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Famous sport's betting scams

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Betting on yourself to lose – the Sheffield Wednesday Three (1965)

It was the Sunday People that actually broke the story of a football betting scam to the Nation in 1965. Ex-England footballers Tony Kay and Peter Swan, together with their Sheffield Wednesday team mate David Layne had been betting on themselves to lose. The story came years after the three had been involved in a game they lost at Ipswich Town.

Tony Kay later admitted to placing a £50 bet that his Wednesday side would lose to Ipswich and they eventually lost 2-0. When the bet was discovered some three years later, he was convicted with his team mates of match fixing, fined £150, banned from football for life and sentenced to four months in jail.

Gay Future – Cartmel on August Bank Holiday Monday (1974)

One of the most famous [horse racing](#) betting scams of all involved trainer Anthony Collins and a horse named Gay Future. Basically, Collins plotted up a [gamble](#) on his charge for a race at Cartmel on Bank Holiday Monday. According to the form book, all of Gay Future's previous form had been moderate to say the least. However, it later transpired that Collins had not run Gay Future in these races and had instead run a far worse horse in his place.

On the day of the Cartmel race, with a string of apparently ordinary form figures by his name, Gay Future was sent off at 10/1. Collins and his syndicate protected the price of the horse by backing it in doubles and trebles with two other stablemates who were later withdrawn. In fact, they never even left the stable. All this meant that all the doubles and trebles turned into one big single bet on one of the day's easiest winners. Gay Future bolted up by 15 lengths and was returned at 10/1. [Bookmakers](#) became suspicious and the syndicate was later convicted of fraud and fined.

In The Money – Hatherleigh Selling Handicap Hurdle at Newton Abbot (1978)

In the Money recorded an effortless 20 length success in a weak seller having been backed by [horse race](#) betting fanatics from massive prices into 8/1. It later turned out that In the Money was actually a far better beast who went by the name of Cobbler's March who had already won five races before. Trainer John Bowles paid the price though as he was banned for 20 years.

Flockton Grey – Leicester 2 year-old maiden (1982)

Flockton Grey landed a massive gamble when winning by 20 lengths at first time of asking at Leicester racecourse on 29th March 1982. As a debutant from an extremely low profile yard he was priced up at 10/1 and his owners placed a huge [bet](#) on him that would return £200,000.

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However, they had no intention of actually running the real Flockton grey in the contest and instead ran a far more physically developed three year old in his place called Good Hand. Unfortunately for Ken Richardson and Stephen Wiles, the two behind the scam, the 'ringer' was simply too good and won by a record winning margin. It was the size of the winning margin that caused a huge amount of suspicion and the police were soon involved as [bookmakers](#) refused to pay out.

The investigators soon found that Good Hand had a scar on his foreleg (unlike Flockton Grey) and the racecourse vet also noted that the winner had teeth too developed for a two-year-old. Both men were caught and charged with conspiracy to defraud. Richardson was warned off by the jockey club for 25 years.

Far Eastern Betting Syndicate – Floodlight Failures (1997)

In one of the most unusual football betting scams, a team of three Malaysians fronted an illegal Betting Syndicate that famously disrupted Premiership matches in 1997 by switching off the floodlights during the game.

They realized that they could make incredible sums of cash, cashing in on the popularity of English football betting in Malaysia, by cutting the power when the score was in their favour. They were eventually caught red handed trying to black out a game between Charlton Athletic and Liverpool early in 1997. Two Malaysians and one of the ring leaders were found at the ground three days before the game with a 'circuit breaker'.

They were attempting to plant the device and control it remotely 72 hours later. They allegedly offered Charlton security Guard Roger Firth £20,000 to let them into the Valley. The same syndicate had been behind attempts to fix two other matches, the first at a West Ham and Crystal Palace game at Upton Park, and the second at Selhurst Park, where Wimbledon were playing Arsenal. In both matches the lights failed when the scores were level.

Hansie Cronje – South Africa v England (January 2000)

At the time, pundits hailed it as one of the greatest acts of sportsmanship when Hansie Cronje worked with England's captain Nasser Hussain to try and get a result from the rain affected Centurion Test match. What later emerged was a cricket [betting](#) scandal that would rock the sport. Instead of letting the match fizzle out into a rain-affected draw, the captains agreed a double forfeiture of innings – unheard of in Test match history.

South Africa had already won the series so the move was simply seen as a crowd pleasing gesture. However, it later turned out that Cronje had done a deal with South African bookmaker Marlon Aronstam to ensure that there was a result of some kind. Aronstam didn't care who won as he backed both sides at massive prices and simply cheered on a result – England eventually won. Cronje was famously given around £5000 and a leather jacket for his role in the scam.