# Audio file

[Sam Hoey Researcher in Focus.mp3](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

# [Transcript](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

[Dr Sam Hoey](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

[Much less is known about Black managers, so this is also a problem that needs attention. Now it's also important to realise here that we're not only talking about former Premier League players who have, you know, a lot of probably have a lot of wealth already to start with. A lot of these players are from the lower tiers of English football and so for them facing these hurdles and obtaining employment in football after their careers have ended is actually has a big impact on their livelihoods, right? So if they are not able to obtain these jobs, progress through the ranks, that can have a severe impact on their life.](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

[Nick Jones](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

[Hello and welcome to the Researcher in Focus podcast from the University of Liverpool. I'm Nick Jones from the research and impact team based here in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, and in this episode I'm joined by Doctor Sam Hoey, lecturer at the University’s Management School. And today Sam will be talking to us about his fascinating research into racial discrimination in the world of football management. So Sam, it's lovely to meet you. Could you begin by telling us a little bit about yourself and what your current research project is about?](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[Great. Yeah. So my name is Sam Hoey. I'm a lecturer at the University of Liverpool Management School in the Economics department. I do research in sports economics. And currently I teach econometrics to the master students, but hopefully eventually I'll also teach sports economics. That's the dream. So. When a lot of people, when they ask what's is sports economics, I often tell them that there's two streams of thought, so to say within that field. First, you have the stream of thought that looks at how economics or econometric methods can help sports and improve sports. So think of contest design or things like that, and 2nd and this is the area which most of my research lays in is using sports to learn things about economics. So think labour economic questions. Or questions in management. So sports has a big advantage in the sense that there's just a tonne of data about workers, so to say. So we can leverage that to learn about economics as well.](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[And are you a big sports fan yourself, or did you arrive at this more from the economics side?](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[Well, I think it started with, yeah, an interest from being a fan myself, of course. So I gathered a bunch of data just to learn how to do that. And yeah, one thing led to another and I started writing academic papers with that data. So I myself. I'm. I'm. I'm. Oh, I'm half Dutch, half Canadian. So I am an ice hockey fan. Then, but ever since I've moved to Liverpool, I've switched to football. I'm definitely more into football nowadays, yeah.](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[What was it that brought you to the University of Liverpool, Sam?](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[So the University of Liverpool, what drew me to it mostly, was that they that we have a great group of sports economists as well as people working in sports analytics, that's quite rare. Usually universities have at most 1-2 people working on that topic. In Liverpool we have many people working on this topic. And on top of that, I would say Liverpool is a very young place. There's a lot of young people walking around and this just gives it a very energetic and yeah, great place to work in, yeah.](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[So could you tell us a little bit more about your current research project exploring racial discrimination in football management?](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[Yeah. So one of my recent research projects looks at discrimination in the market of football management in England. So when we look at discrimination literature in sports, a lot of work has been done looking at how players are discriminated against. So players of minority groups. You know, in terms of their salaries, in terms of the number of minutes that they get to play, those sort of things, but very little is known about managers. So the people that are leading the teams and who are making sure the team performs at the best at its best. And so that's what this paper looks at or this project. So essentially what we do is we look at. That the different hurdles that Black former players face in obtaining jobs in football management after their careers as players Ed. So first, do they face more difficulty than non-Black former players in obtaining a job in management? Now there's a couple of jobs in management which you can sort of define a hierarchy, so you have the youth coaches, which is more or less an entry level job. You have the assistant managers as well as the manager of the first team. And so another thing we look at is, let's say they do make it into this market, how do they progress through the ranks? Are there differential likelihoods between Black and non-Black employees in making promotion? And finally, we look at differential likelihood. In exiting the market or exiting your job. So let's say you do make it to the top job which is manager as a Black manager. Do you face a higher chance of being fired than someone who is not Black? And so we find. Evidence. Showing that in fact there are these hurdles at every step of the employment employment process, so that would be at entry through promotion all the way to exit or dismissal.](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[And what have been your main findings so far?](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[So we find evidence in favour of all free hurdles, so to say so at entry. If we