



Ladbrokes

LIGHTS, KAMARA, ACTION!

DIRECTOR'S TREATMENT BY THEO DELANEY



These ads can deliver in every way.

They will be straightforwardly,
unpretentiously, funny.

They will be very distinctively branded in a
way that is entirely in keeping with the overall
tone.

They will have a distinctive soundtrack that
will further serve to give them a very clear
identity.

Best of all, everything comes from the world
of sport, or, more specifically, televised sport.
In the case of these two executions it is
football. The music, the graphics, the style,
the casting and the action is all steeped in the
football culture that is so familiar to, and
loved by, our audience.

As long as we ensure that all these elements
are delivered with authenticity we'll engender
real credibility with our audience and have a
campaign that it will find easy to love, talk
about and share.

In execution we need to ensure that every
decision we make is faithful to this spirit.

The work already done on graphics is
impressive. Bold and distinctive and perfect
for creating the right context for our central
sections.





CHRIS KAMARA

I have had the pleasure of working with Chris Kamara before and he really is great value. As his TV persona suggests, he is bursting with energy, enthusiasm and an eagerness to do whatever is best for the project. So he takes direction very well.

He is of course well aware that part of his considerable success is based on his tendency to make mistakes live on air and he's quite happy with that because he's a pragmatist - 'whatever works!'

These scripts are based on his famously haywire reporting style which is funny because it's real. So to a certain extent, we need to make his performance something other than a performance. We want, as far as is possible, to get things from him that are spontaneous.

I like the idea of filming Chris in a studio but we need to try a few things to get the best of out of him.

When Chris is match-reporting for real, he is usually sitting on a gantry with headphones and the match going on behind him out of the view of the cameras. He can't see the guys back in the studio and of course there are sometimes technical mishaps, like communication cut outs, that enrich the comic possibilities.

I think we should shoot him against a green screen and add the background afterwards. That gives us maximum flexibility and is very straightforward for the Framestore because the camera is static.

I also think we need to ensure that he can't see us. He needs to be every bit as isolated as when he does it for real.





UNBELIEVABLE!

I think he should have a monitor that we can play the footage to him on. Hopefully he won't have seen the scripts so that when he describes the action for the first time, he does so completely cold.

On Soccer Saturday, he often looks away from camera to see what's going on real time. We should place the monitor somewhere that forces him to do the same for us. Not actually behind him or we'll not see his face most of the time, but certainly away from our camera so that he has two very distinct eye lines, one to us and one to the action.

We can get him to describe that action several times and add little notes.

And we can even show him other seemingly random and irrelevant stuff - perhaps even bizarre or inappropriate stuff - that may elicit interesting reactions.

So any tricks we can play that render him authentically nonplussed, helpless, and generally all at sea, should be in the mix.

We may find that we get brilliant uninterrupted 22 second sequences that do not require any editing. But, more likely, maximum humour will be extracted by us jump cutting through Chris's best bits. We can do this with subtle soft cuts i.e. dissolves over a few frames. I think the audience will forgive us this artifice as long as it's funny.

TONE

Ours is a heady potion. We are taking Sky Soccer Saturday's cup of tea and dropping some magic mushrooms in it. Not many, just one or two, but enough to make the sporting action and Chris a couple of levels more oddly hilarious than usual.

The opening title will set the tone and the closing titles will ensure it's maintained to the end. It's knowing, bombastic, slightly anarchic, very funny and impossible to ignore.

And while Chris's performance is its most essential ingredient, every little detail of execution regarding sound, graphics, music, editing and so on will enhance the unique feel.



