



HOOLIGANS FACE DECADE OF SHAME

Thugs and bigots beware - Football Banning Orders are available to Scotland's police and courts from September 1.

The new orders could ban abusive trouble-makers from games and associated flashpoints across the UK and abroad, for up to ten years. This disposal will be available for anyone convicted of a football-related offence.


Chief Constables will also be able to apply to the courts to ban an individual from matches involving the national team and SPL or SFL clubs for up to three years, even if they have not been convicted of an offence.

Justice Minister Cathy Jamieson launched the banning orders at Scotland's national football stadium, she said:

"More and more individuals and organisations are calling full time on sectarianism, racism and violence in Scotland. The abusive behaviour of a minority that has been allowed to tarnish the reputation of our national game, and of our nation, is being consigned to history. Football Banning Orders will help the police and the courts to deal out real and effective sanctions and make sure the majority can enjoy their football.

"I am passionate about football, and those who sour the reputation of their clubs are a disgrace to us all. The police asked us for additional powers and we've provided them. Football banning orders are a significant tool to allow the authorities to help genuine fans to give bigots the boot. They represent a severe penalty for those who peddle hatred or engage in unruly and violent behaviour.

"Violence, chants, taunts and songs of hatred are inexcusable and must be tackled. We need to respect our rivals and unite against the common enemies that would stain our game – bigotry, racism and sectarianism. The time has come to reclaim our sports grounds and show these hooligans a straight red. A straight red that could last a decade. Ignorance can be no excuse as today we and the police have launched the 'Straight Red' campaign, to let the hooligans and bigots know that the whistle has blown and abusive behaviour will lead them straight to a ban.



“We have pledged to rid Scotland of bigotry and abuse. We won’t sort it in a season, but we’ve already seen real progress. There are long-term actions now being taken forward in our sports grounds, in our schools, in our workplaces and on our streets – football banning orders are one of the key steps we are taking towards relegating bigoted, antisocial, sectarian and racist behaviour to rot among the relics.”

Assistant Chief Constable Kevin Smith, who leads on football issues for the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS), said:

“The police in Scotland are firmly behind the introduction of Football Banning Orders.

“I believe that it will be an important ‘tool in the tool kit’ for dealing with football hooligans, whether that is those who see themselves as part of an organised hooligan element, affiliated to a particular club or the individual who believes that he is a genuine fan but who behaves in a violent, disorderly, racist or sectarian manner.

“Fortunately, in Scotland, we do not see the level of organised football disorder and violence experienced elsewhere. That is a credit to the vast majority of football supporters in Scotland, the clubs that they support and our football authorities.


“However, we cannot be complacent and Football Banning Orders will give us an extra option in dealing with organised football hooliganism.”

David Taylor, Chief Executive of the Scottish FA added:

“Better facilities and an improved match day experience at football matches in Scotland have contributed to much reduced levels of spectator misbehaviour in recent years.

“However, we must remain vigilant and take all possible steps to root out known troublemakers who use football as an excuse for their antisocial conduct.

“To reinforce the excellent work that is already being done by our clubs, the introduction of Football Banning Orders to bar known troublemakers from stadiums is very welcome.



“The Scottish FA supports this important step and trusts that these new powers will be used, where appropriate, to deal not only with any violent behaviour but also with any instances of sectarian or racist behaviour, which has no place in our football grounds in Scotland.”