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**Dr. Daniel Berdejo-del-Fresno & Kevin Bryant**  
with the special collaboration of  
Geoffrey Payton & Mark Potter

# INTRODUCTION

**"Futsal"** started on the **8<sup>th</sup> of September of 1930** when **Juan Carlos Ceriani**, a teacher in Montevideo (Uruguay) created a version of indoor football for recreation in YMCAs. This new sport was originally developed for playing on basketball courts, and a rule book was published in September 1933. Ceriani's goal was to create a team game that could be played indoor or outdoor but that was similar to football. Ceriani, writing the rule book, took as examples the principles of **football** (the possibility to touch the ball with every part of the body except for the hands), and he took rules from other sports too: from **basketball** the number of team players (five) and the game duration (40 actual minutes); from **waterpolo** the rules about the goalkeeper; from **handball** for the field and goal sizes. **Futsal, fútbol sala and futebol de salão** will be covered on this project. **Most of the images** on this timeline **has been hyperlinked** to the original source of information. **Click on them** to learn more about those events.

**The objective** of this research has been **three-fold**: **a)** to recognise and acknowledge the people that got involved and helped in this process; **b)** to document the history and the steps of development that futsal took in England and **c)** to know the history, to understand the present and improve the future (very similar to Carl Sagan's quote).

Of course, when this type of studies are carried out, there is the risk to miss out information or key point. We apologise in advance if that has happened. It was not our intention. We would like to **encourage anyone** that has more information **to help us to fill in some of the gaps** or to send us documents that prove some key point **of the futsal history in England**.

Yours in futsal,

Daniel Berdejo-del-Fresno  
&  
Kevin Bryant



# ENGLAND FUTSAL HISTORY

## England vs Italy

Friendly match against Italy (6-1 lost) played on the 28-7-1985 in Rome (Italy).



\*Hyperlinked Pictures

1983

1985

1988

1989

1991

1996

## 3<sup>rd</sup> FIFUSA World Cup Australia 1988

Geoff Payton was asked about the possibility of sending a team to Sydney (Australia) to take part in 3<sup>rd</sup> FIFUSA World Futsal Cup. A squad of some of the area's best indoor footballers was quickly assembled and with sponsors in place the team flew to the other side of the world where they produced some remarkable upset victories over well established futsal nations. England finished 12<sup>th</sup> out of 16 countries.



## 1<sup>st</sup> FIFA Futsal World Cup

England missed out the 1<sup>st</sup> FIFA Futsal World Cup (The Netherlands, 1989).



## Expanding the Sport

Geoff Payton, who is still the administrator of the league, was contacted by Mark Potter from Perth (Scotland) regarding taking the game north of the border. Once again a squad of players was assembled and the game of futsal was spread to another country where a well organised league now exists.



## Pendle Futsal League

The Pendle Futsal League was based in Colne in the Borough of Pendle in North East Lancashire. It began in 1988 with a well known Colne football player Geoff Payton. Geoff had lived and played in Australia for several years. League continued until 2002. The league has sent representative teams to compete all over the world. It has also hosted tournaments with teams from Gibraltar, Australia and Canada.



## England 1<sup>st</sup> Match

First International fixture in Rome (Italy) vs Scotland (5-1 win) on the 16<sup>th</sup> July 1983 at The Four Nations Cup. On the 17<sup>th</sup>, Italy 8-0 England. On the 18<sup>th</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> Position game vs Ireland 7-2 lost.



## 1<sup>st</sup> AMF World Cup Italy 1991

England finished 12<sup>th</sup> out of 22 countries. Picture below was the 13-1 victory against USA who ended up being last one.



Photo Credit: Nicolás de León Orue



# ENGLAND FUTSAL HISTORY

## Grimsby Futsal League

First leagues commenced in 2001 after initial refusal of rules by Lincolnshire FA. Kevin made a phone call to FIFA. FIFA were supportive from day one. At this time England and Germany were the only major countries outside the FIFA world futsal fraternity. For the next two years FIFA Futsal emails came to Kevin at Grimsby and not FA Headquarters. Kevin founded the Grimsby Futsal League in 2002.



## Gent International Futsal

In May, a team participated in the Genk International Futsal Tournament (Belgium). John Warnock, received the invitation and Mark Potter took a team combining English and Scottish players.



## Simon Darcy Clifford

Simon Clifford borrowed £5000 from a teachers' union to fund a trip to Brazil, where he spoke with Zico and Rivelino, and watched them coach.



