



PRESS RELEASE

Brazil prepares for a World Cup to beat homelessness

- * **30,000 homeless players trial out around the world**
- * **World Cup stars support**
- * **Creating global change - ex-players excel**

While the world stands to attention for the FIFA World Cup, Brazil and the City of Rio are preparing for at the 8th Rio 2010 Homeless World Cup. From 19-26 September 2010 64 national teams of homeless players, including 16 women's teams will be united on Copacabana Beach, Brazil for the week long, annual football tournament beating homelessness globally.

Over 30,000 homeless players around the world are aiming for the chance to stand proud and represent their country on the global stage in Rio. A street soccer stadium with 3 pitches holding a crowd of 5,000 will be built on Copacabana Beach with the statue of Christ the Redeemer on Corcovado Mountain as the remarkable, iconic backdrop.

Mel Young, President, Homeless World Cup said: "Brazil and the City of Rio have the courage to take positive steps to address poverty and serious social issues with football, a sport in which they lead the world.

"The Homeless World cup is an opportunity for homeless people to move from the invisible margins to the center of Rio, stand proud on a global stage, true ambassadors for their country, and change their lives. A ball can change the world."

Orlando Silva, Brazilian Sports Minister, said: "It is with great satisfaction that the Brazilian Ministry of Sport supports the Rio 2010 Homeless World Cup. I'm convinced that gathering people from the whole world in a great sports movement for peace and social change will create a strong impact and contribution."

World Cup stars support

Homeless World Cup supporters include UEFA, United Nations, Nike, Vodafone Foundation, Global Ambassador Eric Cantona and international footballers Didier Drogba, Rio Ferdinand, and Luis Figo.

Didier Drogba, Ivory Coast National and Chelsea Football Club adds, "The Homeless World Cup can change the life of anyone, not simply to help them become a professional footballer, but so that they can develop values, human values, which I think is very important."

Rio Ferdinand, Captain England and Manchester United said: "The Homeless World Cup is inspirational in using the power of football to unite people living on the edge of society, to give them a fresh opportunity to prove to themselves, to prove to the world that they are no different than anyone else.

On this global stage they create real sporting entertainment, set the magic of football alive, change their lives and the change the perception of thousands around the world. They return real heroes, ambassadors for their country, leaders in their local community and the change continues on.”

Eric Cantona, ex-France National and Global Ambassador said, “Everybody needs to wake up in the morning with a goal. The Homeless World Cup brings this opportunity – to go into training, to change your life.”

Creating Global Change - ex-players excel

The first Homeless World Cup took place in Graz 2003 uniting 18 national teams. 5 years on and the tournament had grown significantly to unite 56 nations at the Melbourne 2008 Homeless World Cup, which included the first Women's Cup and a \$3 million legacy of 30 street soccer programmes to address homelessness across Australia.

The Homeless World Cup is pioneering a radical level of change not seen before. 73% of players change their lives for the better by coming off drugs and alcohol, moving into jobs, education, homes, training, reuniting with families and even going on to become players and coaches and set up social enterprises enabling other homeless people to change their situation.

Michelle da Silva, played for Brazil at the Copenhagen 2007 Homeless world Cup and is now a global ambassador for the Homeless World Cup. Born in 1990 into the City of God favela she has lived her life for football and is on a courageous journey out of poverty and exclusion through sport. She now plays for Brazil's women's under 20's national team and is one of the players selected for the 2010 South America Cup.

Michelle says: The Homeless World Cup is about a major life experience. You create friendships and set the right attitude to succeed in your life and in football.”

David Duke played for Scotland at the Gothenburg 2004 Homeless World Cup when he was homeless battling issues with alcohol following the death of his father. It got him back into football and he completed his Scottish Football Association coaching badges to become a certified youth coach. David rose to become manager and take Team Scotland to victory at the Copenhagen 2007 Homeless World Cup. David, also a global ambassador for the Homeless World Cup, is now a budding social entrepreneur and CEO of Street Soccer Scotland to use football to help homeless people in Scotland. It is already working with 500 homeless people providing weekly coaching sessions, an academy providing essential life skills, a Scottish Homeless Cup and a national league due to begin in late 2010.

David says: The Homeless World Cup was the rope that allowed me to pull myself out of a very dark hole. It helped me and now I can help others. When homeless people say to me I can't change, I say yes you can. I did. So can you.”

For more information visit: www.homelessworldcup.org.

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