



Welcome from our
CEO **Viv Anderson**



Under lockdown we are continuing to find work for our Ambassadors, via podcasts and interviews conducted online, and keeping Ambassadors engaged by participation in our #Keepintouch campaign. We would like to say a HUGE thank you to the 160 Ambassadors who have contributed videos to show support for the NHS, the lonely and the vulnerable.

We are always at risk of anxiety, panic, loneliness; these things are constants. But now, because of the widespread nature of the problem, it is more important than ever to keep in touch. If you are an Ambassador and know other former professionals who would benefit from being part of the playonpro community please invite them to join.

Best wishes, stay safe and keep in touch.

Viv Anderson



Playonpro Ambassadors Join Together to Give Messages of Support

Over 160 of our Ambassadors have recorded their support, with the message "Keep In Touch". Rugby Union stars both new and old, and a fantastic team of athletes are getting behind the message and sharing the message on social media to help those going through lockdown alone.

Click the images below to watch the videos.



Our playonpro #keepintouch campaign has been reported on TalkSport, The Sun and The Mirror.

MORE FOOTBALL >

'KEEP IN TOUCH' Man Utd legend Bryan Robson leading mental health campaign to fight stress and loneliness while in coronavirus lockdown

EXCLUSIVE

Ken Lawrence

1 Apr 2020, 12:06 | Updated: 1 Apr 2020, 12:53



Coronavirus: Some sport returns

Armchair sports fans will soon have something to cheer as live action returns to screens for the first time in nearly two months.

Horse racing will be first out of the stalls with a behind-closed-doors meeting at Longchamp, Paris. The sport is making a return thanks to a quirk of the system that categorises it as an agricultural activity. All other French sport remains banned until September.

British racing is also pushing strongly to be allowed to restart behind closed doors, arguing that it can do so and still maintain social distancing rules. British Horseracing is planning to resume with an eight-race-all weather card at Newcastle on 1 June followed by the 2000 Guineas and 1000 Guineas at Newmarket on 6 and 7 June, if they are allowed to resume the sport behind closed doors.



The European Tour also announced a series of virtual tournaments on Monday that will kick off on May 9th to aid coronavirus relief efforts.

Players including Lee Westwood, Martin Kaymer, Joost Luiten and Mike Lorenzo take part from their own homes in tournaments played virtually on some of Europe’s most iconic courses.

The golf calendar has been severely impacted by the outbreak, with three of the sport’s four majors re-scheduled and the British Open cancelled.

The British government have given the Premier League the OK to return to action from 1 June.

Football across the UK has been halted for the last two months as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. However, Premier League clubs remain committed to finishing the 2019/20 season whenever it is safe to do so.

The German Bundesliga is set to be the first major European league to get going, with games scheduled for this weekend.

The Premier League will be watching closely to see if the Bundesliga’s plans are a success.

Senior figures believe that games in the top four divisions, including the Premier League, will be held without crowds until Christmas as Britain tries to control the coronavirus pandemic.

Lord's, the Home of Cricket, is facing the first blank summer of its 233-year history and is braced for income to drop by around £30 million because of the coronavirus pandemic.



playonpro Keep In Touch Campaign

We have run our keep in touch campaign for two months now and been have so thankful to our Ambassadors for supporting us. We asked Marvin Sordell, recently appointed to the FA on the Inclusion Advisory Board, and Eddie Johnson from Sporting Chance for their thoughts on the mental health impact during lockdown.

Marvin Sordell replied, "Over the past couple of months, we have all been forced to adapt to this completely new way of living. It is one that many of us, myself included, have found difficult to adapt to. This of course, is completely okay. The impact that covid-19 has and will have on society goes much further than the virus itself, so it is vitally important that we prioritise looking after our emotional wellbeing at this time. Where human interaction has been drastically limited, we have to do our best to stay in touch with our friends and family, as well as doing what we can to stay happy and positive. Although it’s hard to see at the moment, we will come out of this, and things will get better."



