

## SPORT NEWS

# FOOTBALL UNITES AGAINST ONLINE ABUSE

**FOOTBALL** groups across England are making a stand against the online abuse experienced by many players.

For four days, football players and football clubs will switch off their Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts. The social media boycott was due to start at 3pm on Friday 30 April and finish at the end of Monday 3 May.

The footballers are protesting about racist comments that have been posted online about some players in recent months. Comments are often made after a mistake has been made or a team has lost.

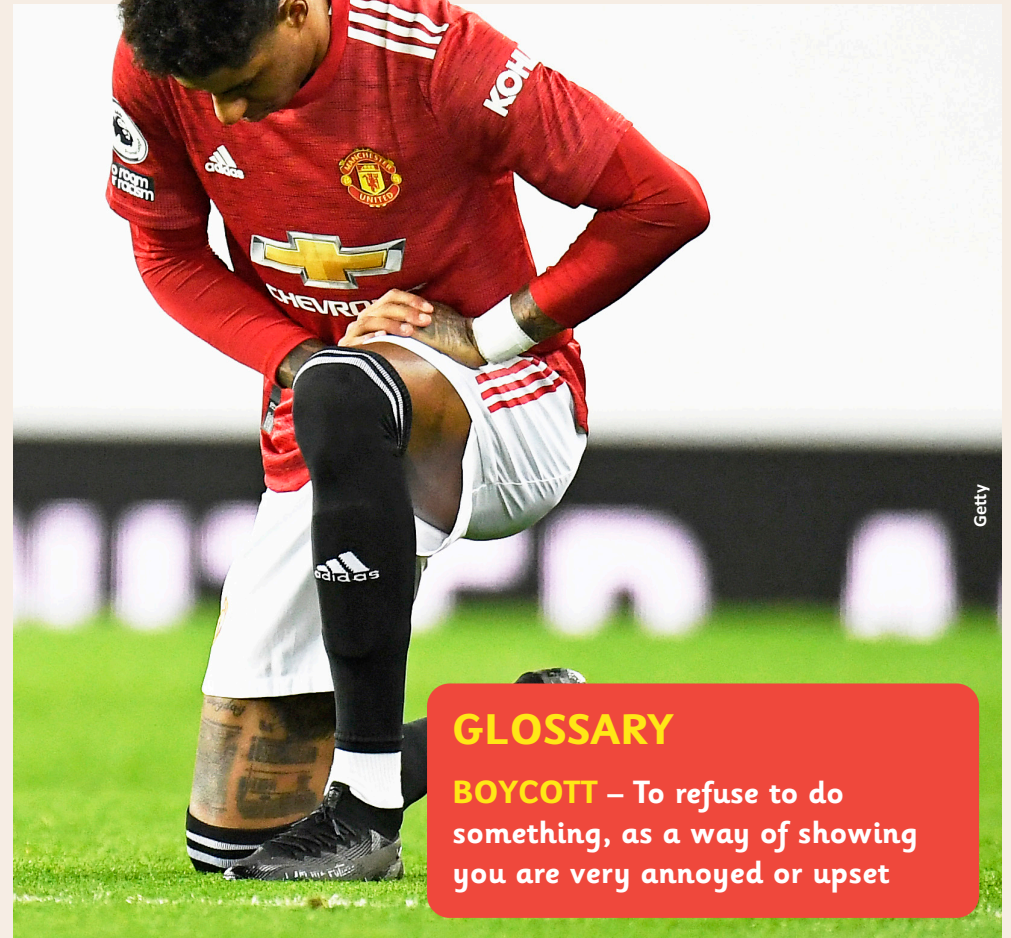
Players that have suffered this kind of racial abuse include Manchester United's Marcus Rashford, Chelsea's Reece James and Manchester City's Raheem Sterling.

The footballers want the social media companies to do a lot more to combat online hate.

In February, many of the same groups involved in this boycott wrote to the owners of Facebook and Twitter. They asked the companies to block or quickly take down hateful messages and to help the police identify who wrote them.

They are extremely frustrated that very little seems to have been done.

The boycott is supported by Kick It Out, a charity that tackles racism in football. Sanjay Bhandari, the chairman, says that "toxic abuse" is now common online. Speaking directly to the company owners, he added: "We need you to act. We need you to create change."



## GLOSSARY

**BOYCOTT** – To refuse to do something, as a way of showing you are very annoyed or upset

## Questions on: 'Football unites against online abuse'

1) What is a boycott?

- It's any kind of protest against racism.
- It's where you refuse to take part in any kind of social media.
- It's where you refuse to do something to make a point.

2) Social media is the word for websites or apps that help you connect and share information with other people. Find three examples of popular social media sites.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

3) Explain what footballers and clubs are doing in protest about online racist messages.

4) Match the footballer to the correct club.

Reece James

Manchester United

Marcus Rashford

Manchester City

Raheem Sterling

Chelsea

5) What can social media companies do to tackle racist messages posted on their sites?

6) Explain why the football groups are feeling very frustrated.

7a) What is Kick It Out?

b) What two words does Sanjay use to describe hateful messages that are put online?

8) What do you think?

- Are social media companies responsible for hateful messages posted onto their websites?
- Should they take more action against hateful messages?