

## **Bonus money**

A MINUSCULE British territory in the Caribbean of just 15,000 people, Anguilla is among the smallest of the 209 members of FIFA, football's governing body. Its national team is ranked 206th in the world, above only Bhutan, San Marino and the Turks & Caicos Islands; its record since its first match in 1997 is played 28, won two. But that is not for want of nurturing by "the FIFA family", as Sepp Blatter, FIFA's president, calls his discredited organisation.

On top of the annual \$250,000 for investment in football that FIFA gives Anguilla, like every other member, in 2003 the local federation received grants of \$650,000 to build a training centre in The Valley, the island's capital. In 2010 Mr Blatter went to Anguilla to inaugurate this. According to FIFA, the centre was to comprise a pitch with a security fence, artificial lighting and a grandstand with offices and changing rooms. Visitors today find a small grandstand with rusty, broken-down fencing, chickens pecking at the weed-strewn, bumpy pitch and offices that are empty and apparently unused, with computer terminals still wrapped in plastic. There is no sign of the dormitories, gym, cafeteria and classrooms supposed to have been built with an extra \$500,000 granted in February 2011.

Raymond Guishard, head of the Anguilla Football Association, failed to respond to questions from The Economist about how the money was spent. A FIFA spokesman said that "construction works have been delayed due to the limited labour force on the island" and insisted that "we constantly monitor" the activities of its member federations.

Yet this monitoring seems particularly cursory in the Caribbean. Guyana's football association, run by Colin Klass for 22 years, was given \$800,000 in grants for a training centre between 2002 and 2006, but has yet to start any building work. The football federation in Montserrat, an even smaller British Caribbean territory than Anguilla, with just 5,800 people, got \$788,139 from FIFA in the early 2000s for what it said would be a "complex" with floodlights and fences, but what Google Earth suggests is just a forest clearing.

Vincent Cassell, who runs Montserrat's football association, attended a meeting in Trinidad & Tobago in 2011 with Mr Guishard and Mr Klass at which Mohamed bin Hammam, Qatar's former football supremo, is alleged by FIFA to have offered \$40,000 to each of them if they would vote for him to replace Mr Blatter in that year's FIFA presidential election. These and other allegations resulted in FIFA banning Mr bin Hammam from football for life last year. Six Caribbean officials received much shorter bans; in the case of Messrs Guishard, Klass and Cassell, these ranged up to 26 months, with fines of up to 5,000 Swiss francs (\$5,450).

Mr Guishard and Mr Cassell are now back in charge of their local associations. FIFA continues to send comparatively large amounts of money to the Caribbean associations, not all of which seems to be invested in football development. In 2010 and 2011 in Anguilla and Guyana, a combined total of more than \$1m was booked as unspecified "bonuses". Once again, it seems that FIFA has scored an own goal.

**Fonte: The Economist, London, v. 406, n. 8828, p. 39-40, 23<sup>rd</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> mar. 2013.**