

Bend it like Beckham

Extra Time

Another View

Another view of football from that taken by Jess, Jules and Joe is taken by Dave and his gang. Read this part of the story by Antoinette Moses called 'One of the Lads', and decide who the gang are, and what they like doing.

'So,' said Dave firmly. 'As I was saying hours ago while Luke here was in another world, what about Amsterdam next month?'

The next England - Holland game was in Amsterdam. Dave had a friend who had a friend who lived in Amsterdam and could get some tickets.

'I'm up for it,' said Mike. 'I think we should go. Amsterdam in March. Cheap beer. England away. Three Lions against the Dutch. Yeah.'

Luke didn't know how he was going to find the money for the fare, but he was determined to go, too. If there was anything, anyone thing that was almost as good as watching Chelsea at home, then it was watching England. Thousands and thousands of England fans waving their three lions scarves and the red cross of St George, thousands of men and boys painted red and white and shouting:

'England! England! England!'

'The time's right,' said Dave. 'We have to go to Amsterdam.' The lads nodded.

'This could be another Charleroi,' added Mike, remembering the stories of friends who had been in Belgium for Euro 2000. 'And this time we'll be there.'

'We'll give them a day to remember,' Steve laughed.

'Hey, Lukey,' he added, 'my glass is empty.'

'Luke got in the last round of drinks,' said Dave, who was feeling good at the thought of the promised fighting ahead. 'You get the round, Steve.'

Steve went to the bar and bought five more pints of beer.

'Why don't all those politicians understand that the fight is part of the game?' complained Dave as they drank.

Although Dave had never studied anything at school, his knowledge of football history was legendary. Luke knew that Chelsea had won the European Super Cup in '98, but he didn't know who had won it any other year. But Dave did. He also knew who had won the European Cup Winners' Cup, the League Cup, the Charity Shield and the FA Cup. Dave knew it all.

'How do you know that?' Luke often asked him.

'Just do, don't I?' Dave would say.

'Do you remember that Mr Forest back at school?' Dave asked the lads.

'The history teacher?' asked Luke.

'Yeah. Him,' said Dave. 'Well he lent me this book once. I think he wanted me to go to his lessons.'

The lads laughed. Dave had never gone to any history lessons.

'But the book was OK,' Dave told them. 'I've still got it. It's full of stuff.' Dave put his glass down firmly on the table that was damp with spilt beer.

The lads weren't quite sure what to say. No-one had ever seen Dave admit to reading before. Except for football magazines and books on how to repair cars. Steve thought it was a joke.

'You?' He laughed. 'Read a book? I don't believe it.' Dave stood up and with one quick movement he picked up Steve's glass of beer and poured it over Steve's trousers. Then he sat down again.

'As I was saying,' said Dave, 'before I was interrupted. This book is full of all kinds of stuff. For example, did you know that when football began in the Middle Ages, it was a way for men to sort out their differences?'

'What do you mean?' asked Gerry cautiously. He drank his beer just in case Dave picked on him next.

'What do you think I mean? You're stupid, you know, you're really thick. You're so thick I don't know why Luke doesn't mistake you for a bit of wood.'

Gerry looked down at the floor. He was big, he was strong, and as a general rule he would fight anyone who insulted him. But Big Dave was different. He was their leader. None of the lads would ever hit Dave.

'Sort out their differences - fight,' continued Dave. 'Football started with men like us who just wanted a good fight. According to this book, it was always more a battle than a game.'

'Is that true?' asked Mike.

'Of course it's true. It's in a book, isn't it?' The lads nodded thoughtfully at this piece of information.

After a moment Luke spoke.

'But didn't anyone try to stop it?'

'Good question, Lukey,' said Dave. Luke tried not to blush. Dave rarely said anything nice to anyone.

'Yeah, they did. Lots of them. Kings and politicians. They tried to ban football loads of times. But they never succeeded. And do you know why?'

The lads shook their heads.

'They never succeeded,' concluded Dave, 'because there have always been too many of us. We decide that there's going to be trouble and there's nothing anyone can do.'

'That's right,' agreed Mike. 'Amsterdam, here we come.'

'Here we come. . . here we come. . . here we come. . .'

From 'Frozen Pizza'. Reprinted in with kind permission of Cambridge University Press and the author

© Cambridge University Press 2002 <http://www.cambridge.org>

1. Can you match the underlined words in the text with the meaning below?

football chant which might be heard as a threat
went red with embarrassment
symbols of England
interesting things
extremely stupid
indicated they didn't know the answer
a large glass (*caneca*) of beer
not listening or concentrating
knowing something without knowing why
interested in taking part
resolve problems

2. Big Dave uses 'history' to support his argument. Do you think he is being accurate in the way that he does it? Is it common to use 'history' (or a carefully selected part of it) to support an argument? Can you think of any examples?
3. What do you think was the effect of Dave's persuasive argument on the other members of the gang?

4. Why do you think he says it is true because 'it's in a book'?

5. Dave says that a 'fight is part of the game' Do you agree? Can you add to the lists below to say what you think are part of the game? (Think: what do people expect when they go to a see a game; can these expectations be considered part of the game?)

On the pitch	In the stands	In the stadium	Off the stadium
<i>Referee's whistle</i>	<i>Fans shouting</i>	<i>Hot dogs</i>	<i>Queues</i>