

Why Gatekeeping in Football Helps No One

MALIK ARAF

Every time there is a major international tournament, we see a drastic rise of football fans around us. Copa America, Euros, and the World Cup are the biggest examples of when this happens.

As a football fan myself, it's always nice to see new people learning about the beautiful sport. I feel there isn't a benchmark you should reach to be qualified as a "football fan." Some people buy jerseys, some buy posters or change their wallpapers to declare their newfound love for the game.

However, just like that random relative in your family gathering that tends to ask intrusive questions about your life, some people think the new fans should be authenticated to experience football to the fullest. In short, they will gate keep at every possible chance and make sure they end up being the person you want to avoid the most at the gathering. Gatekeeping is when someone takes it upon themselves to decide who gets to be a part of a specific community and who does not.

Why do they do this? Maybe it satisfies a certain craving of feeling better about themselves. Or, perhaps they have nothing better to do.

How do they do it? First, with simple questions. Then slowly, they ask you different facts and statistics to know whether you are a real football fan. Answer right, and you are welcome to the club. Answer wrong, and they will shame you for being a seasonal fan and having no passion whatsoever.

Who are they? You'll find these people in your friend circles, classes, family, and you could be one yourself too. Most importantly, who asked them? Absolutely no one.

This whole questionnaire can get worse if you're a girl. Men will bombard you with questions and immediately associate your interest in football with liking pretty footballers. Even if you answer them correctly, they will never admit that girls too can be football fans.

What the so-called more "educated" football fans don't understand, is that someone's lack of depth in technical knowledge shouldn't be any reason for being bullied. Under no circumstances should any of the new fans go through this. It's understandable how different your connection towards your favorite team is maybe, but one should embrace instead of scrutinise the new fans like a university club recruitment process.

Furthermore, using a hobby to undermine others makes the whole point of sports redundant. Because passion and connection work differently for different people, your abundance of football knowledge (read: top 10 useless facts you have in your brain) shouldn't be something you use to run over people. No, Faiyaz, feeling better because someone couldn't answer your 2002 World Cup quiz doesn't make you a superior person.

If you are one of the oldies, be kind and give the help you needed when you first started loving the sport. And if you are the new kid on the block, get ready to get your mind blown.



satire.

Engineering student gives up 14 minutes into new semester

HASIB UR RASHID IFTI

Local engineering student breaks the world record for "Fastest Abandonment of All Hope in a Semester," as he reportedly gave up 14 minutes into the first Physics lecture of the semester. The previous record of 16 minutes was held by a first-year BBA student who, like millions of gullible teenagers, thought BBA was the easy way out in life.

Following a session of blaming his parents for his life choices, Sadman Sakib, the current world record holder told the press, "My first year at AUET was just me trying to inject my parents' obsession with AUET into my veins. Unfortunately, in the second year, I genuinely started enjoying Physics, awed by lectures of Richard Feynman and Walter Lewin explaining intricate theories effortlessly."

"The transition from Lewin's genius to dull Power-Point slides made me give up on Physics, quickly. The first Quantum Mechanics class was just the lecturer pressing the right arrow on his keyboard for 13 minutes as we stared in horror at the slides. What the likes of Bohr, Schrödinger and Dirac worked on for decades, he covered within 13 minutes," Sakib continued. "It took me 52 seconds to attain nirvana and realise that engineering is



a scam. My only reward out of this would be to embrace this pyramid scheme, persuade juniors into believing that engineering is worth it and make some money out of it."

"They killed Maths, dude!" Sakib reminisced on his experience at AUET. "Their slides would make Ramanujan sick of mathematics, reconsider his career as a poorly paid accountant and endure lifelong poverty. They took the passion out of bright young minds and stomped on it, much like home I suppose. Nothing good ever comes out of introducing boomers to technology. First, they ruined Facebook. And now Mathematics."

"I did everything first year dreamers with a false sense of pride and heart full of enthusiasm do. I bought blue pens and markers for separate notes of each subject," he sobbed. "Before the semester even started, I asked my seniors about the minimum CGPA necessary for getting a scholarship in the USA. Don't know why they all laughed when I asked if 3.9 was good enough."

As one reporter questioned Sakib's decision of pursuing engineering, he sighed, "After HSC, I had many options. However, as a Bangladeshi, my parents take all my major life decisions for me. I did what every teenager in Bangladesh does when they realise they aren't brave enough to follow their passion. I chose engineering."

Regarding his future endeavours, Sakib sounded quite numb, "Childhood is when you aspire to be a faculty member. Adulthood is when you realise MBA was the answer all along. Having bullied BBA people my entire life, I'll do what wise people before me have done to hide their unemployment – parkour my way to MBA. I'll always have my AUETian tag though. Do you know what the difference between a cow and AUET is? You can't milk a cow for 50 years."

Suggest Ifiti nonfiction at hasiburrashidifti@gmail.com