## National Fut-sal Association

Geoff Payton tried and form the National Fut-sal Association.



## Kevin Bryant

The Grange Community Centre Grimsby had dwindled down to the last £80 in its football budget. Kevin was asked, 'Could he put the money to good coaching use?' He booked 4 sessions in a sports hall and introduced: Futsal. Why Futsal? After thousands of miles of travel around UK meeting South American coaches and foreign students at UK Universities Kevin knew Futsal had to be the way forward for him. First games at Western School, it started with 8 players. A video and an internet set of outdated rules were used for guidance.



## Brazilian Soccer School

## UK Confederation of Futebol de Salão

After returning from Brazil Simon Clifford founded Brazilian Soccer School in Leeds and the UK Confederation of Futebol de Salão. His business got expanded worldwide and became a very successful company.

1996

1997

1998

2000

2002

\*Hyperlinked Pictures



## British Ladies Squad

Geoff Payton took a British Futsal Ladies Squad in January 1996 to Australia to compete in an international tournament.





## British Isles Nations Futsal Cup

In February/October 2002, the first international tournament in England was held in Chester, the British Isles Nations Futsal Cup. It was hosted by Tranmere Victoria FC, with four other teams representing Ireland, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Gibraltar. Tranmere Victoria FC won.



\*Hyperlinked  
Pictures

2002

2003

2004

2005

### Tranmere Victoria vs Iran

Kevin Bryant received a FIFA email addressed to the European Governing bodies and 'him' offering the opportunity to play Iran (at time rated fifth in the FIFA World Rankings) who was planning a European tour ahead of the FIFA Asian Futsal Tournament. He forwarded the email to Tranmere Victoria, an amateur futsal team with a generous sponsor. Geoff Hughes was their president Iran came over and the FA attended. Iran won 20-3.



### Wirral Futsal Tournament

During the summer there is a futsal tournament in Wirral.



# ENGLAND FUTSAL HISTORY

## FIFA Meetings with The FA

FIFA set up a meeting for representatives of the small English Futsal community to meet with the FA at the Hillsborough Leisure Centre (Sheffield). Mr Victor Beceiro, FIFA Head of Futsal Development, chaired the meeting. As a result of the meeting, Sheffield & Hallam County FA set up an invitation tournament which showcased our limited futsal resources to Mr Beceiro who was making his second visit. Six male teams competed, of which three travelled from Grimsby. Three ladies teams played, one being from Iran. Tranmere Victoria FC won the tournament and as a result were later chosen by The FA to be the first team to represent England in the UEFA Futsal Cup. The result of the FIFA intervention was for the FA to set up a Futsal Development Committee. Development was slow, eventually futsal was accepted by top management at The FA and the 'Futsal Development Committee' ceased to exist. Kevin Bryant, Clive Dinsdale, John Warnock... were some members of this Committee.

## FA England National Team

In June, first England Futsal National Team representing The FA. Graeme Dell first England Futsal Manager. Team travelled to Kuala Lumpur (Thailand) to play KL World 5's Tournament. England played Iran (14-1), Uzbekistan (10-2) and Indonesia (3-2) losing all the games.

## 1<sup>st</sup> The FA Futsal Cup

The FA introduced The FA Futsal Cup. Sheffield & Hallam were the first winners. Twelve invited teams played inaugural tournament, three teams were from Grimsby. Four referees officiated, two from Grimsby.



## Futsal Premier League

Gary Macbeth, a London based futsal supporter, Mark Potter (Scotland) and Kevin Bryant organised seasons one and two of the Futsal Premier League. This league was fore runner to FA National League. FA covered referee costs.



## Collins Oxford Dictionary

The word "futsal" was introduced into the Collins English Dictionary.

Collins  
English  
Dictionary

# ENGLAND FUTSAL HISTORY

## Futsal Premier League (Scotland included)

Kevin & Daniel

Kevin start compiling notes that he could pass to his junior players' parents about their part in the development of their player. Kevin and Daniel Berdejo-del-Fresno meeting after a Sheffield FC Futsal vs Helvecia Futsal game led to Kevin's notes becoming a joint book (2018) 'Coaching Children In & Through Futsal: a Parent/Coach Guide'.

### Doncaster Deaf FC

FPL winners Doncaster Deaf College became the first disability team to reach the qualifying stage of a major European competition.



