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Balotelli to quit Euros if racially abused

31st May, 2012

http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1205/120531-mario_balotelli.html

Contents

The Article	2
Warm-ups	3
Before Reading / Listening	4
While Reading / Listening	5
Listening Gap Fill	6
After Reading / Listening	7
Student Survey	8
Discussion	9
Language Work	10
Writing	11
Homework	12
Answers	13

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THE ARTICLE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1205/120531-mario_balotelli.html

Italian soccer player Mario Balotelli has issued a warning to the upcoming European Championship organizers that he will walk off the pitch if he is the target of racial abuse. The world's second largest football tournament will kick off in Warsaw, Poland on June 8th. Games will be jointly held in Poland and Ukraine. Balotelli's comments come just days after an undercover BBC documentary on racism at Euro 2012's host cities. The programme, entitled 'Euro 2012: Stadiums of Hate,' showed fans making Nazi salutes and monkey chants towards black players. Some of England's black players have said their families would not travel to watch the games because of the fear of potential violence.

Balotelli made his intentions clear in an interview with the 'France Football' magazine. He said: "I cannot bear racism. It's unacceptable for me. If it happened again I would straight away leave the pitch and go home. We are in 2012. It can't happen....I hope it will pass without problem." The player has had plenty of experience of suffering racial abuse, including having a banana thrown at him in Rome. Talking about that incident, he said: "If someone throws a banana at me in the street, I will go to jail because I will kill them." Ukraine's foreign ministry said racism in Ukrainian football was a "dreamed up and mythical problem" and that racism was far worse in EU countries.

WARM-UPS

1. RACIAL ABUSE: Walk around the class and talk to other students about racial abuse. Change partners often. Sit with your first partner(s) and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

soccer player / warning / Euro 2012 / racism / undercover documentary / violence / intentions / interview / unacceptable / pass without problem / jail / dreamed up

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. RACISM: How do we tackle it? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you wrote. Change and share again.

Racism...	What form of racism?	How do we tackle it?
in sport		
in the street		
in jokes		
in companies		
in countries		
in classrooms		

4. THING OF THE PAST: Students A **strongly** believe racism will one day be a thing of the past; Students B **strongly** believe otherwise. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. SOCCER PLAYERS: What should they do if they are racially abused? Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Change partners and share again.

- walk off the pitch
- complain to the referee
- stop the game until the racism stops
- ask for fans to be removed
- call the police
- confront the fans
- ignore it and play their best to win
- start an online anti-racism campaign

6. SOCCER: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'soccer'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1205/120531-mario_balotelli.html

1. TRUE / FALSE: Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- a. A soccer player will quit a game if fans racially abuse him at Euro 2102. T / F
- b. The Euro 2012 tournament is the world's second biggest sports event. T / F
- c. The BBC secretly filmed football fans in Poland and Ukraine. T / F
- d. Relatives of all of England's black players will attend the games. T / F
- e. Balotelli's comments came in a candid interview with an Italian paper. T / F
- f. Balotelli has yet to experience racial abuse as a footballer. T / F
- g. The player said he would kill anyone who threw a banana at him. T / F
- h. A Ukraine politician said racism is worse in EU nations than in Ukraine. T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article.

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. issued | a. contest |
| 2. target | b. tolerate |
| 3. tournament | c. obvious |
| 4. undercover | d. subject |
| 5. potential | e. fictitious |
| 6. clear | f. given |
| 7. bear | g. occurrence |
| 8. plenty | h. possible |
| 9. incident | i. secret |
| 10. mythical | j. a wealth of |

3. PHRASE MATCH: (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. issued a | a. in Poland and Ukraine |
| 2. the target | b. worse in EU countries |
| 3. Games will be jointly held | c. plenty of experience |
| 4. an undercover | d. of racial abuse |
| 5. the fear of potential | e. BBC documentary on racism |
| 6. Balotelli made his intentions | f. warning |
| 7. I hope it will pass | g. mythical problem |
| 8. The player has had | h. clear in an interview |
| 9. a dreamed up and | i. violence |
| 10. racism was far | j. without problem |

Balotelli to quit Euros if racially abused– 31st May, 2012

WHILE READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1205/120531-mario_balotelli.html

