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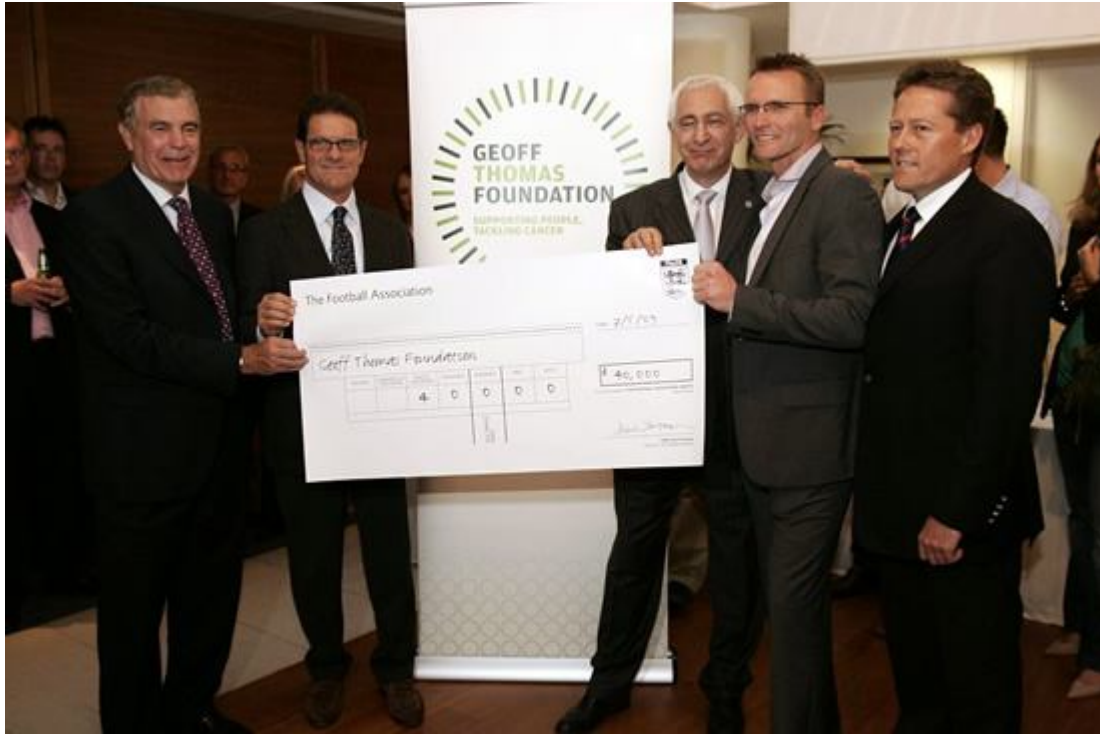
England manager Fabio Capello presented a £40,000 cheque to the Geoff Thomas Foundation at last night's launch of the London-Paris 09 Cycle Tour, held at the Football Association's headquarters in Soho Square, London.



(L to R) England manager, Fabio Capello, Sven Thiele from London-Paris 09 Cycle Tour, Geoff Thomas (Photo: [Adam Tranter](#))

The GTF, founded by former England and Crystal Palace footballer, Geoff Thomas who survived leukaemia, is an official FA charity partner for 2009. The £40,000 cheque for the GTF campaign came from this season's FA Community Shield.

Geoff Thomas said: "We are extremely grateful to The FA for their generous support for our campaign. We are proud to have the backing of the nation's football fans and our national game."



(L to R) Trevor Brooking, Fabio Capello, FA chairman Lord Triesman, Geoff Thomas and Sven Thiele (Photo: [Adam Tranter](#))

FA Chairman Lord Triesman said: "Geoff is an immensely courageous and inspirational person. He is the perfect role model for footballers both young and old.

"Before we arrived at the Foundation event, Fabio Capello and Sir Trevor Brooking were discussing Geoff's qualities as a footballer. I shan't reveal what they said but it speaks volumes that they found time to come and support him and the Foundation team, presenting The FA's cheque. The Foundation has long-term credible scientific goals which are ambitious but achievable and The FA is behind Geoff and his team 100%."

The GTF is also the lead partner for this year's London-Paris Cycle Tour. Sven Thiele, from HotChillee, the global events company which stages L2P said: "Because of Geoff's partnership with The FA we were able to hold our launch at the FA's prestigious HQ. We were honoured to be part of such an inspiring and positive night for sport."

The GTF is trying to fund blood cancer nurses and a treatment network for blood cancer at six hospitals in London, Oxford, Manchester, Birmingham, Nottingham and Cambridge.

Geoff has a team of 19 riders taking part in this year's London-Paris Cycle Tour. Riders, including ex-Palace player, John Salako, policemen, Clive Sparling and Matt Couch joined double Olympic gold medallist, James Cracknell on stage last night to talk about their hopes for this year's

ride. Cyclists Magnus Backstedt and Niklas Gustavsson, from the Cyclesport Team, also attended the event.



Sybil Ruscoe talks to John Salako on the stage

An auction on the night, conducted by Cyclevox's Antony McCrossan for items which included exclusive access to an England training camp and a cycling jersey signed by Tour de France winner, Carlos Sastre, raised £6,500 for the Geoff Thomas Foundation.

The London-Paris 09 Cycle Tour (www.londres-paris.com) runs from June 25 – 28 and is sponsored by adidas, Science in Sport, Subaru, Specialized, Sigma Sport and British Cycling. It is known as the “professional event for amateurs” and is the blue riband of corporate cycle sportives. More than 300 riders will cover 520km over three days and it is the closest the amateur rider can get to the Tour de France experience with rolling road closures and full logistical support.