

Tekst 7

One idea that needs to be shown the red card

By Christine Skelton

- 1 THIS SUMMER'S GCSE results showing girls' success generated another flurry of newspaper headlines on "failing boys", following as it did hot on the heels of the news that girls were now getting a higher proportion of A grades at A-level.
- 2 The Government is clearly taking this matter very seriously, with David Blunkett announcing that local education authorities must take steps to address the "laddish culture" which prevents boys from achieving. Mr Blunkett believes that laddish attitudes to school have arisen because of boys' "lack of self-confidence and opportunity", and one means of raising their self-esteem and increasing their motivation towards education is through giving football a central place.
- 3 The Government has put money into two initiatives: Playing for Success is part of the Government's £200m Study Support strategy and involves clubs providing premises and perks for boys who do one or two sessions a week enhancing their literacy, numeracy and IT skills.
- 4 It is also backing a fantasy football league "to make maths fun and end the innumeracy of many of Britain's soccer-obsessed children".
- 5 It is ironic then that the Government has just launched a scheme to combat football hooligans travelling abroad. On the one hand, there are moves to counter the extremes to which some football fans will go, while, on the other, steps are being taken to encourage boys to get involved more in football.
- 6 There are two fundamental issues here: first, boys are not all the same and so not all are likely

to respond to the emphasis on football; and second, football is not "just a game".

- 7 Even a cursory glance at studies of boys and education shows the various ways football is played out. A study carried out in the North-east in the 1970s of a group of white, secondary-age, working-class boys showed that although they spent every unsupervised moment playing the game, all attempts by the school to motivate the boys through football were strongly resisted. Playing football for the school was seen by them as colluding.
- 8 More recently, in interviews with 10-year-old boys regarded as "star" players in a primary school which gave a high profile to football, it emerged that the boys were, literally, playing the system. They regularly received accolades as part of the school team and got out of homework by playing after-school matches.
- 9 And what about the boys who are not good at football? Numerous studies of both primary and secondary schools report how boys are aware that their popularity is often reliant on their skill at football.
- 10 Several studies of primary schools have shown how football offers opportunities for racist taunts, where lunch-time football games of ethnically mixed teams of boys play amicably until fights break out due to the vague rules. These fights usually occur between boys from different ethnic groups, and sides are taken according to ethnicity.
- 11 Then there are the studies of both primary and secondary schools where girls are actively



Can soccer-obsession lead to numeracy?

- excluded. These attempts to exclude vary. For example when each class is given only one ball to play with at breaktimes, boys adopt strategies to monopolise the ball. Similarly, girls frequently report how they feel that some male teachers collude with the boys to keep the game an all-male preserve.
- 12 Football is the national sport and should be included in the curriculum of schools. But to regard it simply as the way of tackling "the problem of boys and schooling" is naive. Not all boys have the same interests and even those who do have a passion for football are not going to allow it to be appropriated by school.
 - 13 Also, far from being inclusive, football can marginalise entire groups on the grounds of cultural background, gender and sexuality.
 - 14 If the Government is serious about addressing the "laddish culture" it sees as prevalent in our schools, then utilising a "laddish" game will inevitably be counter-productive.

'The Independent'

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- 1p **19** ■ Which of the following is in accordance with paragraphs 1 and 2?
- A A sense of inferiority may cause boys to have bad school results.
 - B Because boys are underachieving, girls are taking their chances to get ahead.
 - C Boys' school results are negatively influenced by their focus on football.
 - D The government has realised that the present school system discriminates against boys.
- 1p **20** ■ What does the government's first initiative, mentioned in paragraph 3, entail?
- A Boys with football potential being given extra training at school.
 - B Boys with good school results being rewarded with extra hours of games.
 - C Football activities as a means to get boys to improve their school results.
- 1p **21** ■ Which of the following is true of paragraph 5?
- A It makes clear that the problem of hooliganism abroad should not be underestimated.
 - B It points out a possible inconsistency in government policy.
 - C It ridicules the initiatives described in paragraphs 3 and 4.
 - D It warns of the long-term consequences of promoting football in schools.
- 1p **22** ■ What is the conclusion of the study discussed in paragraph 7?
- The boys
- A did not improve their school results when they played more football.
 - B regarded their school teachers as unqualified in football matters.
 - C resented the idea of linking football and school.
- 1p **23** ■ Which of the following is true of paragraph 8?
- A It explains that Playing for Success generates only a few star players.
 - B It points out that Playing for Success can provide a positive stimulus.
 - C It stresses the short-term character of the advantages of Playing for Success.
 - D It suggests that Playing for Success may have counterproductive consequences.
- 1p **24** ■ With which of the following could the first sentence of paragraph 10 also begin?
- A Also, several...
 - B However, several...
 - C Thus, several...
 - D True, several...

Dit artikel kan onderverdeeld worden in vier delen:

- 1 inleiding tot het onderwerp
- 2 stellingname en argumenten van de schrijfster
- 3 samenvatting van de argumenten
- 4 conclusie

- 1p **25** □ Bij welke alinea begint het tweede deel?
Noteer het nummer van deze alinea.
- 1p **26** □ Bij welke alinea begint het derde deel?
Noteer het nummer van deze alinea.