



“Stick your neck out!” Says David Dein

Thanks to the “Speakers for Schools” programme, we were delighted to welcome David Dein to our school to speak to our students. Sports reporters Jago, Josh and Seamus in year 8 were very keen to meet and interview him!

David Dein was former vice chairman of Arsenal football club and a key founder of the premier league. At his time at arsenal he won 18 trophies, including 5 FA cups and 5 Premier league titles, he even won the champions league. After leaving the men’s team he went on to become the president of the Arsenal women’s team, helping it develop and become the most progressive sport in the country. He supported the women’s team in the 2015 world cup in Canada but unfortunately lost the bid for the 2018 men’s world cup.

He now is a public speaker who goes around to Schools, Prisons and Business’ to talk about his career and on life skills. The motto he uses every day of his life is The Turtle Motto ‘Stick your neck out’ which means go have a go at something and try and make it happen.

His career was very successful, so successful in fact that he was voted in the top 10 most inspirational people in the premier league.

We asked: *What first got you into football? David told us:*

“I was always an Arsenal fan and in 1982 I stuck my neck out and sent a letter to the board asking to buy a share of the club. After that I sent a blank cheque to show I was serious. In 1983 I was appointed vice Chairman.”

We commented that at times in the past there have been some fairly negative images of British football and has been associated with violence and hooliganism. What has changed to improve this image?

“At one point in the past violence and hooliganism was so bad, that a lot of women and children got scared of going to football games and TV had to pull the plug on football for 6 months, this improved when stadium safety management was increased and fans were separated.”

We wondered what David felt about standing viewing?

“It seems to be working in Germany and there trying it out in Scotland but I disagree with it, especially after the Hillsborough disaster when 96 lost their lives.”

What wanted to know what made the Premier league so successful?

“You need the best show, maximum interest, commercial success and CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility).”

What can David tell us about what scouts look for in players?

“Technique, Physique, Vision, Behaviour and Attitude. Behaviour and attitude is by far the most important!”

Does David think that footballers are paid a fair amount?

“I think it is fair because no one has a problem with actors being paid a lot and the million aires in the Premier are only the top 0.1% of footballers in the world.”

What does David think about timekeeping?

“I think that timekeeping should not be done by the referees but by an independent timekeeper. In an average game the ball is only in play for around 60 minutes so I think to avoid time wasting, there should just be a 60 minute game, where the clock stops when the ball goes out of play.”

Many thanks to David for giving up his time to visit our school and for his informative and motivating presentation!