

## Beckham Dreams of Founding Soccer Schools

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By Emma Graham-Harrison

MADRID (Reuters) - David Beckham has no intention of taking up management when he retires from football but plans instead to give something back to the youth of the sport as world cup winner Bobby Charlton once did for him.

The England captain, who has become one of the world's most recognizable and well-paid sportsmen, told Reuters in an interview he had no appetite to go into coaching or punditry.

"Management doesn't interest me at this point. What interests me is soccer schools -- doing something for children which I had when I was 10, 11 years old," he said.

Beckham won a Bobby Charlton soccer school competition as a schoolboy, went on to sign a contract with Manchester United on his 14th birthday and stayed with the club for over a decade.

Following a sometimes feisty relationship with his United manager Alex Ferguson, Beckham moved to Spain in 2003 and enjoyed a bright start to the season at Real Madrid.

But his form gradually deserted him and he was dogged by tabloid allegations of an extra-marital affair -- which he dismissed as "ludicrous."

He then performed well below par at Euro 2004.

Since marrying his pop-star wife Victoria in 1999, the Beckhams have dominated the British tabloids and rival the late Princess Diana for paparazzi attention.

### OBSESSED WITH FAME

In the days following the end to England's Euro 2004 campaign, when Beckham missed two penalties, football critics accused the captain of becoming obsessed with fame and forgetting his priorities.

"People try to say that the off-field things get in the way sometimes of the football, but I've never put myself in that position," he told Reuters between posing for photos for a range of clothes he has designed with German firm Adidas.

"The football comes before anything I do off the pitch."

This year Beckham's early-season form for Real improved but he sparked controversy last month by saying he deliberately picked up a yellow card in a World Cup qualifying match so he could serve out a one-match ban while injured.

His ability to project himself onto the front and back pages of the world's media means every aspect of the Beckham "brand" comes under scrutiny and

when he turned up at the 2002 World Cup with a punk-style mohican, Japanese hairdressers were inundated by fans demanding a copy.

However he revealed that far from an ongoing image relaunch, some of his more dramatic cuts were due partly to a battle against unruly locks.

"Of course everyone has bad hair days and I'm the same," he said. "I'll wake up one day and say, 'I don't like the hair today' and off it (the hair) comes. That's the way I decide on what I'm going to do next."

He also admitted that some of his extravagant fashion statements, which include wearing a sarong and reportedly the underwear of his wife, come back to haunt him.

"I don't regret anything, but obviously you do look back 10 years ago and think, 'What was I doing?'" he said, although he was reluctant to single out any outfit as a complete fashion disaster.

Beckham gave the interview in late September, but it was held for publication until now under a condition imposed by Adidas.