look at all the players who are, you know. In a position to get these jobs, we find that 33% of non-Black former players get a job in English football managers football management after their careers as players have ended for Black former players, this is only 20%, so that's a 14% difference. What I find most striking is when we look at the top job. So that would be being a manager of a club, right? For non-Black players they have a nine percent chance of getting this job, whereas Black former players have only a 3% chance of getting this job and that's a huge difference that if that's a free fold increase in probability, if you're non-Black versus if you are Black right then finally at exits we also look at. So that that's the first two stages being hired and being promoted. So then the final stage would be exit. So let's say you make it to the top job, which is actually very unlikely. Like I said, for Black former players then they also face a higher chance of being dismissed. So if we look at one season, if you are a non-Black manager, you have a 65% chance of surviving. That season. So I. Energy continuing employment into the next season, you have a 65% chance, whereas if you are a Black manager, that chance is only 50%. So throughout the entire process, starting from whether you enter this market, whether you progress through it, so there's lower promotion rates for Black employees all the way to exit there seems to be hurdles that are hurting their chances, yeah.](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[What was the inspiration behind this project?](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[All right. So yeah, this this project actually started with the Black Footballers Partnership approaching us to do research on discrimination in the football manager market in England. So what does the Black Football Partnership do? They essentially, they're a group of, well, they essentially try to generate an equal playing field for Black footballers in the UK. And that that holds for both players as well as well, now they're shifting their focus to management. So I think what's, what's inspired them to pursue this is that indeed if you look at the managers in the Premier League, I think at the moment there is, there are no Black managers. So that's that seems to be striking because. If you look at the player group, a large share of players in England. Are of Black heritage or mixed heritage and also if you look at the national team of England, I would I think in the last competition the international competition, 11 out of 22 players were Black. So it's it's it's very striking that there's so many Black players but it seems like very few make it into management and that's what. Inspired their quest, so to say, to pursue this more generally, and that's where they approached us and we found the UM. The projects so interesting and and important that once we've completed our work with them, we decided to turn it into an academic paper and essentially what that entails is basically exploring the avenues which could explain what we find more in depth and expanding our our research as well as adding more players, things like that.](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[What would you hope to see as the main real life changes? From your research, the impact, so to speak, from this work?](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[In terms of the impact of our projects outside of academia, I hope first and foremost that it raises awareness around this issue. So if we look at players, I think we're we're quite aware that there are these problems of for Black players in terms of discrimination that they face. I mean in the Netherlands. Where I'm from, you hear stories about bananas being thrown to Black players, but I think much less is known about Black managers. So this is also a problem that needs. Now it's also important to realise here that we're not only talking about former Premier League players who have, you know, a lot of probably have a lot of wealth already to start with. A lot of these players are from the lower tiers of English football and so for them facing these hurdles and obtaining employment in football after their careers. Then it is actually has a big impact on their livelihoods, right? So if they are not able to obtain these jobs, progress through the ranks, that can have a severe impact on their life in terms of solving it, I think it's a very difficult issue to solve. I mean, I think discrimination is very deep rooted in society. So essentially to. Make a change. You need to make changes to people's mindsets, and I think that goes for everyone. I think everyone has some biases which perhaps they're not even aware. Of. In terms of. Policies that could be implemented so I know that in the NFL, the National Football League in. The. US they have what's called the Rooney rule where when you have a posting in management, you have to interview at least two people from minority groups. So that would be a policy that would encourage Black former players. They apply because perhaps they also feel like they don't stand a chance and that they don't even apply as a result of that.](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[What's been the most surprising thing your research has uncovered, do you think?](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[In terms of the surprising findings, or if I find anything surprising in the research, I would say I wasn't really surprised that there is this discrimination present in the market. When I was running the results as like everything I found was like, OK, that's what I would. Expect what? I was surprised by was the magnitude of the effects, especially at the top end. If you look at the top job, which is manager of a club, that's where the difference has become very striking in the sense that it's almost impossible for Black former players to obtain these jobs in the Premier League. You do not see Black managers currently and also in maintaining these jobs, so if they do make it to the top job, they face a lot of difficulty in keeping these jobs. Even