

# England arrive, bring WAGS, Fleet Street



By [Nick Said](#)

4 Jun 2010

England became the latest high-profile nation to arrive at the World Cup on Thursday, bringing with them half of Fleet Street and, of course, those lovely WAGS.



It is fair to say the North West town of Rustenburg will never be the same after the English have spent the next few weeks at the Bafokeng Sports Complex. Just what the English contingent will make of the town, a not-so-subtle mix of old Afrikaner charm and nouveau riche Platinum mining magnets, should make for interesting newspaper copy.

The facilities that they are staying at are first-rate though, and their next assignment is a game on Monday against South African PSL side Platinum Stars, who have had to recall their players from their holidays to take part in the hastily-arranged practice match.

Paraguay also arrived on Thursday and will be training at that great bastion of colonialism, Michaelhouse Boys' High School in the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands. You would have thought it would have been the other way round between them and England, but there you go.

## Missing Benni? I don't think so

South Africa striker Katlego Mphela has been saying how much he will miss Benni McCarthy, who was dumped by coach Carlos Alberto Parreira for the World Cup, but I don't believe him one bit. Aside from there being more on the breakfast buffet, Mphela doesn't want to go through the whole game doing Benni's running for him. It is time to close this chapter and move on.

Staying with the national squad, the goalkeepers, Itumeleng Khune, Moeeneb Josephs and Shu-Aib Walters, have all come out (like the rest of the world) in denouncing adidas' official match ball for the finals, Jabulani.

Without being flippant, it is difficult to find anybody these days who has anything good to say about it and it is looming as one of the big disappointments of the competition. But then I guess if we sit back afterwards and all we have to complain about is the ball, we can say job well done on stadiums, transport infrastructure, crime and so on.

Finally, it was fantastic to read that PE is being flooded with 2.4-million condoms ahead of the tournament. Anybody who has been to PE in winter will tell you there is not much to do, so...

## ABOUT NICK SAID

Nick Said is the business director of The Content Company, a leading supplier of South African and African football news, features, analysis and statistics to the local and international market. He is a former online business manager for Kick Off magazine, having previously held posts as sports editor for iafrica.com and operations manager for 365 Digital Publishing, where he led the team that produced the award-winning Football365.co.uk website.

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