Scotland  
North  
South

Premier League (Gary Macbeth, Mark Potter and Kevin Bryant), Gary organising the Southern League, Kevin the North, Mark the Scottish one. The league ran successfully for two seasons, part sponsored by FA, only for the FA to start its own FA National Futsal League (2008). The teams had no option but to follow the FA as they held the purse strings and UEFA entry forms was only sent to governing bodies.



2005

2006

2006-2007

2008

2010

2012

### \*Hyperlinked Pictures

#### BUCS & more

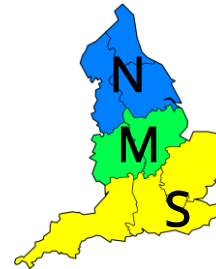
- British University team played at the University World Championships.
- University 5-a-side tournaments move to futsal rules.
- FA County Associations have a futsal specific budget.



### Coaching Education

First FA Futsal Coaching Course delivered. The referee's course followed 3 months later behind schedule.

An England youth team played its first tournament in Lithuania.



### 1st FA Futsal National League

The FA organised the first ever National League with three groups (North, Midlands and South) and then playoffs in a weekend.



### Peter Sturges

Pete Sturges took over as England Futsal Manager in 2008.



### FA Futsal Cup

The FA Futsal Cup got cancelled in 2012 and 2013.



## FA Futsal Cup

In 2014 The FA Futsal Cup returned. It was played at The Cooper Box Arena. First FA Futsal Women's Cup too.

# ENGLAND FUTSAL HISTORY

## FIFA Qualification

In January, England missed the main qualification round for the 9th UEFA European Futsal Championship (Serbia 2016) just by one goal difference. However, in October they qualified for the first ever time to a main qualification round for the 8th FIFA World Futsal Cup (Colombia 2016) after beating Wales (4-2), Denmark (5-4) and Israel (3-1).

## First Ever Main Round

In March 2013, England played in Erzurum (Turkey) against Ukraine (7-0 lost), Turkey (4-3 lost) and Slovenia (5-2 lost) their first ever main qualification round.

## A Catalyst For Change

In November 2014, The FA organised a coaching conference in SGP.



## Michael Skubala

Michael Skubala was appointed as England's futsal head coach and The FA's elite performance manager for Futsal.

\*Hyperlinked Pictures

2012

2013

2014

2015

2016

2017



## Marc Birkett

Marc Birkett appointed 2<sup>nd</sup> referee for the 2012 FIFA Futsal World Cup Final (Brazil-Spain)



## UEFA Qualification

England qualified for the first ever time to a main qualification round for the 8<sup>th</sup> UEFA European Futsal Championship (Belgium 2014) in Kaunas (Lithuania) after beating Lithuania 4-3 (25-1-2013) and Cyprus 2-1 (26-1-2013).

## Baku United FC

First ever English team to reach the elite round of the UEFA Futsal Cup 2014-15.



## FIFA Main Round

Pete Sturgess stepped down after the last game in Hungary (December) of the main round. England played and lost against Ukraine, Hungary and Belgium.

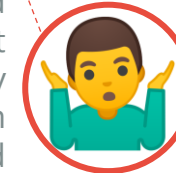


## UEFA B Futsal

First ever UEFA B Futsal Pilot Course delivered by Ian Bateman, Pete Sturgess, Michael Skubala, Tony Elliott, Daniel Berdejo-del-Fresno, Mico Martic and Mark Birkett.

## Uncertainty Period

Simon Walker FA National Manager for Adult Grassroots (Futsal and Small Sided Football) resigned after Hungary too. Michael Skubala was named new England Futsal Interim Manager. Uncertainty and doubts...





## Luke Ballinger's Golden Cup

Luke Ballinger received a golden cap in front of 90,000 fans at Wembley (14<sup>th</sup> November 2017) vs Brazil. He is the first England futsal player to reach the milestone of 100 caps, which he achieved in a game in Germany last year. He has scored 60 goals and skipped the team 60 times.



# ENGLAND FUTSAL HISTORY

## FA Futsal Strategy 2018-24



Michael Skubala presented the new strategy. The new document, which is titled 'Fast Forward with Futsal', outlines The FA's plan to develop futsal by setting four ambitious targets to achieve by 2024 within four key strands: participation, workforce, facilities and international.

## Corinthians Complex

Corinthians Complex Limited (a Community Interest Company owned by Kevin Bryant and co Directors John Drew and Mick Hill) is progressing acquisition of a three court multi sport venue.