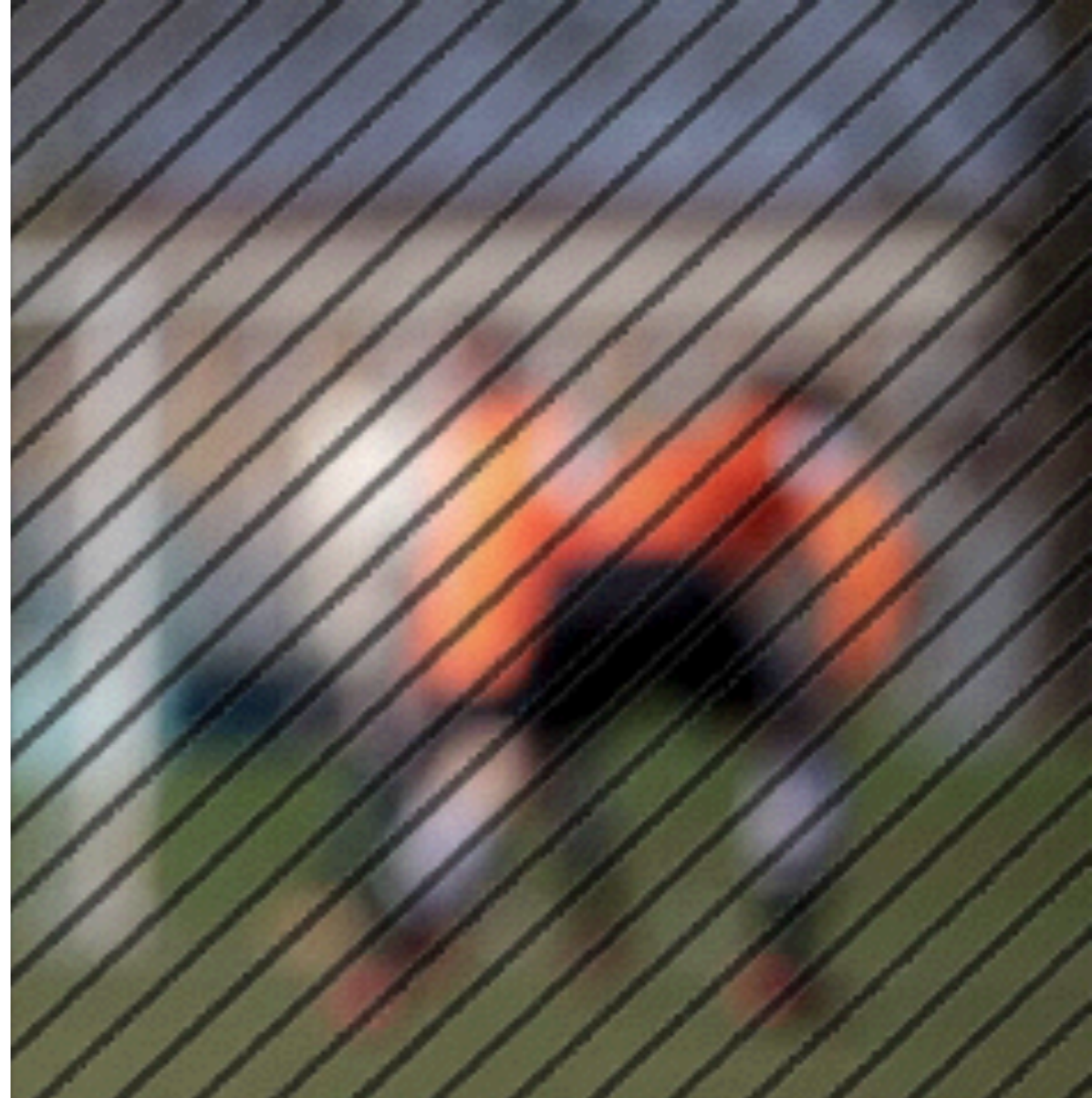
THE RECONSTRUCTIONS

The most important thing about the reconstructions is that they must seem like 100% real found footage. In other words, that this action really took place in a real match setting and was filmed by a spectator or a semi professional in the stands.

There are a variety of things we can do to the footage in post to easily take away the sheen of the contemporary commercial and replace it with a convincing archive quality.

But more important than that is the setting and the nature of the action itself. We should be able to find a good lower league ground that offers us the same kind of grass roots feel that is evident in the existing clips.

After that its about making the action feel very fluid and natural. Each of the archive clips is just one shot with no edits. We should make ours one shot deals too - this will further enhance their credibility.



CELEBRATION

This hilariously elaborate celebration is, of course, anything but spontaneous. Some lunatic - perhaps an angling centre half - has come up with it and has persuaded his teammates to choreograph and rehearse it in training.

So that's what we need to do. We should cast actors who look like footballers (veterans since they'll need be clearly over 25). And we'll spend how ever long we need the day before the shoot practising and honing the action.

We'll use the youtube footage as our template but we don't need to replicate it slavishly. The existing clip runs for just 15 seconds so we'll have the luxury of seven additional seconds to play with.

We can make our action a bit slower and we could have a bit more of a beginning and end. And we might consider additional characters - perhaps non plussed opponents or an officious referee who vainly tries to get them to stop being so silly and get on with the game. If we have these ingredients available on the rehearsal day we can try a few things and see what we like best.

On the shoot day we'll set the whole thing up as rehearsed and find a camera angle similar to the original; wide enough to see everything with some scope for camera movement with a hand held feel.



PENALTY

The same principles apply, and again we'll rehearse with the penalty taker, ref and goalie the day before based on what happens in the original clip. But in 'Penalty', digital post production needs to play an important role.

