

The New Football Pools Launch



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Former Liverpool football stars **Alan Hansen**, **John Barnes** and ex-Chelsea player **Tony Cascarino** team up with referee **Graham Poll** to form the new **Pools Pundits**. Together they will be helping **The New Football Pools** gain unique insight into the game, giving predictions and opinion on every big weekly game. For today's launch they are also joined by former Newcastle United and Tottenham star **Les Ferdinand** to offer players regular expert advice and match predictions.

Their comments about controversial and headline-making issues surrounding the game as well as their views on the players to watch, the big transfer deals and the teams they reckon will pick up silverware, will be published on the website weekly (www.footballpools.com)

Announcing the launch today, the **Chief Executive of Sportech PLC, Ian Penrose** also revealed that a **Football Pools Trust** had been set up to channel investment into football-related good causes. The public can apply for grants for good causes which will be considered by the new **Pools Pundits** who will then present cheques to the beneficiaries.

*"At the height of the success of the traditional football pools over one third of the population played every week. Football is now one of the biggest talking points in our day to day to lives and the **New Football Pools** offers everyone a chance to join in, give their views and play the games in a very interactive way and there is no reason why we cannot attract millions of players,"* said **Ian Penrose**.

Alan Hansen said: "The pools was a big part of my family upbringing and has always been at the heart of the football community. It's like transferring the talk in the pubs and clubs to an exciting game online where anyone can bring their knowledge and skill to their predictions and walk away with a nice cheque and even help make a difference in their local community facilities.

The New Football Pools will also offer new games, Premier 10, made up of ten **Barclays Premier League** games of the weekend and Footy 15 which includes fifteen of the top weekend fixtures from across the Premier League, Championship, SPL and Europe. Playing is as simple as ever, selecting HOME, DRAW or AWAY for as little as £1 a time.

Getting started early on the punditry, retired referee **Graham Poll** predicted honours for Chelsea this season. "Scolari is a winner and vastly experienced at the very top level. Given the incredibly talented squad he has inherited he should be successful. It is interesting that some players who were reported to want to leave Chelsea have decided to stay – testament to Scolari's approach. I think Chelsea will win a trophy this season.

Hansen, Barnes, Cascarino and Poll will be regular members of the **Pools Pundits** team offering weekly tips and views and they will be joined by 'guest substitutes' at key moments of the season or before crucial fixtures.

The games can also be played on many of the Paypoint terminals across a network of 17,000 retailers, through a minimum of 1,750 Ladbrokes outlets, online via 888.com, with yet more ways of playing to be announced soon.

As well as the new interactive prediction games, old favourites like Spot the Ball will be available as well as the Classic Pools where 8 score draws are picked from 49 fixtures and new [Private Leagues](#) syndicates can compete in

their own private prediction league, pitting their skills and knowledge against each other.

The original and famous Pools Panel consisting of ex football heroes, England goalkeeper **Gordon Banks**, former striker **Roger Hunt** and ex Scotland star **Tony Green** will continue to meet at the Liverpool headquarters of **The New Football Pools** every Saturday to make their predictions in the event of match postponements.

Gordon Banks, a member of England's World Cup winning team in 1966, commented: *"The pools is part of our football heritage and it's been part of our lives for years. We have a lot of fun meeting every week discussing the possible results and there is often some heated discussion. Like everything else the Pools has to move with the times and the new games on the internet offer even more excitement to the new generation of football fans."*

The launch also sees The New Football Pools steps up its support and development of sport and good causes in the UK through grants awarded by its Football Pools Trust. Over its 85 year history the pools has contributed over £1.1 billion to football, other sports, the arts and good causes.

Sportech plc Chief Executive Ian Penrose added: *"The pools has played a key part in improving sporting facilities during its 85 year history and over 60 million people have been given winning cheques. With the new online games, there is an opportunity to play exciting games and win money by making accurate predictions but also know that you are contributing to good causes –it's a win, win for everyone."*

Among the first clubs to benefit from the pool's funding to make grounds safer for fans were Liverpool and Glasgow Rangers, who were each then able to convert terraced areas of their stadia to seats. Stadia such as Millwall's New Den, Middlesbrough's Riverside Stadium and Huddersfield Town's McAlpine stadium were also supported with Trust Grants.

The Pools has also established strong links with football through a three-year partnership to become one of a select number of official licensees of The Premier League and Football Leagues and official partners of The Scottish Premier League and Scottish Football Leagues. **The Football Pools Investment Fund** has also been set up to channel significant investment into Football related good causes.

Web Site: <http://www.footballpools.com/>

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