



## **SAM MINIHAN**

### **Stockport County Player & Community Foundation Coach 2019**

I began coaching for Stockport County's Community Foundation during the 2016/17 season. After meeting with Dave Wardle, the Foundation's Manager, it was clear to see how passionate and enthusiastic everyone associated with the charity was and is towards their projects. Following a conversation with a former Stockport County Player and Community Coach, Lewis Montrose, it became apparent to me how beneficial and satisfying it would be to work for the charity alongside playing for the connected club.

During my time working with the Foundation I have visited and coached at almost every Primary School within the extensive Stockport area. Inside these Schools I've had the opportunity and pleasure of meeting children from all ages and backgrounds, most of which have a common passion or understanding of Stockport County.

Once the children (if they didn't already know through experience) realise I am a player for the aforementioned team, you can see an instant excitement and respect between myself and the children. With this in mind, the Multi-Sports Sessions I deliver are filled with energy and attentiveness as children have the opportunity to learn from somebody they could potentially view as a role model. The free Schools Ticket Initiative led by Stockport County and the Foundation encourages children from all the local schools to come and watch a match whereby I and other coaches along with the first team Manager (Club Captain Paul Turnbull, Adam Etches and Szymon Czubik) will be in attendance. Once again, I've seen first-hand how much these experiences have inspired and encouraged children to partake in sports, support their local team and most importantly, stay active.

On behalf of the Foundation I have also attended several Walking Football Sessions for the elderly. This gives our more perhaps, loyal fans a chance to meet and engage with myself and speak about Stockport County whilst remaining active and healthy. I also lead a Youth Offender's Engagement session every Monday whereby young adults going through difficult times have the chance to train and learn from myself. I have personally had the pleasure of seeing this group grow and grow, with a large group now attending regularly and displaying extraordinary improvements in their behaviour and football abilities. I have also taken part in coaching local disability and mental health football sessions. All of which fill me with pride and satisfaction at the happiness these sessions bring to the individuals.

My overall experiences as a Player/Coach for Stockport County's Community Foundation have allowed me to meet people from all areas of the community and really see the true love and emotion people have for this club. This in turn drives me to make the club successful so initiative's such as the Foundation can continue to grow and carry out the outstanding work they do for all areas of the community. The Foundation is also quite unique in the way that it possesses players as coaches too. Speaking from a player's point of view you can unquestionably see the difference it makes having someone who plays for the club they support or know of coaching their sessions. I have managed to engage thousands of children and hopefully inspire these individuals into making good decisions, staying active and becoming lifelong learners.

Sam