when you take into account how well their team is performing. So let's say you had one team managed by a Black person and another team managed by a non-Black person. If both teams were performing equally well, we still find that the Black manager has a higher likelihood of leaving their job essentially.](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[Where will you next with this work?](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[So in terms of future? Things we want to look at, I think one of the things we want to look at is also who is discriminating here, right? So there's many, many. Different groups that could be influencing the process here, so we have of course upper management who in the end is in charge of making the decision of which manager they hire. And so if this group is predominantly white, they might have a a predisposition to hiring white managers. Now there's also the fans. So it could be that the fan base has a preference. Or watching or having their team being managed by a non-Black person and so this could sort of force the hand of the upper management so to say and finally it could also be the group of players, right? I mean if the group of players have a preference for being managed by a non-Black manager then that could also influence. Decision of the of the upper management of the club. So the CEO of the club essential.](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[How would you go about answering those kinds of questions?](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[Well, so in economics we everything is data based, right? So we we don't really conduct surveys. We try to answer our questions using existing data. So essentially what I think we would do is we would, we would try to find out who are the CEOs of these clubs and you know of what race are they and does that have any correlation to who they're hiring. So one thing that we could look at, for example, in the rare case that a football club would have a Black C. So does this change who they're hiring? So what we find there is one. There's actually a paper who looks at referees in the National Basketball Association, and this is a more diverse group. So you have a bunch of Black players as well as non-Black players, and you have a bunch of Black referees as well as non-Black referees. And what they found there is actually that there is this own race favouritism, so the Black referees judge in favour of Black players, meaning that they give them less fouls. And the white referees give less fouls to the non-Black players or the white players. So something like that could also be going on in the hiring process where there is this perhaps unconscious, you know, favouritism towards hiring people of your own race. And if then people who are in these decision making process positions are predominantly white. And that could be an explanation for the problem, of course.](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[And based on all the stuff we've talked about so far, what would you say your priorities are for your research?](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[What I would still, what I would still like to research essentially is uhm, which one of these factors is most important? So if we look at entry promotion and higher dismissal rate for Black managers? If we weren't able to solve one of those, would that solve most of the problem? And then which one should we focus on? So if if if you're a policy maker and you're thinking of policies to improve the equal playing field for Black managers, often you have to choose which problem you're going to tackle. So is that. Entry so Rooney rule could have a positive effect there. So essentially by forcing clubs to interview at least two people of minority group. Could that solve the problem? But it could also be that you need to target your policy more towards promotion as well as decreasing this gap in dismissal at the top end. So being manager, the differential likelihood of being fired there. So I think we can we can we do have methods of figuring out which factor is most important. And which one's policymakers should target?](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[How is this research received? For some it might be seen as a bit of a sensitive topic.](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[What I realise is when I present this is that people get uneasy, you know it's it's a very, you know, it's a people, it's a topic that people are passionate about in different ways. And what I find is that when I present this work that a lot of people try to come up with reasons why these differences exist. And so, like, they'll say, you know, especially what you see in the media perhaps is that people say, well, Black players do not want to enter this market as as much as white former players. And so there is actually some evidence that this is not the case. So Black former players are more likely to hold coaching licences. So there's definitely intent. Entered this market. As well as some people would even go as far as saying, well, there is a a difference in how good these two groups would be at managing a club, right. And we just simply find no evidence for that. So it's it's quite interesting to see that, you know, people are very passionate about this topic and yeah. They almost feel offended. You know what I mean? Like, that's they'll try and rationalise why these differences are there, instead of focusing on how can we, you know, solve this and take it serious? Yeah.](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)

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[Doctor Sam Hoey, thank you so much. That's been really interesting to hear about all your work. And it's been a pleasure. Talking to you and. Thank you all for listening as well and I hope you can join us for our next edition of our Researcher in Focus podcast coming soon. Thank you and goodbye.](https://theuniversityofliverpool-my.sharepoint.com/personal/ndjones_liverpool_ac_uk/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/Sam%20Hoey%20Researcher%20in%20Focus.mp3)