## Atlantic Futsal Conference

The Atlantic Futsal Conference 2021 was announced to be in SGP with Dr Sergio Lara-Bercial, Sergio Gargelli, Dr. Daniel Berdejo-del-Fresno, Tony Elliott and Kevin Bryant as keynote speakers.



\*Hyperlinked Pictures

2017

2018

2019

2020

2021

## Futsal Great Britain Association

Futsal Great Britain Association is founded and is one of the members of the Futsal European Federation and Asociación Mundial De Futsal. AMF is the world's largest Futsal body.



## Kevin Bryant's Recognition

Sheffield FC, The World's Oldest Football Club, kindly asked Kevin to be their 'Futsal Ambassador'. Recognition he greatly values. A recognition for his 20 years involvement in futsal.



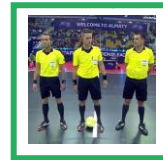
The Guardian

## COVID-19 Pandemic

After the COVID-19 Pandemic and months of uncertainty, The Guardian published a Jamie Fahey's article confirming The FA cuts on grassroots football and futsal. Men's national futsal teams scrapped according to the article. 24-09-20, just the day after, The FA confirmed it.

## Marc Birkett ref UEFA Futsal Cup 2019

England's top Futsal referee Marc Birkett was appointed as one of the officials for the finals of the UEFA Futsal Cup 2019.





# ENGLAND FUTSAL HISTORY

## (Other important facts)

### \*Hyperlinked Pictures

1990  
&  
1992



## UEFS Futsal Men's Championship

England participated in the UEFS Futsal Men's Championship celebrated in Portugal. England finished 4th behind Portugal, Czechoslovakia and Spain. England would repeat participation in 1992, but finishing 10th this time.

2018



## U19 England Futsal

England's Futsal U19s squad will play their first ever international games in March when they face the Netherlands.



## U19 England Futsal Tournament

The England U19 futsal squad will head to France in August to compete in a Four Nations Tournament. Following a successful year of development, the Young Lions will travel to Montaigu and compete at the Complexe Sportif Max Bossis Arena on 28 and 29 August.

2019



## U19 England Futsal Euros

The Young Lions will face Italy on Wednesday 27 March and hosts Croatia the following day before playing Slovakia in their final match on Saturday 30 March, with all of the games taking place at the Mladost Hall in Karlovac.



## National Futsal Series

In 2019 The FA launched the new league format. The National Futsal Series (NFS) is the top tier of futsal in England, the inaugural season was 19/20 which was voided due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2020



## The FA Statement

After having an online virtual meeting with all the players and staff on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020, The FA released the following statement the day after at 10am confirming the cuts and the end of the England futsal national team.



## Players Statement

Later on the same day the players released another statement while they are preparing one collective petition for the futsal family and wider sporting community to show their strength of feeling.



# ENGLAND FUTSAL HISTORY

(Historic Picture Provided by Geoffrey Payton)

1988

## 3<sup>rd</sup> FIFUSA World Cup Australia 1988

On the picture we have the squad that represented England at the FIFUSA World Cup in Australia (1988).

Final Ranking:

1. Paraguay
2. Brazil (7 wins, 1 loss from 8 matches)
3. Spain
4. Portugal
5. Uruguay
6. Australia
7. Argentina
8. Czechoslovakia
9. Netherlands
10. United States
11. Italy
12. England
13. Canada
14. Hungary
15. New Zealand
16. Japan



Photo Credit: Geoffrey Payton

1990

# ENGLAND FUTSAL HISTORY

(Historic Picture Provided by Geoffrey Payton)

## FIFUSA Meeting

Geoffrey Payton representing Great Britain in a FIFUSA meeting in Mexico City in 1990 just before the FIFUSA World Cup held in Italy in 1991. England participated finishing 12<sup>th</sup> (see final ranking below):

- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Portugal       | 12. England       |
| 2. Paraguay       | 13. Puerto Rico   |
| 3. Brazil         | 14. Mexico        |
| 4. Bolivia        | 15. Israel        |
| 5. Argentina      | 16. France        |
| 6. Spain          | 17. Soviet Union  |
| 7. Venezuela      | 18. Canada        |
| 8. Czechoslovakia | 19. Hungary       |
| 9. Colombia       | 20. Italy         |
| 10. Uruguay       | 21. Japan         |
| 11. Australia     | 22. United States |

\*Originally England was ranked 13<sup>th</sup> and Puerto Rico 12<sup>th</sup>, but table was modified after because England beat Puerto Rico in the group.



