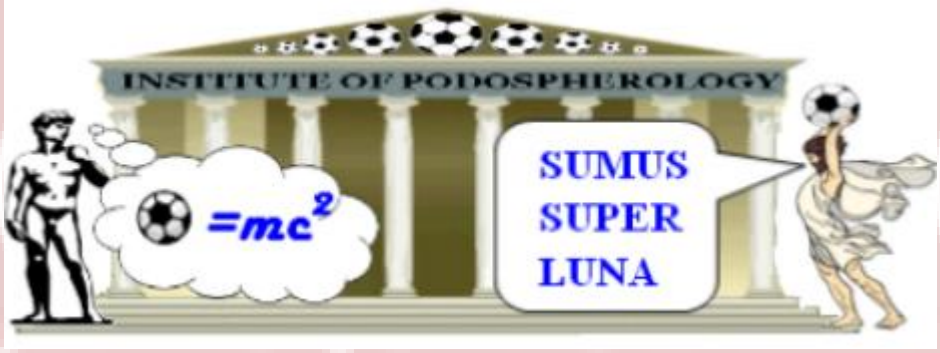

football and technology white papers

Cephalopodospherologics

An innovative and radical research project into the abilities of cephalopods to predict the results of football matches

by

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Cephalopodospherologics

Premise

The FIFA World Cup in South Africa was marked by a number of firsts – the first World Cup Finals to take place on the continent of Africa, the first outside Europe to produce two European finalists and the first victory by Spain. However, there was also one more significant first - the first ever sporting competition to have its results consistently predicted by a cephalopod, in this case Paul the Octopus.

Paul was kept at an aquarium in Germany and before each game involving Germany, as well as the final, he was invited to choose food, in this case a mussel, from one of two plastic chambers, each one bearing the flag of one of the teams. Not only did Paul choose the mussel from the box with the winning team's flag in all of Germany's matches, he also chose Spain to win the final.

Paul was subsequently retired and sadly died at the end of October 2010. However, his heroic feats of prediction have spurred the researchers at the Institute of Podospherology to put aside research being currently undertaken and to set up a new research programme termed Cephalopodospherologics, designed to investigate the predictive powers of all cephalopods in a controlled environment to determine once and for all whether cephalopods can efficiently predict the results of football matches better than television pundits and newspaper tipsters, and which species of cephalopod is the most efficient and productive both statistically and financially.

Proposal

The Institute proposes that research be undertaken into the predictive skills of representatives of the four main branches of cephalopods – squids, octopuses, nautiluses and cuttlefish. This research will take place in a controlled environment at a secret research facility belonging to the Institute. The research project will last a total of ten weeks, starting on Sunday 31 October 2010. The interim results of the project will be posted on a weekly basis on the Institute's website. The final report will include a statistical and financial analysis of the results with recommendations of which species is

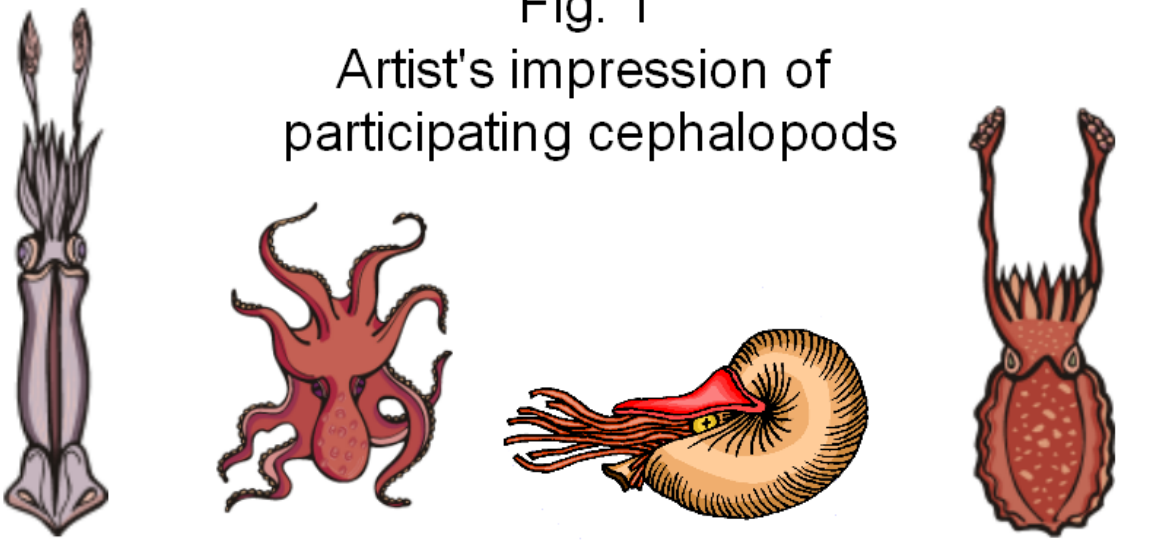
best at predicting results and with a detailed proposal to set up a cephalopodospherological results prediction service to bring further revenue in the Institute. The whole process will be overseen by an independent third party to ensure no unwarranted and undue partiality, bias or influence on the cephalopods on the part of the researchers.

