



And it's eco, too—Most sports balls are made by children—or by adults paid an un-fair wage. Not this one.



FAIR PLAY >>CHILDREN CAN NOW KICK CHILD LABOR OUT OF THE PARK.

“The mindful life,” elephant’s slogan since 2002, was chosen because it blurs the line between environmentally-responsible everyday actions and being present and awake to the karma—the ramifications of our every action—that those walking a spiritual path work to develop through meditation, prayer, yoga or chanting.

You can discover, and sharpen mindfulness through rock climbing, mountain biking, flower arranging, tapping away at one’s laptop...or on the soccer field. But it’s hard to do so when the ball you’re kicking, kids, is made by kids. And so **elephant journal’s 2008 The Mindful Life Award** goes to **Fair Trade Sports**—a company that had a unique, difficult-to-achieve idea and kicked it out of the park, with style. ~ed.

By not paying adult workers a wage equal to local standards of living, sports companies force parents to put their children to work (somewhere else) so their family can survive.

Fair Trade Sports’ balls are eco-certified, vegan and union-made by adults paid fair wages (so their children can stay in school), in decent working conditions. They’ve pioneered the use of eco-certified rubber from a sustainably-run forest, rather than rubber from mono-crop, destructive rubber tree plantations. Next up: figure how to use reclaimed rubber. Finally, they pay a 20 percent premium, which goes directly to a worker-run organization that grants micro-loans to women-run businesses, and provides healthcare for the workers’ families.

Still, the balls are competitively-priced. How? By not sponsoring million dollar athletes and advertising campaigns—instead relying on grassroots press and word-of-mouth. Now that takes balls.

“I started this company to bring market pressure to bear on Nike, Adidas and the other multinational companies to improve the humans rights and environmental aspects behind their sports balls. And to have fun doing so.” ~Scott James, fairtradesports.com