

Nuggets and Bright Lines

- Bhai or brother



Bhai

This word has come to signify the unity and bonding between the people that I have come to love and respect. As I listened carefully, struggling to understand all the conversations surrounding me in this new land, I kept hearing this one syllable. At first it passed my by but it was uttered so frequently that I wondered what it was. In a chance conversation with a young family I asked what the word was in Bengali for brother. “Bhai”, she said and immediately I recognised it. Seemingly all the boys here refer to each other by their names with the ‘bhai’ tagged on to the end. So for example it comes as: ‘Rakib bhai’ or Kazi bhai”.

So it means brother. We use similar relationship pronouns in English. ‘Brother’ itself is not so common but there is also the use of ‘cousin’ or ‘cuz’ and ‘sister’ or ‘sis’.

Why is this significant? Well this is significant because behind the calling of each other brother is a bond. A bond that has a cohesion. A cohesion that only comes with time, challenge and a common purpose. It is this ‘glue’ that is often the final element in a successful team or the magic that creates astounding results in either seemingly ordinary circumstances or when the chips are almost totally down. It is, for me, what has come to signify the most meaningful part of this journey, the bond between the players and myself.

This reference is certainly not something new or unique. Brothers In Arms is a common phrase that signifies a unified struggle. It also happens to be the chosen title of a successful Dire Straits album. Maybe there are strands of the same in the music industry’s artists, Sister Sledge and Sisters of Mercy and as regards lyrics, ‘He aint heavy, he’s my brother’ come to mind. I think on that note my Bhai, we will leave it there.



The Author

Rob is a UEFA qualified coach with a League Managers Association qualification and a science and medicine background. He has worked in the football industry in Europe, USA, Asia and Africa; at International, Premiership, League, Non-League and grass roots levels with both World Cup and European Championship experience.

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