



media release

BIG LOSSES FOR LONDON AS ARSENAL AND FULHAM CRASH OUT IN THE PREMIER LEAGUE ALL STARS

The All Stars Arena played host to a London derby as the Gunners took on Fulham and Portsmouth met Birmingham with all of the teams hoping to secure a place in the quarter finals of Sky One's Premier League All Stars.

The first teams to enter the Arena were Portsmouth and Birmingham City. Legends back to play for Portsmouth were Paul Walsh, Guy Whittingham, Andy Awford and Alan Knight. The celebrities joining them included *Hollyoaks* actor Marcus Patrick, Pompey's most famous supporter John Portsmouth FC Westwood and comedian Adger Brown. Prior to the match, John Portsmouth FC Westwood commented: "*My heart's bursting to play for the club that's my life. It's making my dreams come true. I'd die for Pompey.*" Three lucky fans joined them. Birmingham's side was filled with legends Paul Devlin, Steve Claridge, Martin Grainger and Kevin Miller, the celebrity fans were Musical Youth singer Dennis Seaton, boxer Robert McCracken and Nigel Clark, the lead singer from Dodgy, and three talented fans completed the line up.

The capacity crowd had to wait six minutes for the first goal with Paul Walsh the scorer putting Portsmouth in the lead. Coming off the pitch one-nil down Birmingham City player/manager Claridge said, "they're more organised than us, they've done their homework. Hopefully we'll nick one in the second half." At three and a half minutes into the second half Claridge got his wish as he equalised for the Blues. Musical Youth frontman Dennis Seaton put two more into the back of the net finishing Portsmouth off. The final score was 3-1 and Birmingham go through to the quarter finals.

Pompey won £5,000 for their community initiative 'Make Dreams come true'.

Next to take to the pitch were Arsenal and Fulham. Arsenal heroes Ray Parlour, Paul Davies, Nigel Winterburn and Vince Bartram, celebrity fans Mark Ramprakash, Leeroy Thornhill of the Prodigy and Big Brother's Ziggy and three lucky members of the public pulled on their red shirts to play for the Gunners. Fulham fielded a team of legends including Bjarne Goldbaek, Wayne Collins, Rufus Brevett and Dave Beasant, celebrities Andy Scott Lee, rapper Example and comedian Jim Jeffries and three supporters who've always dreamt of turning out for the The Cottagers.

Presenter Ian Wright was clearly itching to join his fellow Gunners. He commented, "I feel like I'm in the wrong place. We haven't got a front man and I should be on there." He proved to be right as Arsenal, and indeed Fulham, struggled to hit the back of the net with a goalless first half.

It was shoe designer fan Adam Di Mambro who kicked off the score sheet taking Fulham into the lead in the 15th minute. Just two minutes later Ray Parlour replied with a belting shot from 20 yards outside the box. With the score line at one all, both teams battled hard to score a winner, tempers were frayed and Goldbaek found himself banished to The Cooler with two minutes to go leaving Fulham with just six men on the pitch for the rest of the match.

With the final score a one all draw, lower than 'Boro's 3-3 draw at full-time with Newcastle United, both teams crashed out of the tournament and 'Boro qualified for the next round in their quest to win as much as possible for Butterwick and Teesside Hospices.

Arsenal take home £5,000 for TreeHouse, a charity for Autism education and Fulham will donate their winnings to their community disability programme.

Premier League All Stars, the charity football element of the Premier League's Creating Chances community initiative, continues tomorrow night with more legends, celebrities and fans of each team competing in this knock-out competition that will see the ultimate champions winning £100,000 for their Club's nominated charity. The other Clubs charities will all benefit from the remaining pot of £200,000. All of the action is live on Sky One every night from 8pm.

The first two quarter final matches take place tomorrow with rivals Manchester United and Manchester City first to take to the pitch and West Ham and Wigan to follow.

Free tickets are available from www.skyone.co.uk/allstars or by calling 08700 60 33 88.

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