

## Real Madras Forever

Six months ago, we were approached by a bunch of overweight chaps who needed a sponsor for their football team.

Not an overly attractive proposition that would appeal to the average company looking to boost its image, but not being your average company, we looked into it a bit deeper.

The group were part of a national movement called ManVFat ([www.manvfat.com](http://www.manvfat.com)), an organisation set up a couple of years ago dedicated to helping chaps lose weight. The founder



himself had been rather hefty and when he started to look at options, discovered there was very little support for men, with most weight loss schemes, like Weight Watchers, targeted at women. Now there is a useful book that supports the cause as well as the website.

There are massive health issues associated with obesity, ranging from diabetes to mental health problems, with plenty of things in between, so we decided to take the plunge and sponsor Real Madras in the Weston Super Mare ManVFat football league.

The principle behind this league is you get goals for losing weight as well as for what happens on the pitch, thereby incentivising the guys to eat the right way and stay focused between games.

The intrepid crew started badly, were used as target practice in the opening three games, and with two players getting injuries so serious they were off work for 10 days each, they really were the walking wounded. However, once the team got its act together, they progressed from being under fire from the more established teams to firing on all cylinders and actually competing.

The turning point in the season was the Weston Super Mare El Clasico, Real Madras v Beercelona – the guys lost 6-0 on the pitch but won 18-12 off the pitch. There was no stopping them then as they beat all the teams coming before them, eventually finishing runners up in the league and triumphantly winning the cup.

That was an impressive turnaround, but the off the pitch statistics were much more impressive over that 12-week season:

- One player lost 20% of his body weight,
- Three more players lost over 10% of their body weight
- Five more players lost 5% of their body weight.
- One player found his first job in six months,
- Another got engaged
- And the group built the most amazing team spirit.

Sadly, the rules of ManVFat mean teams are regularly split up to stop one team dominating and to keep the competition even. Alas, Real Madras are now no more as the guys have moved on to different teams, so we are taking this opportunity to say well done fellas, it was a privilege sponsoring you and to be part of your journey on raising awareness of the ManVFat movement.

