



Sports Reach

Spring 2013



Dear friends,

"Call them all together - men, women and children, and the foreigners living in your towns - so they may hear this Book of Instruction and learn to fear the Lord your God... Do this so that your children who have not known these instructions will hear them and will learn to fear the Lord your God." Deuteronomy 31v12,13.

As I read these words a few weeks ago, they showed me the importance of the work we are involved in, you and I. We are living in a generation who have never even heard who God is, never mind been taught to fear Him. Blasphemy is everywhere. Our children are being taught that we evolved from slime as the result of a big bang; they have not heard that God created them in His own image, that He loves them even though they have broken His rules, and that through the death of His Son they can be brought back to their loving Heavenly Father. It has been an immense privilege over the Easter period to 'call them all together' at **soccer and netball schools**, and to share the truth with them...so that they may believe for themselves. Our theme at our sports schools this year is **'In the beginning'**...we look at creation, the fall, the cross, and making the choice. It has been great to hear kids exclaim **'wow, that all makes sense! I never heard it like that before!'** and several children have turned to God over these past few weeks! Praise God! Thank you for being a part of what God is doing, for your faithful prayers, and financial support. **Be encouraged**...God is at work, and He is **mighty to save!**

Pray on... Forwards together, backwards never!

God bless, Sue.

'How shall they hear without a preacher?'

South Africa

What an amazing trip! And as always, God amazed us with the **open doors** He gave us for sharing the gospel!

In February, a team of 8 travelled for our return visit to South Africa, working alongside Nick and Sheila Court, **Stepwise Youth Ministry**. We flew to Johannesburg, and the following day began our ministry in Tembisa (thought to be the biggest township in the southern hemisphere) doing **street evangelism** to help with a church plant. Children soon flocked to play sport with us, and passers-by were keen to talk as we invited them to **Bible study** and to **church**.

We then spent the next 6 days in **Clarens**, doing mainly schools work, but also with the opportunity to share with the Municipal Workers. At the Combined School we had the **whole school for assemblies for 5 mornings!** We took the theme **'The Four Points'**, as you can see on our t-shirts. Clarens Primary were very welcoming too – they had three teachers absent, so they gave us sports classes with most of the school! It was during the first period that I looked around and felt so blessed that God had brought the right team together – Ruth Snalam (17) Sarah and Ruth (our daughters, both 14) were organising netball matches and coaching for the girls, while me, Grace (16) and James Sutton (10) did football training and matches with the boys! (Will and Sooty were teaching in the high school). At the end of each hour we shared testimony and a gospel message with the children. **13 boys responded!**

A great time again at **Tschpong Feeding Programme**, acting out Bible passages, singing and sharing **'Meet the King'**! I asked the children if they would like to 'meet the King' for themselves to come forwards after the meal and we would pray with them...around **30-40 children came forward** over the 4 days we were there, the first girl came while I was still eating! All of our team really enjoyed our time there, just playing games with the children after the meal, we spent many memorable hours there, late into the afternoon. Happy days!

Then there were the farm schools – again more sport, assemblies, classes, we had to be ready for anything!

But the **most amazing opportunity was in the high school**. We had taken a few classes there last year, and when we asked on the Monday morning which classes we could take, the principal printed off a sheet of the week's lessons, and said we could have every **'Life Orientation Class'**! This amounted to 15 hours of teaching with the 16-20 year olds! What a time we had with them! Will shared with them from **John 10 v 10**, while others of us shared testimony and sang. The classes often ran over time with all the questions the students were asking! Many of the young people responded to what they heard, and **trusted Christ as Saviour** – praise God! Please pray for them that they will grow strong in the Lord, and pray that we will have more opportunities with them.

On a personal note, I felt a bit daunted when I realised we had two classes at the same time, which meant that I would be teaching one group for an hour...but God provided in a tremendous way, and at the end of the class I asked for any to raise their hands if they wanted to repent and come to Christ...about 38 of the 42 students did so! What a privilege to lead them in the sinners' prayer!

Note to self – **I can't, but HE can!!!**

Back to Kempton Park, more schools, more sport, youth Bible study, church services...and then back home, **tired out but rejoicing** in all the **HE** had done! Please continue to pray for this work, and for wisdom in planning our next mission to S Africa! Sue



Netball



With the winter leagues now over, there's still lots going on in the netball! 17th April saw 25 of us, dressed in black and white, play for 3 hours to raise money for SportsReach! Over £500 was raised, thanks everyone! Our **9th Annual Tournament at Garstang, Lancs** is Saturday 22nd June, with the **Sandhurst, Kent Tournament** on 8th June.

