



Season 2010/11

Why they really call Mario 'Super'

Thu 16 Jun 2011, 10:06AM
Posted by David Clayton

Ever wondered why Mario Balotelli is nicknamed 'Super Mario'? Sure, he's a great talent on the pitch and his name happens to be the same as a world famous Nintendo game, but there's much more to the young Italian than meets the eye.



Away from the glare of the tabloid mischief-makers in the UK and Italy, Mario has a caring and compassionate side that few get to see, mostly because he shuns publicity from his visits to orphanages and children's homes. In fact, we had to prise these images away from a close family member to illustrate that the 20-year-old has more than just football on his mind.



Mario made a private donation to Casa del Sole several months ago and when the charity returned his kindness with an invitation to come and see what his money had been used for, Mario made a promise to stop by for the day as soon as the English season had ended and was as good as his word. He received a moving reception from the children on arrival and also met his biggest fan, Tommy, pictured above (right). Tommy adores Mario and was at his side for the majority of the day, holding his hand and shouting his name continuously.



He was delighted to see that his help had enabled Casa del Sole to purchase a new horse to help the disabled youngsters with more mobility learn to ride and attain independence under the guidance of Argentine instructor, Nelson - another big Balotelli fan! Children and animals are close to Mario's heart so to see the two loves of his life in tandem and bringing so much happiness was as much as he could have wished for.



Of course, he couldn't leave without demonstrating his equine brilliance with a balancing act on one of the horses!



After that there was lunch followed by a signing session with gifts he'd brought along with him - hats and shirts were autographed to the delighted youngsters before rounding off the day with a Q&A session.



Mario admitted he'd never had such a grilling at the Q&A! Questions ranged from

'Why do you keep changing your girlfriend?' to whether he liked Manchester and English football - he likes both by the way - and what was the meaning of his existence from a young lad called Yuri! In fact, Mario admitted he'd had a fantastic day and plans to keep close ties with Casa del Sole in the future.

As he left, he was presented with some gifts and plants the children had grown in the greenhouse and was told by one of the staff, "You did all this. You made them so happy, Mario."

Mario responded that it was the kids who had made him smile and lifted his spirits.