

# Marcus Rashford will be remembered as a great on and off the pitch

The Manchester United striker will score plenty of goals but his activism in fighting child poverty should be admired by all



Manchester United player Marcus Rashford and his mother Melanie visit FareShare Greater Manchester at New Smithfield Market, Manchester. AP Photo



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January 20, 2021

Any player wanting to be remembered as a great at Manchester United knows that achievements on the pitch must be matched by endeavours off it.

One current United player making an impact on both counts is Marcus Rashford.

With the January transfer window open, the CIES Football Observatory last week released its latest biannual transfer value list, with United striker Rashford rated the most valuable player in the world at €165 million (\$200m).

The CIES list charts how much a club would have to pay to sign a player across Europe's big five leagues, based on advanced algorithms dictated by key factors such as a player's age, the length of their contract, their club's financial situation and any previous transfer fees.

Rashford is also on track to record his best season in senior football, having scored 15 so far in all competitions.

I venture to say that in the short term he will be the captain of the Manchester United.







20. Frenkie de Jong of Barcelona has a current transfer value of £91.06m (Dh422.7m) according to CIES. Getty



At just 23, Rashford has already accumulated vast experience for his club and will be looking to spearhead England's attack along with the likes of Harry Kane and Raheem Sterling at this year's Euro 2020 tournament.

But Rashford has usurped his footballing achievements this year with his social activism in recent times, becoming one of those few players who become a giant inside and outside the four lines.

Undoubtedly, the generous contributions of the likes of Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi and others were very important in the beginning of the pandemic, but Rashford's role in fighting for good causes is on another level entirely.

When Covid-19 reached the UK last year, the Manchester United and England star was not content with making financial donations or simply training at home, waiting until football started again.

Instead, seeing a need in the wider community, he began to make a tangible difference in the lives of the less fortunate.

Rashford helped raise money and raise awareness of FareShare, an organisation that redistributes surplus food to charities, which are later turned into meals for those in need. Having grown up poor, Rashford knew only too well the perils of not knowing where the next healthy meal was coming from.

In the UK, there are more than 32,000 schools. With closures during both the first and second wave of the pandemic, many of the children who relied on schools for free meals were suddenly deprived of it.

With his help, more than £20 million has been raised and FareShare now provides 3 million meals a week to underprivileged children across the UK.

The Manchester-born striker has also successfully campaigned for the UK government to provide more than a million school children with access to free lunch vouchers. This campaign earned him an MBE in the New Year's Honours list.

Rashford's contribution to charitable causes was duly recognized at The Best Fifa Football Awards 2020 ceremony, in which he was named the first Fifa Foundation Award winner for his outstanding humanitarian work in combating child poverty.

There is no doubt that Rashford will be one of the great players in United's history for what he does on the pitch, but he will also be an idol of a great nation for everything he has done off it too.

Published: January 20, 2021 11:00 AM