Marvin Sordell

Sporting Chance, established by Tony Adams over 20 years ago, offers services to support current and former professional sportspeople with any emotional or mental health problem. Eddie Johnson said, "The lockdown has had a profound adverse effect on many of our clients, as the enforced loneliness and social isolation exacerbated many underlying existing issues. It is so important to reach out to anyone who may be suffering during this time. Please look at the playonpro app for our contact details, and get in touch if you need any help or advice from us."



Story from an Ambassador: Harry's Heroes, The Boys are Back on Tour

Harry's Heroes The Boys are Back on Tour: Euro Having A Laugh is on ITV on 18th May. Two of our Ambassadors, Trevor Steven and Michael Gray, were sent out to join other Ambassadors including Lee Hendrie, Paul Walsh, John Barnes and Paul Merson. Under the watchful eye of Harry Rednapp the team reunites and travels to France, Italy and Germany to improve on past performances.

Providing opportunities for our Ambassadors to lace up their boots, and reignite the camaraderie is at the core of playonpro and we were delighted to give our Ambassadors this opportunity to take part in the show.

Michael Gray told us "When playonpro approached me to ask if I would like to be a part of the new Harry's Heroes series I jumped at the chance.. hitting your screens May 18th.. it was great to meet up with everyone and play a small part in watching and seeing how far the lads had come in battling their addictions/depression .. if these stars can reach out to someone then you can too.."





Story from an Ambassador: Jari Litmanen

Jari called Viv Anderson to tell him he'd had covid-19 pretty badly.

"I had corona for 4-5 weeks, and was very tired throughout that period. I felt all the time like i used to feel in the evening after 2 practices- tired with muscle pain and bad headaches. My breathing was sometimes difficult. Luckily I now feel normal, but it is strange virus and we need to respect it."

All at playonpro wish Jari a full and speedy recovery.



Jari with Marcel Desailly and Viv at the Hong Kong Soccer 7s tournament in 2019.

Invite Ambassadors

As part of the keep in touch campaign Ambassadors please continue to invite your fellow ex-professionals. Especially anyone you think would particularly benefit from more support at this time.

playonpro

INVITATION SHOULD GO TO PROFESSIONAL SPORTS PLAYER

First Name

Last Name

Email

Phone Number

Message to playonPRO admin

INVITE

RIP - Michael Robinson, Trevor Cherry and Norman Hunter

Robinson, who announced in December 2018 that he had been diagnosed with a malignant melanoma, started his career at Preston and also played for Manchester City and QPR.

Brighton, Liverpool and City tweeted that they were “deeply saddened” to learn of Robinson’s death and said their thoughts were with his loved ones. “For Albion fans of a certain vintage, we remember Michael at the Goldstone, playing with enthusiasm, tenacity and endeavour, yet always with a big smile on his face” said the Brighton chairman, Tony Bloom.

His former Liverpool teammate, Mark Lawrenson, said: “I used to call him ‘the wall’. He was very good at holding the ball up and causing defenders all sorts of problems – they couldn’t have a moment’s peace against him. Then he turned himself into the Des Lynam of Spanish football. It’s a sad day.”



Trevor Cherry with Norman Hunter

Former Leeds United and England defender Trevor Cherry died ‘suddenly and unexpectedly, aged 72. The Club say they are ‘shocked and deeply saddened’ by the passing of the 27-cap England international that comes fewer than two weeks since the death of his teammate Norman Hunter. All at playonpro send their condolences to all their friends and family.

Podcasts

We have had several requests for podcasts and online interviews from current and new partners. Any ambassadors wanting to do podcasts please contact fiona@playonpro.net

Thank you especially to our App partners - Geoffrey Miller Solicitors, Classic Football Shirts, Black and Gold Vehicle Leasing, Julian Harris, Sporting Chance, Snack Media who are continuing to support us and provide opportunities for our Ambassadors.

Our partners



*Please contact Fiona Armstrong Hall
should any further information be required.*

Email:*Fiona@playonpro.net*
Tel: *+44 (0)161 302 8200*
www.playonpro.net

Media House, Richmond Road, Bowdon, Cheshire, WA14 2TT

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