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Italian soccer player Mario Balotelli has (1) _____ a warning to the upcoming European Championship organizers that he will walk off the pitch if he is the (2) _____ of racial abuse. The world's second largest football tournament will (3) _____ off in Warsaw, Poland on June 8th. Games will be (4) _____ held in Poland and Ukraine. Balotelli's comments come just days after an (5) _____ BBC documentary on racism at Euro 2012's host cities. The programme, (6) _____ 'Euro 2012: Stadiums of Hate,' showed fans making Nazi (7) _____ and monkey chants towards black players. Some of England's black players have said their families would not travel to watch the games because of the fear of (8) _____ violence.

salutes
kick
undercover
potential
issued
entitled
target
jointly

Balotelli made his intentions (9) _____ in an interview with the 'France Football' magazine. He said: "I cannot (10) _____ racism. It's unacceptable for me. If it happened again I would (11) _____ away leave the pitch and go home. We are in 2012. It can't happen....I hope it will (12) _____ without problem." The player has had plenty of experience of (13) _____ racial abuse, including having a banana thrown at him in Rome. Talking about that (14) _____, he said: "If someone throws a banana at me in the street, I will go to jail because I will kill them." Ukraine's foreign ministry said racism in Ukrainian football was a "(15) _____ up and mythical problem" and that racism was (16) _____ worse in EU countries.

dreamed
straight
incident
pass
clear
far
bear
suffering

LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1205/120531-mario_balotelli.html

Italian soccer player Mario Balotelli _____ to the upcoming European Championship organizers that he _____ if he is the _____. The world's second largest football tournament will kick off in Warsaw, Poland on June 8th. Games will be jointly held in Poland and Ukraine. Balotelli's comments _____ an undercover BBC documentary on racism at Euro 2012's host cities. The programme, entitled 'Euro 2012: Stadiums of Hate,' showed fans making Nazi salutes and monkey _____ players. Some of England's black players have said their families would not travel to watch the games because of _____ violence.

Balotelli made his _____ interview with the 'France Football' magazine. He said: "I cannot bear racism. It's unacceptable for me. If it happened again I would straight away _____ go home. We are in 2012. It can't happen....I hope it will pass without problem." The player has had plenty of _____ racial abuse, including having a banana thrown at him in Rome. Talking _____, he said: "If someone throws a banana at me in the street, I will go to jail because I will kill them." Ukraine's foreign ministry said racism in Ukrainian football was a "dreamed _____ problem" and that racism _____ EU countries.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1205/120531-mario_balotelli.html

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'racial' and 'abuse'.

racial	abuse
---------------	--------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• issued• target• jointly• host• fans• families	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• bear• leave• pass• plenty• banana• far
--	---

RACISM SURVEY

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1205/120531-mario_balotelli.html

Write five GOOD questions about racism in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

RACISM DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'racism'?
- c) Is racism here to stay or will it be with us forever?
- d) What do you think of Balotelli threatening to walk off the pitch if he is racially abused?
- e) What do you think of Balotelli after reading the comments from his interview with the 'France Football' magazine?
- f) Should other players follow him off the pitch if he is targeted?
- g) What should happen to fans who make Nazi salutes or racially abuse players?
- h) What should world football do to clubs whose fans take part in racist behaviour?
- i) What do you think of the fact that the families of black England players are avoiding the tournament out of fear of possible violence?
- j) Do you think Balotelli is a good role model?

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RACISM DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Should Mario Balotelli become a UN ambassador against racism?
- c) Is racism in 2012 worse than ever?
- d) What forms of racism exists in your country and what does the government do to help stamp it out?
- e) What effect would it have on Euro 2012 if star players like Balotelli walked off the pitch?
- f) Have you ever been the victim of racial abuse?
- g) What's the best way to deal with someone racially abusing you?
- h) Is Ukraine's Foreign Ministry right?
- i) What three adjectives would best describe this story?
- j) What questions would you like to ask Mario Balotelli?

LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1205/120531-mario_balotelli.html

Italian soccer player Mario Balotelli has (1) ____ a warning to the upcoming European Championship organizers that he will walk off the pitch if he is the (2) ____ of racial abuse. The world's second largest football tournament will kick off in Warsaw, Poland on June 8th. Games will be (3) ____ held in Poland and Ukraine. Balotelli's comments (4) ____ just days after an undercover BBC documentary on racism at Euro 2012's host cities. The programme, entitled 'Euro 2012: Stadiums of Hate,' showed fans making Nazi (5) ____ and monkey chants towards black players. Some of England's black players have said their families would not travel to watch the games because of the fear of (6) ____ violence.

