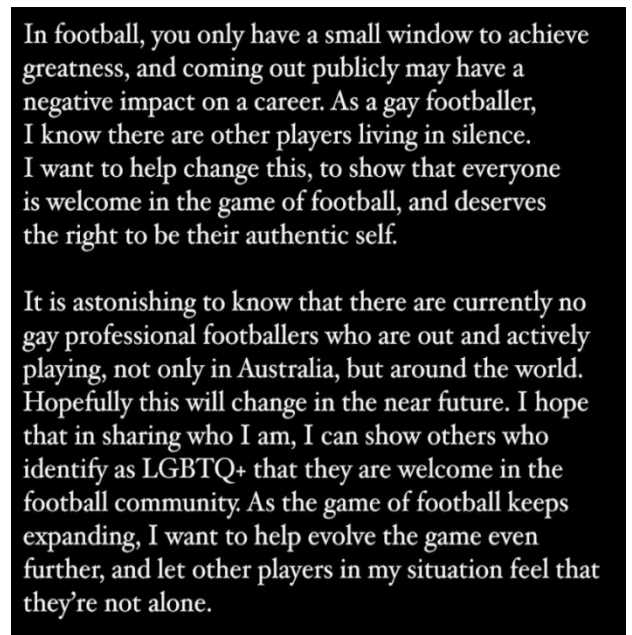
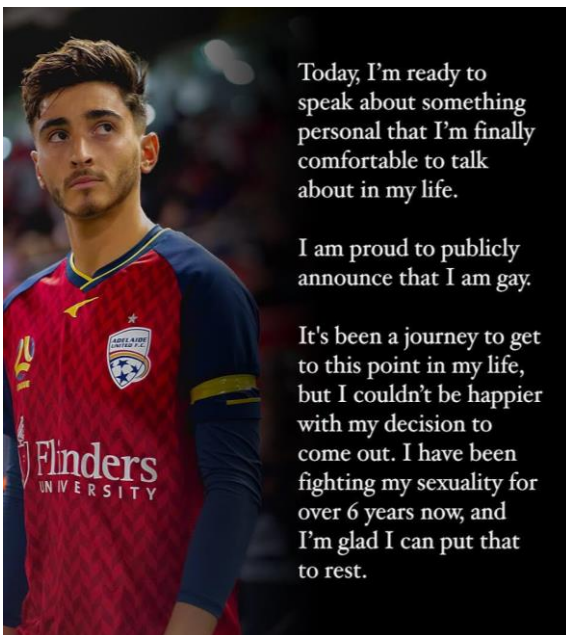


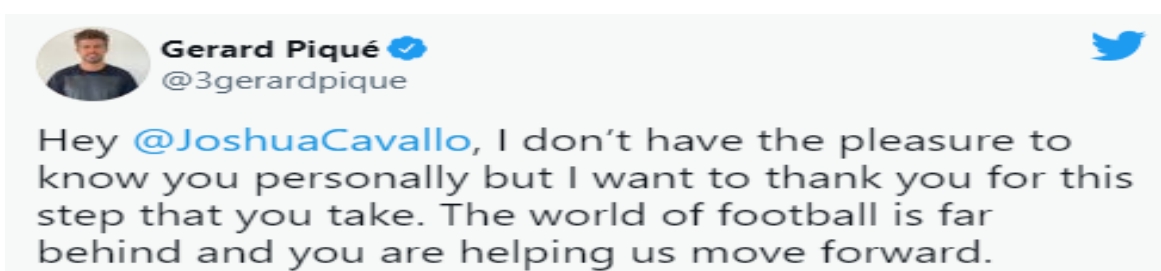
Equality and Diversity

Josh Cavallo is a 22-year-old Australian footballer who currently plays for Adelaide United in the A-League. On October 27th he announced via a social media post that he was gay; this announcement was very significant for inclusivity in football across the world as it made him the world's only current topflight male professional footballer to be openly gay.

He revealed that he had been fighting his sexuality for 6 years which had left him feeling isolated for a long time as he would distance himself from teammates to avoid being asked questions and admitted to having struggled with his mental health. He has spoken about the moment he first told his coaches and how the support he received from them allowed him to have his most enjoyable training session as he finally felt accepted for who he was in the game. Josh also mentioned that prior to coming out as gay he found it exhausting living a double life whilst still trying to perform to the best of his ability. Inclusivity is a concern within football and Cavallo told Sky Sports News "I want to get a message across to the world to show that it doesn't matter who you are, what you believe in or what culture or background you come from, everyone is accepted in football. It should be based on your talent not on what you look like or believe in."



Since the announcement Josh has received large amounts of support both nationally and internationally. The A-League sent their congratulations to him and Adelaide for creating a safe and inclusive space and added "Football is a game for all - if you love the game, you're welcome here.". Some of the world's biggest clubs and players have also sent their congratulations and support to Josh which he has said he is shocked and taken aback by.





Liverpool FC 
@LFC



Proud of you @JoshuaCavallo for your strength and bravery.

You'll Never Walk Alone  #RedTogether

The Premier League - Equality and Diversity Work

Rainbow Laces is a Stonewall campaign where participants do something active while wearing Rainbow Laces in their boots or trainers, to show their support for LGBTQ+ equality.

The Premier League has stated that it is proud to stand alongside Stonewall in promoting Equality and Diversity. If you watched a Premier League match between 27 November and 2 December, you may have noticed rainbow captain armbands, Rainbow Laces on players boots, Rainbow Laces substitute boards and LED sponsor boards highlighting the Rainbow Laces campaign.

The Premier League aim to ensure everyone within the organisation and all those connected to clubs, including supporters, feel safe and welcome, irrespective of sexual orientation or gender identity. A key focus of the partnership with Stonewall will be encouraging LGBTQ+ acceptance among children and young people involved in community and education initiatives such as Premier League Primary Stars and Premier League Kicks, and within Academies. Coaches, teachers and leaders will be equipped with bespoke resources and programmes developed by the League and Stonewall which promote positive attitudes towards the LGBTQ+ community.



Why do we need the Rainbow Laces campaign?

It has been highlighted that many LGBTQ+ individuals still feel unsafe and unwelcome in sports and fitness environments. There are some staggering numbers surrounding this, for example:

- Across Europe, 82% of LGBTQ+ people who take part in sport have experienced or witnessed homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in the past 12 months (Out in Sport, 2019).
- More than 43% of LGBTQ+ people think public sporting events aren't a welcoming space for LGBTQ+ people. (YouGov for Stonewall, 2017).
- 20% of sport fans think anti-LGBTQ+ language is harmless if it's just meant as banter (ICM for Stonewall, 2020).

But there is hope that the Rainbow Laces campaign is working and attitudes towards LGBTQ+ people in sport are changing. The below statistics highlight the progress being made but there is still more to do.

- Two thirds of sport fans who saw the campaign believe they have a responsibility to stick up for LGBTQ+ fans of the teams and sports they follow (ICM for Stonewall, 2020).
- 46% of people feel confident challenging anti-LGBT language online and at live sporting events.