Photo Credit: Geoffrey Payton



# ENGLAND FUTSAL HISTORY

## (Historic Pictures Provided by Geoffrey Payton)

\*Hyperlinked Pictures

1990

### UEFS Futsal Men's Championship

England participated in the UEFA Futsal Men's Championship celebrated in Portugal. England finished 4th behind Portugal, Czechoslovakia and Spain.



Photo Credit: Geoffrey Payton





# ENGLAND FUTSAL HISTORY

## (Historic Picture Provided by Geoffrey Payton)

\*Hyperlinked Pictures

1990

### UEFS Futsal Men's Championship

England participated in the UEFS Futsal Men's Championship celebrated in Portugal. England finished 4th behind Portugal, Czechoslovakia and Spain. See the team on the picture.



Photo Credit: Geoffrey Payton



Simply  
SPORT  
DBF

# ENGLAND FUTSAL HISTORY

## (Historic Picture Provided by Geoffrey Payton)

1990

### France International Futsal Tournament

Again, Geoffrey Payton put a team together to travel internationally. This time it was a club tournament in the French Riviera (south of France). Colne Lancs was the name of the team that participated in this 4-team event in May of 1990.



Photo Credit: Geoffrey Payton



# ENGLAND FUTSAL HISTORY

## (Historic Picture Provided by Geoffrey Payton)

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Photo Credit: Geoffrey Payton

# ENGLAND FUTSAL HISTORY

## (Historic Picture Provided by Geoffrey Payton)

\*Hyperlinked Pictures

1991

### 1<sup>st</sup> AMF World Cup Italy 1991

England Futsal National Team participating in the World Cup held in Italy in 1991.

Peter Gibbons (top left corner), England futsal top referee of the moment travelled too and took two games in the World Cup.



Photo Credit: Geoffrey Payton



# ENGLAND FUTSAL HISTORY

## (Historic Picture Provided by Nicolás de León Orue)

\*Hyperlinked Pictures

1991

1<sup>st</sup> AMF World Cup  
Italy 1991

- |                   |                   |
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| 8. Czechoslovakia | 19. Hungary       |
| 9. Colombia       | 20. Italy         |
| 10. Uruguay       | 21. Japan         |
| 11. Australia     | 22. United States |



Nev Roscoe on the ball (10) and Mick Foster in play (2) in the 13-1 victory against USA.

**Photo Credit:** Nicolás de León Orue

# ENGLAND FUTSAL HISTORY

## (Historic Picture Provided by Geoffrey Payton)

\*Hyperlinked Pictures

1996

### British Ladies Squad International Trip

Geoff Payton took a British Futsal Ladies Squad in January 1996 to Australia to compete in an international tournament. A group of 21 women players from colleges all over the North West had a mere six months to train before going to the international event.

Not good photo but this is the only one we could find after one of the games played over there. Some players' names are mentioned on the Lancashire Telegraph article (follow link for more info).



Photo Credit: Geoffrey Payton



# KEVIN BRYANT'S NOTE

Clearly the game has gathered pace since those early pioneering days. Acorns have produced saplings. It is now 2020 and we are still years away from being fully grown oak trees (Brazil, Spain, and Argentina).

Have we progressed the past twenty years or lost a golden opportunity?

The choice is yours.

Kevin Bryant  
Grimsby Futsal League Organiser

**\*Grimsby is recognised in The FA literature as a start point for English futsal. This is not 100% correct; the first league was in 1988 in Colne with the Pendle Futsal League organised by Geoff Payton (Lancashire) and Grimsby the first The FA 'affiliated' league. Santos FSC from the Pendle Futsal League played in the inaugural The FA Futsal Cup along with Tranmere Victoria. Tranmere Victoria is still competing at highest level 2020. Pendle dropped out of competitive futsal at very early stage due to the factories the players worked in having summer shut downs that clashed with major The FA competitions. Wheels fell off Grimsby in National competitions 2015 onwards due to lack of adequate local facilities and breakdown in communication from The FA to County FA and subsequently ourselves. Thankfully a situation resolved and Kevin is optimistic 2021 onwards will see Grimsby back leading and not playing catch up.**

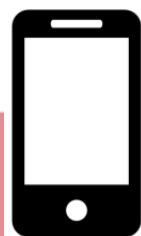


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\*Hyperlinked Pictures

