

EDINBURGH05



THE IMPACT OF THE HOMELESS WORLD CUP

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The Homeless World Cup Makes a Real Impact



Figures from The Homeless World Cup suggest that sport can make a real impact on problems experienced by homeless and excluded people. After the homeless World Cup 2004, more than 90% of people said that it had a positive impact on their lives and 74% had made significant changes in their lives as a direct result of their involvement.

Research carried out amongst the 204 players involved in the 2004 Homeless World Cup has produced some staggering statistics.

- 188 players 92% have a new motivation for life.
- 78 players 38% found regular employment.
- 95 players 46% improved their housing situation.
- 70 players 34% have pursued education.
- 56 players 27% have addressed their drug dependency.
- 146 players 72% continue to play football after the Homeless World Cup.

16 players have even been signed professionally or semi-professionally in a playing or coaching capacity by football clubs.

The research was carried out four months after the Homeless World Cup had finished.

The Homeless World Cup proves conclusively that sport truly is an effective tool for combating homelessness and poverty globally.

Direct impact on the players at the Homeless World Cup

For the 2003 as well as the 2004 Homeless World Cup extensive research has taken place to measure the impact on those who participated. For the vast majority of players the Homeless World Cup had a strong positive impact on their lifestyles. The most important personal effects are a generally higher self-esteem and motivation in life with effects ranging from finding a regular job to improving their housing situations.

The concrete numbers indicate that 4 months after the Homeless World Cup took place; more than two-thirds of all participants experienced a significant life change. This level of impact is much higher than any other initiative concerned with trying to move homeless people away from their situation. At best, the figure is 30% and it is generally lower.

	2003 (Graz)	2004 (Gothenburg)
Significant life change	66% (92)	74% (151)
<i>thereof</i>		
- Got regular jobs (e.g. miner, shop assistant, own business, player/ coach in (semi-) professional football club)	31% (43)	38% (78)
- Improved their housing situation	35% (49)	46% (95)
- Chose an education (back to work courses, studies, school)		34% (70)
- Addressed a drug dependency	n/a	27% (56)
Remained in same living situation (mostly stayed street paper vendors)	28% (41)	21% (43)
Lost contact after the HWC	6% (8)	5% (10)

In addition, football became an integral part of people's life. While before the Homeless World Cup 2004 36% played football on a regular basis, this number doubled to 72% five months after the event.

However, figures only give one side of the story. The whole project and the event itself is full of dramatic human interest stories which illustrate the real impact of the process.

For example, the best goalkeeper in 2004, Kevin Wilson of England has finished an officially recognised Football Community Coaching course and has been nominated for Sport Personality of the Year in the Yorkshire Area. When the course is finished he will become a recognised football coach. The best goal scorer in 2004 Yevgen Adamenko (Ukraine) now plays in a professional club in Ukraine. Maxim Mastitskij (Russia) studies social management to support the St. Petersburg street paper project "Way Home". David Nilsson (Sweden) became managing coach of the Swedish national team for the Homeless World Cup 2005. Yasuharu Kawaharada from Japan has been invited to give a lecture at the University of Osaka to talk about the Homeless World Cup.

Street Papers and social organisations worldwide have formed football programmes and have selection processes in place. The level of exposure the Homeless World Cup 2004 has received has had a huge effect on the profile of these organisations. For example, The Big Issue in the North (England) now has an ongoing training partnership with Manchester United. Spanish paper 'Milhistorias' have partnered with Real Madrid and American's 'Big News' has partnered with the New York Metro Stars. There are many other examples.

Other statistics from the 2004 Homeless World Cup

Participating teams: 26

Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Namibia, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Scotland, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, USA, Wales.

Participating players: 204 (201 male players / 3 female players: Denmark, Switzerland, Wales)

Average age: 29 (oldest player: 64, Yoshinori Matsumoto, Japan / youngest player: 16, Rael Fiechter, Switzerland)

From social backgrounds (homelessness, street paper vendor, drug therapy): 94% (192 players)

Asylum seekers: 6% (12 players)

Played HWC 1st time: 87% (178 players) / **2nd time: 13%** (26 players)

The HWC rules allow players to participate maximum twice in Homeless World Cups.