Balotelli made his intentions clear in an interview with the 'France Football' magazine. He said: "I cannot (7) ____ racism. It's unacceptable for me. If it happened again I would straight away leave the pitch and go home. We are in 2012. It can't happen....I hope it will (8) ____ without problem." The player has had plenty of experience of suffering racial abuse, including having a banana thrown at him in Rome. Talking about that (9) ____, he said: "If someone throws a banana at me in the street, I will go to jail because I will kill them." Ukraine's foreign ministry said racism in Ukrainian football was a "(10) ____ up and (11) ____ problem" and that racism was (12) ____ worse in EU countries.

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. | (a) assured | (b) insured | (c) initiated | (d) issued |
| 2. | (a) target | (b) aim | (c) bulls eye | (d) objective |
| 3. | (a) joint | (b) jointly | (c) jointed | (d) joints |
| 4. | (a) depart | (b) have | (c) come | (d) get |
| 5. | (a) disputes | (b) reputes | (c) salutes | (d) flutes |
| 6. | (a) promise | (b) potential | (c) capacity | (d) undeveloped |
| 7. | (a) cow | (b) bull | (c) dog | (d) bear |
| 8. | (a) pass | (b) fall | (c) over | (d) through |
| 9. | (a) orient | (b) incident | (c) accident | (d) ancient |
| 10. | (a) nightmare | (b) imagine | (c) hoped | (d) dreamed |
| 11. | (a) biblical | (b) comical | (c) mythical | (d) atomical |
| 12. | (a) far | (b) fear | (c) for | (d) fir |

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WRITING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1205/120531-mario_balotelli.html

Write about **racism** for 10 minutes. Correct your partner's paper.

HOMework

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find out more about racism in football / sport. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. RACISM: Make a poster about racism and how to combat it. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. BALOTELLI: Write a magazine article about Mario Balotelli and his comments to the 'France Football' magazine. Include imaginary interviews with him and a Euro 2012 organizer.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. LETTER: Write a letter to the boss of world football. Ask him three questions about racism in his sport. Give him three ideas on how to tackle it. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. T b. F c. T d. F e. F f. F g. T h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. issued | a. given |
| 2. target | b. subject |
| 3. tournament | c. contest |
| 4. undercover | d. secret |
| 5. potential | e. possible |
| 6. clear | f. obvious |
| 7. bear | g. tolerate |
| 8. plenty | h. a wealth of |
| 9. incident | i. occurrence |
| 10. mythical | j. fictitious |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. issued a | a. warning |
| 2. the target | b. of racial abuse |
| 3. Games will be jointly held | c. in Poland and Ukraine |
| 4. an undercover | d. BBC documentary on racism |
| 5. the fear of potential | e. violence |
| 6. Balotelli made his intentions | f. clear in an interview |
| 7. I hope it will pass | g. without problem |
| 8. The player has had | h. plenty of experience |
| 9. a dreamed up and | i. mythical problem |
| 10. racism was far | j. worse in EU countries |

GAP FILL:

Balotelli to quit Euros if racially abused

Italian soccer player Mario Balotelli has (1) **issued** a warning to the upcoming European Championship organizers that he will walk off the pitch if he is the (2) **target** of racial abuse. The world's second largest football tournament will (3) **kick** off in Warsaw, Poland on June 8th. Games will be (4) **jointly** held in Poland and Ukraine. Balotelli's comments come just days after an (5) **undercover** BBC documentary on racism at Euro 2012's host cities. The programme, (6) **entitled** 'Euro 2012: Stadiums of Hate,' showed fans making Nazi (7) **salutes** and monkey chants towards black players. Some of England's black players have said their families would not travel to watch the games because of the fear of (8) **potential** violence.

Balotelli made his intentions (9) **clear** in an interview with the 'France Football' magazine. He said: "I cannot (10) **bear** racism. It's unacceptable for me. If it happened again I would (11) **straight** away leave the pitch and go home. We are in 2012. It can't happen....I hope it will (12) **pass** without problem." The player has had plenty of experience of (13) **suffering** racial abuse, including having a banana thrown at him in Rome. Talking about that (14) **incident**, he said: "If someone throws a banana at me in the street, I will go to jail because I will kill them." Ukraine's foreign ministry said racism in Ukrainian football was a "(15) **dreamed** up and mythical problem" and that racism was (16) **far** worse in EU countries.

LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - d 2 - a 3 - b 4 - c 5 - c 6 - b 7 - d 8 - a 9 - b 10 - d 11 - c 12 - a