

The man juggling football and futsal

There's not too many people around who play two sports simultaneously at a high level, but that's exactly what Jeff Adubofour does.

Adubofour plays football for Bamber Bridge in The Northern Premier League, the seventh tier of English Football, whilst also playing Futsal for Manchester Futsal Club.

Born and raised in Hackney, East London, Adubofour was playing football from a young age, playing in 'cages' with friends on the streets of Hackney.

"I grew up playing football in East London, only now living up North because of work, but yeah so I grew up playing on the streets, in cages, and then playing for the school team."

"I've never been at an academy or a club so I never really had that experience but mostly it was just schol based and then playing for the district."

The Englishman first started playing Futsal when he was 16, but then grew into the sport more when he studied at the University of Leicester.

"I first started playing Futsal when I was 16, but I properly got into it at university through one of my friends."

"He was playing for the Uni futsal team and then he was like Jeff you should come along, you'll enjoy the game."

"So I went there, had a couple of sessions and I was committed to it and it was really enjoyable because it was all friends at uni who were playing football and futsal at the time just being in a team so for four years we were just playing and that's how I really got into it."

His most memorable moment in Futsal is winning the League with Manchester last season.

"My most memorable moment in Futsal has been winning the league last year with Manchester, we ended up representing England in the Champions League as a result so yeah that's my biggest achievement."

Adubofour, 27, had a break away from football for half a decade after being focused on Futsal.

He only started playing football again last year, signing for Bamber Bridge near Preston after moving up north for work commitments.

"I hadn't played football since university so since 2019, last season was my first season back in football, so one of the things to get used to was position."

"At Bamber Bridge I've played so many different positions and that's probably because of Futsal having to play so many positions and not really a set one."

"You end up playing so many games growing up and you're always in the game some way shape or form, all those old memories come back to you."

"Even like the smells of a football changing room that you sort of miss after being away for it for a fair amount of time so yeah it was difficult to get used to but after the first couple of games it was fine."



In terms of balancing the two, Adubofour manages to just about squeeze the two commitments into schedule.

"Physically, it can be challenging because we have our futsal league games on a Sunday and the games with Brig are on a Saturday and sometimes Tuesday."

"I work in the week for an engineering firm, and then my weekends are taken by football and futsal but I'm enjoying it and that's probably the main thing."

In terms of both of his coaches, he says 'they appreciate that i want to try a new challenge.'

"The gaffer at Brig [Jamie Milligan] has been really good with me, he understands the situation."

"I know that some situations can be quite difficult where clubs don't want you playing externally and likewise with Manchester Futsal, they appreciate that I wanted to try this challenge of getting back into playing football again so they're super supportive as well."

Bamber Bridge manager Jamie Milligan spoke about his player for Bamber Bridge, and he said 'Jeff is a proper sound lad.'

"What you get from Jeff is an honest lad who'll run around and work hard and he's got quality as well."

"He's a proper sound lad, the players love him and he's a normal down to earth lad."

"He's comfortable in possession and in training, in games, he's so comfortable on the ball."

Adubofour compared the two sports and said 'futsal is a little bit quicker.'

"A lot of people do like to compare it, I like to think of them as stand alones, but they do overlap in some ways."

"I'd say futsal is a little bit quicker, you have more touches on the ball compared to football where you can be in and out of the game sometimes."

"In futsal it's a bit more technically demanding, a lot of people think it's a lot of skills and flashy flicks but its ultimately making the right decision because in a 5v5 game if you make the wrong decision, there's going to be a chance down the other end, similarly to football but maybe you can get away with it more on an 11 a side pitch, but both bring a lot of different challenges."

Future ambitions for the winger include representing England in futsal.

"For futsal, the pinnacle is representing my country."

"England as a futsal country haven't really been as successful as other nations, we've never qualified for a major competition, we usually get to qualifiers and not make it to the final competition so thats definitely a goal as this new generation of the national team comes together."

"In terms of football, I want to establish myself in the team, I just want to continue to prove myself and help the team where I can."

"I just want to see where I can go and how high I can go."