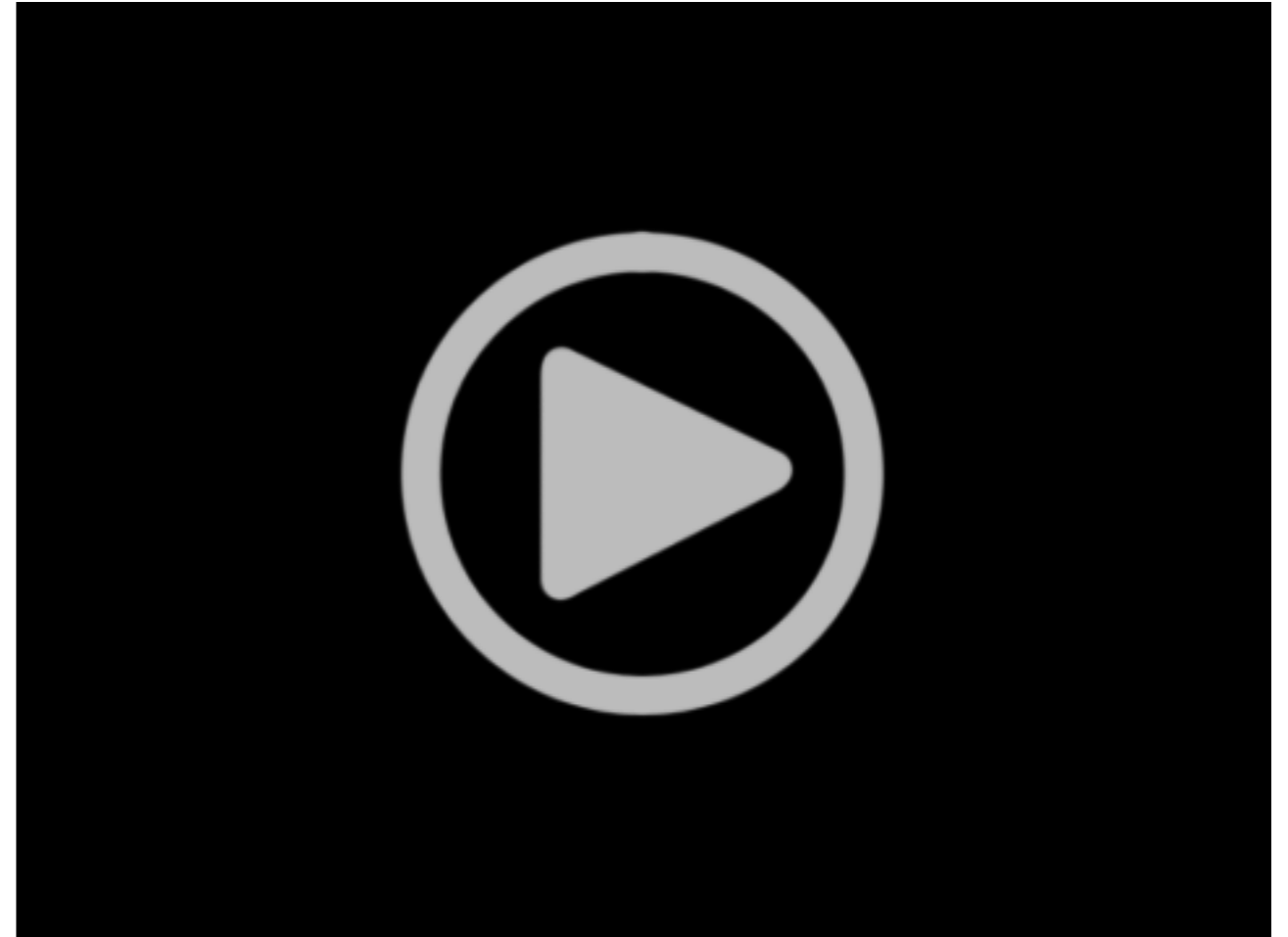
Working with our specialist sports choreographer Andy Ansah, we will cast for a highly skilled footballer who will be able to hit the bar from the penalty spot with great reliability. (Andy is confident this will not be a problem).

We will lock the camera off and set about filming the penalty and then, each time it does hit the bar we'll play the action through to the end,

Once we've got two or three really good takes we'll bring in a tower rig from which we will drop a spinning ball from just outside the top of frame. We'll doubtless have to do this many times to get the ball to do close to what we need it to do but we'll operate a kind of conveyor belt system and keep going. I have spoken with the Framestore and they are very happy with the plan and are confident that we can manipulate the ball afterwards to perfect its trajectory.

Although we'll need to shoot the whole thing with a locked off camera we'll be able to add some nice wobble and perhaps the odd minor zoom afterwards to add to its very spontaneous and unslick feel.

The original clip is in slow motion but I think it'll seem even more authentic if we play ours through at normal speed. This will also enable us to get all the essential action in within the available 22 seconds. And again, on the rehearsal day we can try a few things to further enhance the humour.



MUSIC AND SOUND

Music over the opening and end graphics will play a big part in creating the distinctive identity of the campaign. We need something that is bold humorous and sporty - the kind of track that adorned sports programmes in the 70s and 80s like [World Of Sport](#), [Ski Sunday](#), [The Big Match](#) and [Superstars](#). (These latter two are certainly available as library tracks).

For the middle section I think we should create a natural effects track based on the kind of ambient sounds that usually accompany Chris when he's reporting. If we think that's too sparse we could create a percussive, stripped back musical bed that links the opening and concluding music. This is the sort of decision that is best left to post when we'll see - and hear - which option works best.



SO...

These films have many elements. We need to pull them all together to create a voice that speaks to our audience's deep love of televised sport. By ensuring that we speak with cast iron authenticity - as fans to fans - we will create a really populist, stand-out campaign.

