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## From ticket heartache to England glory

By **Danielle Glavin**  
BBC News, Stuttgart

**A group of children who lost out on a World Cup match because of an alleged ticket scam, are heading home to Portsmouth after seeing England win.**



The pupils donned their Portsmouth shirts for the match

**The Mayville High School pupils' original World Cup trip ended when their tickets did not materialise but Portsmouth Football Club funded their return to watch England play Ecuador. BBC News joined them.**

The boys walk towards the stadium in pairs decked out in the bright blue shirts of Portsmouth Football Club.

Other fans from around the world point and take photographs - they know who they are.

Pompey season ticket holder Sean Cox stops them, asking if they are the children whose tickets did not turn up.

"I think it's great Portsmouth FC's put something back into the community by supporting these kids who got ripped off. It's fantastic," he says.

**“ I was just so excited... after [Beckham] scored I knew we'd get through ”**

Mayville School pupil Paul Phillips

Within minutes a BBC Newsround camera crew stops to interview them. A crowd gathers to watch and cameras snap away.

It takes the group half an hour to get to the stadium, when it should only take 10, because people keep stopping to have a picture taken with them.

One man gives them a replica World Cup to hold before he reaches for his camera.

Deputy head Martin Castle stands back from the limelight and watches.

"All these old boys stopping to have pictures taken with them," he says.

"It's great. We've had a wonderful time. Thanks to everyone who helped to get us here and make this possible."

It takes 15 minutes to give out the 23 tickets and to find the right seats then another 10 to cart 23 drinks over from the

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refreshment stall.

But when the team takes to the field the drinks are forgotten, as the flags are picked up and the boys make themselves heard.

Paul Phillips was one of the loudest when David Beckham's goal went in.



Cheers from the pupils rang out as Beckham took his winning free kick

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### 'Intense' atmosphere

"I thought it was an amazing goal," he says. "I was just so excited. After he scored I knew we'd get through."

After the whistle blows and the excitement of victory dies down the group gathers together and they sing the National Anthem.

Jay Francis said: "That was the best experience of my life! The atmosphere was intense and all of the England fans were great."

"Thanks Pompey!" Paul shouts.

As the stadium empties the boys are recognised again and have yet more pictures taken, before the dream trip is over and it's time to head home.



Pupils achieved near celebrity status as news of their ticket loss spread

Fan Donny Skeets, from Portsmouth, stops by their coach, "I'm Portsmouth through and through," he sings.

"It's excellent they got the tickets. I wish I was wearing my Portsmouth shirt now - they're the best team in the world!"

They are joined on the bus by BBC South Today's Tom Hepworth and the video camera rolls.

"They suffered the heartache of being sent home after being promised tickets to a World Cup game," Tom says in his final piece to camera.

"In total they've travelled more than 4,000 miles and spent hours on a coach but...lads was it worth it?"

"Yeah!" they scream. The flags make a re-appearance and the boys sing their favourite World Cup song. "We're gonna score one more than you. England!", they chime.

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