

SKY HD



press release

NOT A BLUE DAY AT THE PREMIER LEAGUE ALL STARS AS CHELSEA AND BIRMINGHAM CITY ARE KNOCKED OUT

It was the last night of the quarter finals at the All Stars Arena with Middlesbrough, Birmingham City, Chelsea and Sunderland all vying for a place in the semi finals of Sky One's Premier League All Stars.

First to take to the pitch were Middlesbrough with their legends Craig Hignett, Bernie Slaven, Mikkel Beck and Jim Platt, celebrity supporters Alistair Griffin (Fame Academy), actor Mark Stobart and Speedway champ Gary Havelock, alongside three ordinary fans. Their opponents were Birmingham City with legends Dennis Bailey, Steve Claridge, Martin Grainger and Kevin Miller, celebrity fans Musical Youth singer Dennis Seaton, boxer Robert McCracken and Nigel Clark, from Dodgy, and three talented fans completing the line up.

Despite an electric atmosphere, the first half was goalless making a very competitive second half as each team tried to win through. Slaven took 'Boro into the lead in the 13th minute. The match became very physical with a clash of heads between amateurs Stuart Kane (Birmingham) and Julian McGuire ('Boro), followed shortly by Brum fan Hemmings being floored by Hignett but Stobart paid the price and was sent to The Cooler. He said, "talk about injustice. Shocking! I'm having a word with Dermot [Gallagher]." A fantastic strike from fan McGuire 3 minutes from time gave 'Boro a 2-0 win putting them through to the semis and sending Birmingham home with £15,000 for Promise Dreams and the Book Trust charities.

The next match saw Chelsea's Gus Poyet, Roberto Di Matteo, Kerry Dixon and Peter 'the cat' Bonetti, join up with actor Ross Kemp, comedian Omid Djalili and cricketer Alec Stewart and three lucky fans. They took on Sunderland with legends John Byrne, Marco Gabbiadini, Andy Melville and Iain Hesford, celebrities Liam McGough (Big Brother) with soap actors John Nayagam and Joe Simpson. A trio of talented supporters were the final three Mackems.

Ahead of kick off Liam McGough said, "be great to get through to the semis, the longer we're here the more money there'll be for charity and the longer we're here the more footie we can play on the telly." Chelsea were buoyed up by a pre-match

team huddle and they were quick to get into the game with Djalili attempting a long range shot and Di Matteo striking the ball just wide of the mark within the first two minutes. But it was Sunderland to score first with new signing John Byrne, who replaced Don Goodman, hitting the back of the net 8 minutes in. The game resumed in the second half with both teams battling hard in desperation to qualify. Ross Kemp brought some of his rugby skills to the football field as the game took a tough turn, Chelsea fan player Mwanza suffered two chipped teeth and Di Matteo and Sunderland's McGough collided leading to McGough leaving the pitch to vomit.

Desperately trying to keep the Blues in the game Alec Stewart attempted to clear the ball right in front of keeper Bonetti but it was a clumsy clearance and Byrne capitalised on the opportunity to score his second of the night putting Sunderland through and Chelsea out with a final score of 2-0 to the Mackems.

Chelsea take home £15,000 for their charity partners CLIC Sargent and Right to Play.

Premier League All Stars, the charity football element of the Premier League's Creating Chances community initiative, concludes tomorrow night with the legends, celebrities and fans of West Ham, Sunderland, Middlesborough and Manchester United competing to be crowned the ultimate champions winning £100,000 for their Club's nominated charity. The semi-finals followed by the final are live on Sky One from 7pm.

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