Malawi look to FA for new coach

The Football Association of Malawi has appointed Stephen Constantine as their new national team manager.

Constantine, an FA and FIFA instructor, has a vast amount of experience from his time coaching in England and as the former head coach of India and Nepal.



The new Malawi national team manager, Stephen Constantine, has signed a three-year contract

Solomon Islands savour return of former coach



Girls from the Solomon Islands share a team photo after training

The FA's Alan Gillett received a hero's welcome when he returned to the Solomon Islands in March to deliver a coaching course to football instructors as part of a new agreement with the Oceania Football Confederation (OFC).

Former Solomon Islands national coach Gillett guided the team to the final of the OFC Nations Cup Final back in 2004 when he secured a 2-2 draw with Australia in Adelaide.

That result is still regarded by many as the national team's greatest achievement and Gillett was awarded a silver medal for his contribution to sport on the islands.

"I have always been looking for an opportunity to return and after I learnt that The FA had committed to assisting the development of football in the OFC region and specifically in Fiji and the Solomon Islands, I knew I would be back," said Gillett.

Gillett worked alongside another FA coach, Jamie Houchen, to deliver a week-long course focusing on various elements of coach education and The FA Learning programme.

By the end of the workshop, hundreds of children turned up to take part in the coaching sessions conducted by local instructors who will be left to continue the good work started by The FA's Gillett and Houchen.

"We want Solomon Islands coaches to become FIFA coaches," added Gillett. "We want Solomon Islands referees to become instructors in Oceania.

"They have got the raw materials, players and coaches. And they have got people who work at the grassroots level in the country but they have got to keep it going."



Alan Gillett puts the coaches through their paces



The FA's Jamie Houchen takes a training session



AFC

AFC and FA sign new co-operation agreement



The Football Association signed a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) in January.

The new accord will continue the work of The FA's International Development Programme in Asia which has benefited from The FA's technical expertise since 2000 after the first co-operation agreement was signed.

This latest MoU will extend for an initial period of four years, 2007-2010, and will focus primarily on Education & Training - Tutor Training, Refereeing, Technical and Youth Development - together with research assistance and kit donations.

All of the proposed FA activities have been identified to complement the AFC's own Education Programme and Technical Development Plans.

"We are looking forward to starting this new phase of co-operation with the Asian Football Confederation in 2007," said FA Chairman Geoff Thompson.

"It will build on a productive five-year period during which we established firm foundations in terms of education in football within the framework of Vision Asia.

"We value the personal interest and input from the President, Mohamed Bin Hamman, in ensuring that the FA-AFC co-operation agreement has been mutually beneficial.

"The sharing of expertise and experiences has undoubtedly contributed to the development of coaches, referees and administrators in Asia, and most certainly to the personal and professional development of our own tutors in England."

To kick-start the 2007 programme of events, The FA's Jamie Houchen and Les Howie travelled to Kuala Lumpur to deliver an FA Learning Workshop aimed at developing the AFC's elite instructors.



AFC President Mohamed Bin Hamman and FA Chairman Geoff Thompson shake hands after signing a new co-operation agreement



The FA's Jamie Houchen and Les Howie deliver an FA Learning workshop



CONMEBOL

Ecuador excels in referee development



An Ecuadorian referee takes part in fitness drills

The FA's Ray Olivier and Premiership referee Peter Walton returned to Ecuador in January to deliver an Advanced Course for Referees Instructors to get the FA-CONMEBOL assistance programme underway for 2007.

Regional Referee Manager Olivier and Premiership official Walton were back in the Ecuadorian city of Guayaquil following the highly successful seminar the pair delivered in January 2006.

Senior referees from all over Ecuador attended the seminar aimed at taking them a stage further in their development. They were put through a series of intense training sessions in very hot conditions.

"The Ecuador Football Federation was delighted with the success of the workshop, and was very pleased with the quality of the

presentations and fitness sessions we conducted," said Olivier.

"We have seen a significant improvement in the referees' performance both in the lecture theatre, where they asked lots of questions, and on the training ground.

