

**MIKE DORAN**

• Tel: 0151 225 5582 • Fax: 0151 225 5510 • Mobile: 07801 453918

• email: [mike.doran@liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:mike.doran@liverpool.gov.uk) • Pager: 08700 555500, No: 622976



**For Immediate Release**

For Immediate Release

Monday, September 29 2003

## ASIAN ACES WIN OVER PREMIERSHIP GIANTS

**The 1990 City of Culture had reasons to celebrate in the 2008 capital on Sunday. (Sep 28)**

Glasgow Ansar lifted the first nationwide Asian football title in Liverpool after clinching a dramatic victory on penalties against the 49ers DK from London.

The Scottish team almost had a unique double but the Under 16-side were on the wrong side of a penalty decider, going down 2-0 to Rochdale side Asia FC.

**But one Asia FC player is arguably the greatest winner of the weekend.**

Voted player of the tournament in the Under-16 category, Mohamad Saffraz has been offered trials at Premiership giants Manchester United, Liverpool FC, Bolton Wanderers and Tranmere Rovers.

The 15-year-old midfield maestro was one of three players to be offered a trial at a professional club.

Festival Organiser Majid Lavji, said: "I'm delighted for Mohammad and the other players who caught the eye of the clubs. The whole tournament was about raising the profile of Asian players in the UK and giving them the opportunity to showcase their skills in front of professional clubs. We were hoping some of the big clubs would offer trials and that is exactly what happened. Many of the scouts also said they will be looking again at many of them teams who played this weekend. I hope the lads chosen on Sunday make the most of it and blaze a trail for others to follow.

"The weekend was a huge success and I'd like to thank all those who took part and supported the event from Sport England, Liverpool city council, Everton and Liverpool FC, the FA, Eufa and the Kick Racism Out of Football Campaign to the players and managers.

"Liverpool was the perfect host for this tournament. The reaction we have had in the city has been positive from day one. We had over a thousand spectators and more than 600 players taking part and the signs for a bigger and better tournament next year look exceptionally good."

Former England and Liverpool FC ace John Barnes was guest of honour at the tournament and gave the event, held at the Heron Eccles Playing Fields In Allerton, both thumbs up.

He said: "I was delighted to see that sporting bodies are now working together to get more ethnic players into the game. A lot of work still needs to be done, but a tournament like this is a big step in the right direction."

Councillor Warren Bradley, Executive Member for Leisure and Culture, said: "This weekend was a big win for football. Sport of any kind should be open to all. I'm thrilled that work is now underway to create a level playing field so that the colour of your skin should no longer be a reason not to excel at the highest level."

Talks will now be held over the coming months to develop an Asian Football Academy in Liverpool, and host next year's tournament at the Liverpool County FA's purpose built Soccer Centre in Walton. Plans are in place to also turn the 6-a-side format into a full 11-a-side tournament. There are also plans to host an Asian Cricket

# Results: 2003 AsiaEurope Football Tournament

## Under 16s

Winners **AsiaFC**  
Runners up *Glasgow Ansar*  
Full time Result 0-0. (Asia FC won 2-0 on penalties)

Top Scorer Asim Rabbani, Asia FC (Rochdale) - 11 goals  
Player of the tournament - Mohamad Saffraz, Asia FC .

## Men's Open Age

Winners **Glasgow Ansar**  
Runners up *49ers DK from London*  
Full time result (Glasgow won 4-3 on penalties)

Top Scorer Wahid Asif - Glodwick Dynamo (Oldham) 15 goals  
Player of the tournament - Ferrad Sofinne 49ers DK from London

## ENDS

For more information please telephone Mike Doran on 0151 225 5582 or 0780 145 3918 or Majid Lavji on 0870 014 5678.

Photos and Video will be available on [www.AsiaEurope.com](http://www.AsiaEurope.com) by Tuesday, September 30 - [www.AsiaEurope.com](http://www.AsiaEurope.com)

AsiaEurope Football Festival Returns Next Summer 2004 .