



AMERICAN FOOTBALL HELPING STRENGTHEN USA-CHINA TIES

by Kameron Thomas Corresponding Reporter

從乒乓球到美式足球：體育之橋再連中美關係

一個偶然的機會我認識了休斯敦 Cyril White,他曾經是個運動員,他有一家公司在上海,TGBTG Sports, a sports management group based in Houston and Shanghai that owns the medial platform Chinahoops.net 只要是做體育有過的一系列管理,他常駐中國,自己創建的公司已經有20年,Cyril講一口流利的中文,熱愛中國,他的公司在中國有着好前途。

Cyril 他來找我是因為他的兒子 Jackson White 是一位非常優秀的 football 球員,兒子要來克利夫蘭上大學。

我倆在電話里聊的時候,我想起中美建交起始于乒乓球外交,當然一切都是天時地利,我對 Cyril 說,就目前看中美關係越來越多



USA Football Player Jackson White believes American football can mend relationships between USA and China. Jackson White connects with American football fans in China by promoting products on china media platforms. Visit his website @ www.firstdownjacksonwhite.com NCAA Prospect Jackson White sees American football as a new tool to reach the youth of China



負面情緒,我們能不能現在一起做一些有益於中美友好合作關係的事,Cyril 也一下興奮起來,他也非常樂意,他是做生意的體育人,想更多地看到中美之間的友情,去做人民喜歡的事情,他告訴我中國孩子現在特別喜歡美國的 Football,這兩年這兩年美國教練在中國非常受歡迎。我說我們可以計劃一下,他說11月3日他來克利夫蘭,我期待我們見面的時候……浦瑛



Since China hosted visitors from the USA for the first ping pong games in 1972 between the nations, sports has been used to build a bridge of international goodwill. From that starting point, the relationship between the USA and China had continued to develop in mutually beneficial ways.

China joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001, and along with the rest of the

world, the East-West ties grew stronger over the years, with sports being at the center of many Sino-USA projects. Now, after much controversy over Covid-19 and the recent political differences, sports is again a major part of mending the international relationship, and this time its American Football working as the connector.

Jackson White, a USA wide receiver from

Houston, Texas, has traveled to China and had a chance to experience the fans and sports culture of the country. Jackson believes football is a great new way to connect with the younger generation of Chinese audiences.

"Sports lets me connect at the human level with people, regarding of any language, religious, or cultural differences," Jackson said, who was ranked the #7 wide receiver for Texas private schools in class of 2022. "It is good to see football growing in China. Its more opportunities to inspire and connect with people on common interests."

In 2019, an American College football team went to Shanghai, China to play 2 goodwill exhibition games, which were well attended. China has also sent groups of young basketball students from China to the Cleveland area for sports training camps in 2018-2019 summer time. Prior to the Covid-19 outbreak that has limited group travel to China since February 2020, USA-China based company TGBTG Sports had been in talks with Cleveland area Notre Dame College for a potential trip to China for the games. Notre Dame College, a top NCAA Division II program, would have played 4 games -- 2 in Shanghai and 2 in Beijing, according to the original format of the goodwill games.

"Notre Dame College athletic director Scott Swain has done a great job keeping a great football program together, and we hope we can get them to China for the games in the future," said Cyril White, managing director of TGBTG Sports. "Mr. Swain understands that sports is more than a game, and we certainly want to use our platform to unite people in these times."

Chinese companies had already become heavily involved in sponsoring Western sports teams, leagues, and athletes. Several NBA players have been sponsored by top apparel brands in China, while many national teams and leagues abroad have benefitted from China's growing interest in branding through sports. Jackson White says that now that football is more popular in China, more



football players can build relationships with brands because of this interest.

"Football fans will pay more attention to football players, and we will get better sponsorship deals and more fan engagement," said Jackson, whose website www.firstdownjacksonwhite.com launched in China in September 2021. "The opportunity makes me realize I'm always more than just a player-- I am a sports ambassador. I want to be a part of why we see each other as being more alike and not as being more different."

China and the USA enjoyed a relatively amicable relationship during the Barack Obama presidential years, and political differences began to emerge during the Donald Trump administration, most notably the disputes over Covid-19, its origin, and how both countries handled the virus and/or shared information to contain it. With president Joe Biden as the new leader of the USA, it remains to be seen how the current leadership can bring a positive change in the relationship between the nations.

"I can't speak on the political things, but I know that football brings a smile to the face of those who love the game, and I love seeing those smiles when we play football together," Jackson said. "I'm looking forward to going to China with whatever college team I end up playing on. I want all my future teammates to have the experience."

