

FOOTBALL

Made Simple



Ann Waterhouse

An Entertaining Introduction
to the Game for Mums & Dads

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SPORT

THE AUTHOR



Ann Waterhouse started work in 1969 in the UK editorial office of an international oil magazine. A career in the media followed but the arrival of two sons gave Ann the opportunity to pursue her writing activities, initially as a hobby. Since 1994, she has been writing entertaining and informative guides to sports, aimed at parents, grandparents and friends who didn't play the sports themselves.

Football Made Simple

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to that hardy band of supporters who stand by the sides of pitches across the country in pouring rain, howling wind and whatever else the British weather can throw at them, watching groups of kids kicking a large, round and very muddy ball up and down a field, occasionally interrupted by someone with a whistle who stops the game, only to start it again shortly afterwards.



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I've been so lucky to have Amanda working with me on this series of books. If you're interested, her wonderful illustrations are available for sale in colour direct from Amanda. See her website for more information about her work:

» stibyharris.com

Introduction

This is the second book in our series of guides for supporters who are coming along to watch team games being played by their children, partners or grandchildren.

If you've picked up or been given this guide, we hope it's because you're interested in the game of football and want to learn more about it. We can't *guarantee* you'll enjoy watching the game more after reading our guide, but we're certain you'll be able to understand much more about what's going on, why the game's been halted by the *officials* and what may happen next, and who knows, maybe you will enjoy going along to matches more, too.

As with all sports, the more you understand the game, the more fun it is to watch. Knowing all the rules would be a step too far, but learning a little about the names of the playing positions, their roles on the pitch and some of the most important Laws of the game, will certainly help you enjoy those cold days sitting or standing by the sidelines.

In common with our other books in this series, we have highlighted familiar or well-used terms in *italics*, and quick explanations of these terms can be found in the glossary at the back of the book.

Whatever the reason for you reading this introduction, we hope you'll want to read on. We can guarantee some interesting facts, some useful guidance and definitely some humour about this highly popular game that inspires more passion from its followers than almost any other sport on the planet.

What is football?

'Football's football, if it weren't it wouldn't be the game that it is.'

(Garth Crooks)

Football is just simply the most popular *ball* sport in the world. Because all that is needed to play is an area of open space and a ball, much of the world's soccer is played informally on patches of ground without any marking or real *goals*, and in many places it is played barefoot, using rolled-up rags or newspapers as the ball. A major reason for football's vast popularity is its accessibility and adaptability.

The statistics are truly staggering: *FIFA* (Fédération Internationale de Football Association), the governing body of the game since 1904, estimates, through a 'Big Count' exercise, all those involved in football on a regular basis. The most recent took place in 2006, so even these figures are probably below current levels. Back in 2006, approximately 270 million people were involved in the game, 265 million players and 5 million officials. Just to put this into context, if footballers were a nation state, it would be the fourth most populous in the world. There are currently 29 million women and girls playing the game worldwide, and that number is increasing even more rapidly than the men's game.

The worldwide television audience for the 2014 World Cup final game was estimated by FIFA at 2.6 billion for those watching just a few minutes. The cumulative audience of all matches was estimated to be 26.29 billion with an estimated 715.1 million people watching the final in full. This means a ninth of the planet was watching.

This makes the World Cup Final game the most-watched single televised event, and it's a pretty good bet that at least one member of your close family watched this game. We know the total global audience for the Olympics is bigger, but that is spread over multiple sports and many days. The detailed review of the 2014 competition

has not yet been published, but a single game (Brazil vs Croatia – the opening match) broke all records with just the Brazil-based audience totalling 42.9 million.

FIFA maintains an informative website, www.fifa.com, that provides so much detail it would take several weeks to read everything on the site, but if there are any statistics you'd like to check, that's the place to look first. Every nation has its own local organisation, the Football Association (FA) in England being the longest standing of these. They also have their own websites; for example, the FA one is www.thefa.com. You will find a list of the major websites in our web links pages at the back of this book and on our website:

» www.sueportersguide.com.

