



## PPF INCLUSION IN SPORT WEEK

### PRESENTERS & PANELLISTS

#### **BRENDON BATSON OBE, CHAIR, PROFESSIONAL PLAYERS FEDERATION**



Brendon Batson is a member of the English National Football Museum's Hall of Fame and a pioneering anti-racism champion.

A member of West Bromwich Albion's famous "Three Degrees", full-back Brendon played an important role in the Baggies' successes in the late seventies and early eighties.

After he stopped playing, he was Deputy Chief Executive of the PFA for almost 20 years and played a pivotal role in the development of the Kick It Out campaign to tackle racism and discrimination in football. He has been chair of the PPF since 2005.

#### **SIMONE POUND, DIRECTOR OF EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION, PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALLERS ASSOCIATION**



As well as her PFA role, Simone Pound sits on the international players union FIFPRO's EDI Committee and is Chair of the PPF EDI Committee. She is also an Independent Non-Executive Director for the Professional Cricketers Association. She has previously sat on the Kick It Out Board and FA Women's Board. She is Co-Director of the PFA Business Schools EDI Directorship.

She has written guidance, tool kits, and education programmes for Anti-Racism, Anti-Bullying, Tackling Homophobia and LGBTQ+ Inclusion and EDI player workshops that have been delivered to over 4,000 professional footballers across all Leagues.

She is a staunch advocate for anti-racism and champion of the progression for black players into coaching, management and Board positions after playing.

Simone has been instrumental in tackling the online abuse of professional footballers working with social media platforms,

government, CPS, police and players to work towards its eradication. She developed a programme for footballers on Sexual Consent and Respectful Relationships and Toxic Influencers to address online misogyny.

Most recent projects include Interfaith initiatives supporting players of faith in the workplace and a drive to support neurodiverse players including Colourblind Awareness and Understanding Autism.

### **JASON LEE, FORMER FOOTBALLER**



A former footballer with over 650 appearances for 18 Clubs, Jason now works as a Senior EDI Education Executive for the Professional Footballers Association. His remit is to ensure players are aware of the services of the union and ensure that black, Asian and players from minority ethnic backgrounds are accessing our courses and to provide a pathway to future opportunities in the game from coaching and managing to administrative and Board level.

Jason will also support any player wishing to report discriminatory incidents and ensure the procedures are relayed back to a player on a personal level.

### **ASHTON HEWITT, RUGBY PLAYER**



Ashton is a professional rugby player for Dragons RCF with over 100 appearances for the region. He is also Chair of the Welsh Rugby Players' Association and non-executive director for Commonwealth Games Wales.

Ashton has a passion for EDI which has led him to advocate and push for necessary change across all sectors and throughout society.

### **JADE POPOOLA, NETBALL PLAYER**



Jade Popoola plays defence for Loughborough Lightning and juggles netball with her studies at Cambridge University where she studies Human, Social and Political Sciences.

Jade is passionate about inclusion and is using her studies to develop her knowledge and raise awareness of impact of the lack of inclusion in society.

### **CELIA QUANSAH, RUGBY PLAYER**



Celia Quansah is an England rugby player and Team GB Olympian. Brought up in Twickenham, she began her career in rugby as a talent transfer athlete from track and field aged 21. Celia is a proud member of the LGBTQ+ community and speaks openly on the topic and her relationship with teammate Megan Jones. By doing this they hope to encourage others to feel comfortable being their true selves.

Alongside being a professional athlete, Celia is passionate about the movement of women's sport and using her platform to share her experiences and be a role model to young girls whether that be in sport or other avenues.

### **VIVEEN TAYLOR, DIRECTOR OF EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION, SPORT ENGLAND**



Viveen Taylor is an award-winning advocate for positive change, Director of Equality Diversity & Inclusion in Sport and a non-exec director with Leicestershire County Cricket Club, leading on EDI.

Viveen joined Sport England in 2018 as Strategic Lead for low socio-economic groups and now, as a senior leader, Viveen is actively working with colleagues and partners to build a sporting landscape which redresses the deep-rooted systemic inequalities, issues of exclusion and discrimination.

### **LIZ BLOOR, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, NETBALL PLAYERS ASSOCIATION**



Liz is the founder and CEO of the Netball Players Association, which represents professional and semi professional netball players in the UK playing in the Netball Super League and the home nations national squads. The NPA is a relatively new players association which supports its 120 members to thrive on and off the court. Their services include legal and commercial advice, negotiating common league contract terms, international agreements, welfare and well-being services, and personal development and education. Liz has played a key role in representing the players views throughout the recent professionalisation.

### **LINDSAY GORDON, LEAGUE MANAGERS ASSOCIATION**



Lindsay is the Legal Director of the League Managers Association, the collective representative voice of football managers working in the Premier League, EFL Championship, Leagues One and Two, the WSL and Women's Championship. The LMA supports over 670 members worldwide through a range of exclusive member services including, health and wellbeing, CPD-accredited education and legal services.

As the LMA's EDI Lead, Lindsay helps to shape and develop the LMA's EDI education through the LMA Institute of Leadership and High Performance and sits on various football stakeholder groups reviewing the individual and collective EDI strategy across the game.

### **JATIN PATEL, HEAD OF DIVERSITY & INCLUSION, RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION**



Jatin is an inclusion, diversity, and social equality professional with over 15 years' experience working across the private and charity sectors. In his current role as Inclusion & Diversity Director at the RFU, Jatin focuses on driving the I&D strategy across four strategic pillars: Game Play, Fans/Followers/Partners, Employee and Board and Game Leadership via multi-year action plans, key events, ongoing awareness and education and advocacy for positive change across the community and elite game.

Prior to joining the RFU, Jatin worked for DLA Piper and KPMG UK, developing specific expertise in social and racial equality, communication campaigns and public & organisational policy.

### **ABI SAKANDE, PROFESSIONAL CRICKETERS ASSOCIATION**



Abidine Sakande was a professional fast bowler for Sussex CCC and Leicestershire CCC as well as a Trustee of the Sussex Cricket Foundation, encouraging and reinforcing their efforts to broaden access to cricket to people from all backgrounds. He helped to set up the PCA's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group and is a PCA Inclusion Champion, part of a team of current and former players who deliver EDI education sessions and facilitate open discussions about dressing room culture with current professional cricket teams.

He completed a Masters in Environmental Anthropology from the University of Kent in 2023, and in 2024 he joined the Civil Service as a Government Social Researcher.

### **CARAGH McMURTRY, NEURODIVERSE SPORT**



Caragh McMurtry is an Autistic former Olympic rower and co-founder & Director of Neurodiverse Sport; a not-for-profit organisation whose mission is to raise awareness of neurodiversity in sport, and whose vision is for neuroinclusive practice to become the norm in all sports.

Caragh feels passionately about inspiring and supporting all neurodivergent people to live healthy and active lives. Through Neurodiverse Sport she and her team provide reliable advice and guidance to sports teams, clubs and organisations, giving them the knowledge and understanding they need to practise neuro-inclusivity.

Visit [www.neurodiversesport.com](http://www.neurodiversesport.com) for more information, or follow @neurodiversesport on Instagram to (hopefully) be inspired!!!