"We used some television footage from football matches in Ecuador so that we had a better understanding of the situation referees and assistant referees face in the country. This was very well received by the participants and we were able to analyse some of their decision-making to good effect."

The Ecuador Football Federation has been a major beneficiary of the FA-CONMEBOL co-operation agreement. This is the third year running that its football officials have received workshops to monitor the standard of refereeing in the country.



Premiership referee Peter Walton shares his experiences with a group of Ecuadorian officials



CONCACAF

A boost for women's football in the Caribbean



The FA demonstrated its continuing commitment to developing the women's game by holding a workshop for the CONCACAF region in Trinidad & Tobago.

The FA's Football Development Manager, Ros Potts, Regional Football Development Manager Helen Croft and Birmingham County FA Football Development Manager Natalie Justice gave a detailed insight into how the female game has progressed in England.

The advances made by England's senior women have seen Hope Powell's team qualify for the FIFA 2007 Women's World Cup™ in China having last featured in the competition back in 1995.

As part of the three-day seminar in Port of Spain, participants were asked to identify the challenges that they faced in developing and running women's football in the CONCACAF region, sharing good practice from The FA in England.

Ros Potts said: "The Trinidad and Tobago workshop on developing women's football was a brilliant opportunity for us all.

"Over the three days, we found working with the delegates to be such a rewarding experience. We hope the representatives from the varying associations benefited as much as we did from the workshop.

"We hope to be able to re-visit in the near future to check on the progress in developing the women's game in the region."



Delegates take part in group discussions



CONCACAF President Jack Warner supports the Women's Football Development Workshop

Wembley welcomes football home



Wembley opened its doors to the public for the first competitive football match to be played at the new stadium and fans were treated to a thrilling game as England's Under 21s drew 3-3 with their Italian counterparts in March.

Gianpaolo Pazzini grabbed the headlines for Italy with a goal after only 29 seconds en route to a hat-trick that denied England victory.

But David Bentley, who scored England's first goal at their new home and was named Man

of the Match, was delighted just to be part of a truly special day.

He said: "This stadium is where you want to play football and it was great to score a goal on an occasion like this and something I will never forget.

"Wembley is fantastic and it was an amazing feeling just driving up to the ground. Stepping out onto the pitch was great, right from the first minute.

"It's very tight as well and the crowd's right on top of you, which is a good feeling."



FA referees in demand

It has been a busy period for The FA's Referees Department. Regional Referee Manager Janie Frampton has become a FIFA Futuro III Instructor, Head of National Referee Development Ian Blanchard hosted a delegation of referees from South Korea, while Regional Referee Manager Keith Hill welcomed officials from Japan to Soho Square.

Future of football's laws in focus

The 121st International FA Board (IFAB) met in Manchester in March. IFAB, which comprises the football associations of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland along with FIFA, is the guardian of the Laws of the Game.

At the meeting, criteria were set for all future experiments involving goal-line technology. Others items discussed were the stipulation that referees' communication systems should



only link the match officials; player's equipment must not carry any political, religious or personal statements; and a player may not celebrate a goal by covering their head or face by a mask or similar item.

Proposals for two additional assistant referees were referred to the IFAB Sub-Committee for further study, together with a protocol for dealing with injured players on the pitch.

FA pledges support for Football 4 Peace



Representatives of The FA, including former player now FA consultant Brendon Batson, attended the 'Football 4 Peace' festival held in Tel Aviv ahead of England's Euro 2008 qualifier against Israel in March.

Arab and Jewish children from communities around the country sported football kit donated by England fans and took part in matches throughout the afternoon.

In addition to showing off their football skills, the young girls and boys were also showing how Arab and Jewish communities can put aside the kind of prejudices which afflict Israeli society by playing football together in mixed teams.

The Football 4 Peace initiative was set up in 2001 by a group of lecturers at the University of Brighton interested in exploring football as a tool to promote peaceful co-existence. A festival takes place annually in Israel which is supported by the British Council and The Football Association.