The cephalopods taking part in this research have been humanely sourced from a reputable aquarium and will be cared for by specialist staff for the duration of the research. After the research project, the successful cephalopod will be retained by the Institute for use in the prediction service, while the others will be returned to the aquarium to continue their lives as before.

Methodology

The cephalopods in the project have not been identified directly in order to protect their identities and the validity and reliability of the research to be conducted. However, we do have an artist's impression of them *(see Fig 1)*.

Fig. 1
Artist's impression of participating cephalopods

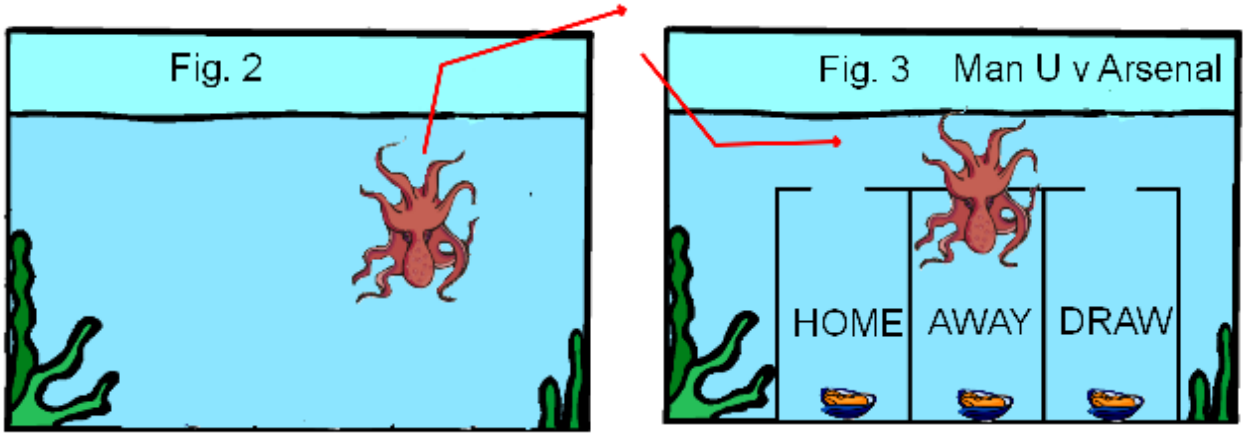


Sid the Squid | Olly the Octopus | Nobby the Nautilus | Katie the Cuttlefish

Each cephalopod will occupy its own tank. There will also be four separate tanks, each containing three chambers. Each week, a particular Premier League game will be randomly allocated to each cephalopod. The word

HOME will be placed on one chamber, AWAY on another, and DRAW on the third. In order to ensure no bias to any particular chamber, the words will be allocated differently each week and the team names and crests will not be used to ensure that the cephalopod in each case will not be influenced by any preference for shape or appearance, or any other previous allegiance.

A typical food sample, depending on what each cephalopod normally eats, will be placed in each chamber. The sample in each chamber will remain the same every week in order to avoid bias for taste and ensure that selection is made purely on the cephalopod's predictive abilities. When the second tank is ready, each cephalopod will be taken from its tank *(see Fig 2)* and transferred to the relevant tank with identical food each chamber *(see Fig 3)*, where it will be closely observed making its choice.



Once the choice has been made and recorded, the cephalopod will be transferred back to its "home" tank and left to consume its meal. After the relevant games have been played, the results will be noted and a statistical and financial record will be kept of each cephalopod's performance. The financial record will be based on a weekly one-pound stake wagered according to the price list of a major bookmaker, and a profit and loss account will be kept.

Development

We anticipate that the published results from the project will form the basis of a new type of football prediction system, with cephalopodospherologics at its foundation. The new system will be licensed to tipping services and professional punters to take advantage of the cephalopod's predictive skills.

Furthermore, we will use our data to advice any club willing to take on a cephalopod for the purposes of predicting team performance, ascertaining team structure, and planning tactics. We anticipate that this will lead to important new developments in the organisation and structure of football in this country and around the world.

In the wider field of biology, the results will be shared with biologists and oceanologists around the world for further enhancement of understanding of the little understood intelligence capabilities of the cephalopod community.

Conclusion

The Institute is committed to the development of cephalopodospherologics in the belief it will contribute to the benefit of football in general. We anticipate that the results of this project will be of great benefit to the wider football community.

Recommendation

We would like any interested parties to work with us to further develop this idea by setting up and administering a cephalopodospherological research facility. After ten weeks of testing, it will be licensed to the interested parties for prediction purposes and any proceedings will be kept by the interested parties after the deduction of the licensing fee to the Institute of Podospherology.

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