Played football before the HWC 04 on regular basis: 36% (73 players)

Play football after the HWC 04 on regular basis: 72% (146 players)

Grass Roots Soccer

All participating street papers and social organisations have formed football programmes on regular basis as a part of their social inclusion activities. The growing number of national qualifications and selections for the Homeless World Cup 2005 is a clear sign that the HWC message has reached the grass roots level in the participating countries. 12 countries run or plan to develop a national street league for social inclusion projects after the HWC 2004: Austria, Denmark, France, England, Ireland, Poland, Scotland, Spain, Ukraine, Uruguay, USA, Wales.

This is an increase in;

- 240% in comparison to 2003 (5 countries) and
- 400% to before the first Homeless World Cup (3 of all participating countries in 2003).

What do the players say?

“The Homeless World Cup has the most beautiful and healthy practice to unite people. The Swedes were hospitable, and we were welcome and I liked it very much.”

Cláudio Bongiovani, 52, Brazil

“The one thing I really want to say about the Homeless World Cup is what a great experience it was. It really was eye opening.”

David Arthey, 20, Canada

“Taking part in the Homeless World Cup in Sweden was the best experience in my life I’ve ever had and it made me change my life completely and start thinking of something positive, which can help change somehow the situation I’ve had. It was a real victory for me to get Golden shoe Trophy.”

Yevgen Adamenko, 20, Ukraine

“This is unforgettable. I realized I’m not alone. All those people there, with the same problem I have. They are rather confident and proud of themselves. Nevertheless they don’t have a permanent place to live they feel positive. I came back here, to Ukraine, with a strong confidence to change my life. I understood that I’m the one and the only one who can change it. I looked at the girl who came with us, a young girl from the Way Home Fund, the journalist and translator, and understood one thing: if there are people who care about the homeless ones, I myself must be responsible for my life. I must be the first to take care of me. If it’s important for those people what is going on with me (they are interested in me after the championship as well), this is me and only me to do something and move forward.”

Mykola Serebrjanskiy, 31, Ukraine

“The Homeless World Cup was very nice for me. I want to return to win the cup and then go out of the homeless world.”

Omar Paz, 27, Argentina

“The Homeless World Cup was a good experience and gave me new motivation in selling our streetpaper. I have been even invited for a lecture to the University of Osaka to talk about the HWC.”

Yasuharu Kawaharada, 58, Japan

“The thing I want to say about the Homeless World Cup is thank you for giving me the chance to achieve something and represent my country.”

Sean Paul Lewis, 21, Wales

“The good thing about the Homeless World Cup is that all the vendors can have the chance if they work to take it. Anyway, they can meet people from other countries and you can take notice that it is important to people if they really want to be stars of their lives. I think I am really a star now.”

Sergio Pena, 26, Argentina,

”The Homeless World Cup was fantastic and I got a lot out of it, I really enjoyed meeting so many people, it gave me a buzz. I’m doing Football in the Community Coaching now and have been nominated for Sports Personality of the Year in Yorkshire Area.”

Kevin Wilson, 22, England

“I liked meeting different people from different countries. It can change your life if you get to play for different teams.”

Lofty Lottering, 23, Namibia

“For me the participation in the Homeless World Cup was a very important experience. Most of all, because I realized how well we live in Switzerland.

The friendship with the team from Namibia, to hear the stories about their everyday life – that opened my eyes for many things. I see my problems in a different light now.”

Rael Fiechter, 16, Switzerland

“The Homeless World Cup was an experience of a lifetime.”

Ahmet Akdag, 23, England

“I have seen that sport is very important to promote social integration and participation, and to make me feel that I am able to do things like anyone else. It was a great fun.”

Eduardo Fausto da Silva, 24, Brazil

“I want to say that this event made me get into sport, into football, deep and now I’m studying at the university. I also have an intention to try to get to professional team.”

Oleg Filatov, 20, Ukraine

“Thanks for the opportunities and the experience of meeting other street paper vendors from around the world. I made lots of new friends.”

Nkosinathi Mkhonono, 32, South Africa

“I just want to say ...THANK YOU!”

Igor Kozeny, 42 , Czech Republic

“The enjoyment and excitement and the social side of things, it was a good experience. I enjoyed seeing other people’s point of views from all different countries and I could see how lucky I am. It was an honour to play for my country.”

Auric Afranie, 23, England

“The one thing I want to say about the Homeless World Cup is that it changed my life and has helped me to grow up a little and face up to responsibilities in my life.”

Lee Steven Anderson, 18, Wales

