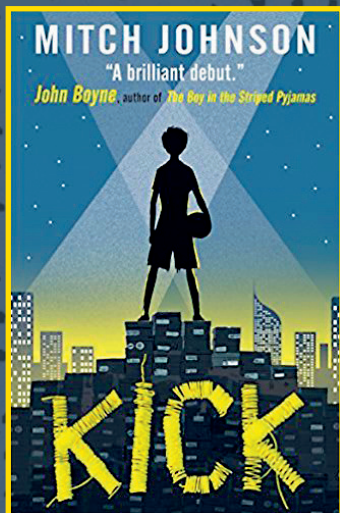


# Kicking back



You've seen how boots are made, now find out what life can be like for the people who make them by reading **Kick**!

## MEET THE WRITER – MITCH JOHNSON, AUTHOR OF "KICK"



**Kick** is a story about **Budi**, a young boy who is football crazy. He dreams of playing for **Real Madrid**, just like his hero **Kieran Wakefield**. However, instead Budi spends his life stuck in a horrible, sweaty factory **sewing football boots**. Then, one unlucky kick brings his world crashing down.

What follows is an incredible tale of **following your dreams** and refusing to give up, no matter what life throws at you. The book's writer, **Mitch Johnson**, chatted to *Kickaround* about his football memories, how he came up with the idea for the book and what you can do to help children like Budi.

**Kickaround:** What is your earliest memory of football?

**Mitch Johnson:** I remember in the 1998 World Cup when **David Beckham** got sent off against Argentina, then **England** lost on penalties. That was my first football heartbreak.

Before that I played football in the street with my brother. We were very lucky

because we had a small plastic goal and we put it on the kerb outside the house. We would get home from school and go straight out there to play football. I'd pretend to be **Alan Shearer**.

**K:** Where did you get the idea for **Kick** from, and why did you decide to set it in Indonesia?

**MJ:** When I worked in a sports shop I found an energy gel wrapper in a shoebox for a pair of **football boots**. It got me thinking about who had made those boots. Obviously it was an

## Who makes your football boots?

As we explained on the last page, most companies prefer to make their boots in the Far East because it is cheaper to pay workers there.

Unfortunately, the small amount of money the workers are paid often means they **struggle to afford basic things** like a house and food.

Working conditions can also be very difficult for these people. The factories often have **no windows**, are very hot and noisy, and the work is extremely tiring. Occasionally the factory owners force children to do these jobs. This is called **child labour** and is against the law.

However, big companies such as **Adidas** and **Nike** now make sure their boots are not made in factories like this. These days their workers are paid enough money to live on, and their factories are cleaner and nicer places to work in. It's still a tough job though!



These boots have come a long way



exhausting job if they were drinking energy gels. That's what inspired me to think about the lives of these people. Football is amazing, but it's important to look behind the scenes because it's not always as great for other people. **Indonesia** is where a lot of boots are made, so I set the story there.

**K: The book is not just about football, it's about dreams, family and child labour. Why did you choose football as the thing Budi loved?**

**MJ:** Everyone loves the twists and turns in football. When **Leicester** won the Premier League that was unthinkable. The unexpectedness of football is really useful for stories. When the plot of the story twists and turns it's like the twists and turns of a player in a match, or the twists and turns of a team in a season.

**K: We all wear football boots. Why is it important we learn how they are made?**

**MJ:** Everyone has a set of basic rights that should be respected. Unfortunately, in these kinds of industries these rights are **ignored, overlooked or denied**. One of the best things about sport is that it's

fair: there are a set of rules, two teams turn up, they play and there's a winner. If we want to live in a world that is **as fair as sport** we need to stop companies treating their workers badly.

**K: What can we do to improve the lives of the people like Budi?**

**MJ:** You could do some research and find out if the company that has made your boots is doing something that you don't agree with. If they are, contact them and tell them that you are not happy with the way they treat their workers.

You can also support human rights charities. **Amnesty International** protect human rights around the world. If you raise money for a charity like that they would be able to go out and do good work to help people like Budi. **Kick is out now and costs £6.99, published by Usborne**

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL**



## FOOT NOTES

**1800s-1940s** Most players wear very heavy work boots with metal studs hammered into the bottom.

**1960s** Boots become lighter as companies like Adidas get involved.

**1970s** Hummel make the first white boots, worn by Everton's Alan Ball.

**1980s** The Puma King and Adidas' Copa Mundial put comfort first.

**1990s** Adidas launch the Predator while Nike arrive at the 1994 World Cup with the Tiempo Premier.

**2000s** Boot madness! Bright colours and blades both become fashionable.

**2010s** Some boots now include microchips to track players' performance!



## COMPETITION

We have three copies of *Kick* to give away that have been signed by Mitch Johnson! To win one, just answer the following question:

**Which club does Budi dream of playing for?**

- A) Real Madrid
- B) Barcelona
- C) Manchester United

Get an adult to email the answer, along with your name and age, to: [hello@kickaroundmag.co.uk](mailto:hello@kickaroundmag.co.uk)

**Closing date: 1st June. Good luck!**

T&Cs apply, see [kickaroundmag.co.uk](http://kickaroundmag.co.uk) for details

\*Image reproduced from *Kick* by permission of Usborne Publishing, 83-85 Saffron Hill, London EC1N 8RT, UK. [www.usborne.com](http://www.usborne.com). Copyright © 2017 Usborne Publishing Ltd. Illustrated by Oriol Vidal.