

Jonathan Latimer

### **Futsal Player Furious at FA Cuts**

A Carlisle Futsal player has come out angered by the FA's decision to scrap funding for Futsal.

The FA made the assessment that they'd axe funding for all elite futsal clubs and significantly reduce its funding for grassroots futsal from this season onwards.

This comes after "unavoidable" budget cuts associated with Covid-19.

Thomas Williamson, 18, joined Carlisle Futsal Club the beginning of the 2019/2020 season as the youngest member of the squad.

He said: "I think its criminal how the FA has defunded futsal. The sport was growing and was the most popular and big it has ever been in the UK.

"The defunding has already affected all the club's growth; every club was struggling enough with Covid-19 and then they start to defund it. It has certainly set the growth of futsal back a few years."

Williamson and the Cumbrian outfit compete in the National Futsal Series two which is the second tier of English futsal.

Futsal is a modified form of football played with five players per side on a smaller, typically indoor, pitch with its name being derived from the Spanish or Portuguese word for "football"- FUTbol or FUTebol, and the French or Spanish word for "indoor" - SALon or SALa.

The FA launched a six-year plan for the sport in 2018 and had plans to introduce an England women's team which now doesn't seem likely due to cuts.

Williamson added: "It's really disheartening training and putting all your effort into the sport and get no help in return. It makes us all feel like the FA doesn't care about our sport especially when the sport was doing really well, in particular for us when we had just gotten promoted.

"I think futsal really does help the skill and composure of football players so without footballers playing futsal I think they are missing out in on a lot of quality futsal brings to football."

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