Come and join us if you can!

Football



Sharing the word around the centre circle before a league match

The **football league** has also drawn to a close, with Great Eccleston coming out on top this year. It has not been an easy season for various reasons, but we are thankful for all those who have put in a lot of time and effort to make it possible, to managers, refs and the exec, and so thankful to God that many men have heard the Good News. Please pray for the **Champions Cup Final** 26th April, and for the **Awards Evening** on Sat 27th April at Capernwray Hall.

And begin to pray for next season...

Weekend Away



Well, we advertised this event as **'Football, Fun and Faith at its best!'** And that is exactly what it was! 55 of us travelled to Knock Christian Centre near Appleby and enjoyed football and netball, plenty of fun and games, and great Bible teaching. *Roll on next year!*

Forthcoming events...

AUSTRIA 20TH YEAR 10th - 24th May

14 men, 14 days, 1 mission - making Christ known. Please pray that this will be the best tour yet. Pray for the team, for the local teams, for devotions and lectures, safety in travel and on the pitch. Most of all, **PRAY FOR SOULS TO BE SAVED!** May we come back rejoicing in what the Lord has done!

FRANCE 10TH YEAR 5th - 14th June

Still places available!

Prayer points as above, also pray for more to join the team and for more open doors.

5 ASIDE FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT

Lancaster, Saturday 29th June

office@sportsreach.org.uk www.sportsreach.org.uk
SportsReach, 57 Lancaster Road.
Carnforth, Lancs, LA5 9LE England

My first season as a SportsReach Netball League Manager

By Jane Marsh, 'Bluebelles' team

I have been a supporter of SportsReach for many years and more recently as an **umpire** for the netball league, but last summer God began speaking to me about entering my own team into the league. At first, I tried to justify not entering a team ... I work full time... My family are already involved with church activities...I'd need to find baby sitters... Would I find a team committed enough to play each week?

I'd played in a team in another league and was getting frustrated with lack of organisation and unprofessional approach to the way it was run. Having umpired netball in the SportsReach league I was impressed by the reliable and efficient organisation and running.

So at the beginning of September the **'Blue belles'** team was born! If I had been in any doubt that this was what I was meant to do then God showed be otherwise. *We had 14 people committed to play within 48 hours of joining the league!*

Our team met together a couple of times before our first match and it was clear that we would work well as a team. Players came from a wide variety of places and with a range of previous netball experience.

I have to be honest and say that I was nervous about the first match. Not least about our ability to play, but also about the time in the evening given over to a gospel message. How would my team react? Would they come again? Would it put them off? I didn't need to worry. **God knew my team before I did.** He knows their needs. Our first talk was a personal testimony and each week ladies spoke from personal experience or gave words of encouragement and each week God has spoken directly to members of my team and many conversations have followed as a result.

The league suggested that each manager gain the support from their church and I have been encouraged by the **faithful prayer** and sometimes **practical support** from our church.

The regular **managers meetings** have reminded me that whilst we are individual teams competing against one another, we are united in the work to share the gospel and prayer support for each other.

I would like to encourage anyone who is considering joining the league. **There is no greater privilege than sharing the love of The Lord Jesus Christ.** Sometimes we feel totally inadequate and unprepared, but God equips and can use the weakest if **they are a willing.**

Easter Soccer and Netball Schools



We had **almost 200 children** sign up for our Easter camps at **Glasgow, Carnforth and Battle!** They were a great success, even though the weather was pretty cold! We saw several children commit their lives to God. Thanks to all involved, either practically or prayerfully! We couldn't do it without you! *God is GOOD!*

Soccer/Netball Schools

Caton, 29 May S+N

Gt Eccleston, 24 July S+N

Bethersden, 31 July

Wray 31 July

Ripon 31 July

Clapham 7 Aug S+N

Sandhurst 14 Aug S+N

Tundbridge Wells 21 Aug

Clayton-Le-Moors 28 Aug

Staines 28 Aug

Please pray for all the above events, all running for 4 days. Pray for the school assemblies prior to the camps, that we will be well received and *many children will sign up!*

My first soccer school, by Samuel Sutton, age 7 yrs

I made some great new friends at Glasgow Soccer School. Every day was exciting. I loved the football coaching with dad and John, especially learning to shoot!

I enjoyed playing in the matches in the afternoons, and I was so happy when our team reached the World Cup Final. I won the penalty shoot out competition!

The Bible Time and meeting times were great, especially learning about how God created the universe and sent His Son Jesus to bridge the gap that sin had made.