



**And it's Hayek.
Hayek to Suarez.
Goal!**

Amid the fallout from Luis Suarez's controversial goal for Liverpool in their FA Cup tie against Mansfield Town on Sunday, we have – regrettably – not learnt whether the Uruguayan striker numbers the economist and philosopher Friedrich Hayek among his influences. For it was Hayek who compared the market to a game in which “there is no point in calling the outcome just or unjust”.

Beloved of Margaret Thatcher, Hayek took the view that the duty of the powerful to help those less powerful – for which one might read a leading Premier League team such as Liverpool and a non-League one such as Mansfield – was minimal. He would have seen Suarez's hand make contact with the ball immediately prior to the goal, and said, “Tough”. Or something very like it.

Mansfield felt cheated. We recommend trying to be philosophical.

8th/9th January 2013

Letters to the editor

Truth proves elusive in Suarez handball

The reports by Tim Rich and James Lawton (Sport 7 January) show how difficult it is for football referees to get important decisions right. Even though, no doubt, Tim and James had the benefit of action replays, they disagreed about what happened.

Tim said that Suarez “was clearly struck on the hand by the ball”, whereas James said that it was a “diabolical act” and that Suarez “controlled the ball illegally”.

The referee of course saw the incident only once and in real time, and decided that the handball was accidental. It would be academic but interesting to know if he agreed with Tim or James after seeing the action replays.

JOHN ROGERS
London SW16

It is wrong to assert that Hayek believed “the duty of the powerful to help those less powerful ... was minimal” (Leading article: “Hayek to Suarez. Goal!”, 8 January). That was his view of the state; but the worth of an independent propertied class extended to their support as patrons of art and literature (and, perhaps, a lowly football club).

Ideals (such as fair play) receive wide endorsement only after lives and fortunes are devoted to arousing “the public conscience”. He cited the abolition of slavery, prison reform, the prevention of cruelty and the humane treatment of the insane, which “were for a long time the hopes of only a few idealists”. Hayek's comment on the Suarez goal would have been more thoughtful than “Tough”.

G R STEELE
Reader in Economics
Lancaster University
Management School