



Pickles the Dog Detective

It all began at the start of 1966 and England was preparing to host the World Cup for the very first time. There was lots of excitement about the tournament, but nervousness too. People would be visiting from all over the world, so it was important that the country put on a really good show, both on and off the football pitch.

On Sunday 20 March, the Jules Rimet World Cup trophy was on display at a grand exhibition in London. It was all part of England's plan to build up interest in the upcoming tournament. Lots of people went along to catch a glimpse of the golden cup, glistening in its display case. There were supposed to be security guards watching the trophy at all times, just to make sure that it

was safe. However, that day, the guards decided to take a little lunch break. When they returned to the room, they found that the lock was broken, the emergency exit door was open, and the display case was empty! With less than four months left until the start of the World Cup, the trophy was missing!

The police got to work straight away. But after a week of searching for clues and speaking to suspects, they still didn't know where the World Cup was. It was so humiliating for the government and, to make it worse, FIFA were furious. How had England managed to make such a mess of their beloved tournament already? Other football nations, meanwhile, were outraged. 'I'm damned angry,' said Mr Erik von Frenckell, former president of the Finnish Football Association. How could England be trusted to organise a World Cup when they couldn't even look after the trophy?





If someone didn't find it soon, there was a danger that it might be too late. The trophy might have been melted down already and sold to make lots of money, and what then? Maybe they would have to cancel the whole World Cup!

All around the country, people were looking for the trophy. In the end, however, it was a dog who came to the rescue – a four-year-old black-and-white collie called **Pickles**.

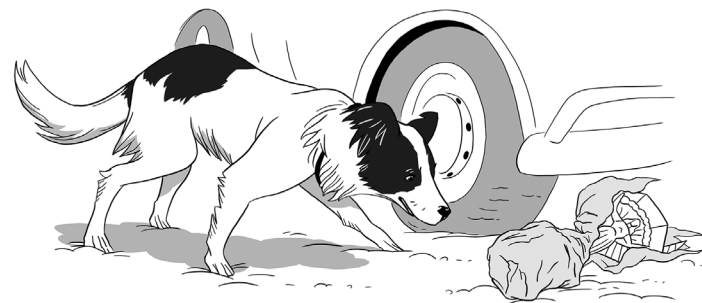
Pickles was out walking one night with his owner, David Corbett, in south London, when he noticed a strange parcel wrapped in newspaper and string, lying by the wheel of a neighbour's car.

'Come on, Pickles!' his owner called out from a distance. 'Let's go!'

But the dog detective didn't budge. He knew that he had found something significant. Pickles kept sniffing



and pawing the parcel until eventually, Corbett came over to see what was going on. As he stooped down to clip the lead around his dog's collar, he spotted the parcel that Pickles had sniffed out.



It looked very suspicious indeed. Should he touch it? What if it was a bomb? Corbett ummed and ahed but eventually he picked the parcel up. It felt very heavy in his hand, so he decided to see what was inside. As he tore off the first bit of newspaper, he could see a metal plaque, with four words written on it: 'Brazil', 'West Germany' and 'Uruguay'.





With his curiosity growing, Corbett ripped off another bit at the other end of the package. What he found was a golden figure of a winged woman holding up a cup. In an instant, he recognised it. The pictures had been all over the newspapers and the TV too. Pickles the Dog Detective had discovered the World Cup trophy!

With his heart pounding with excitement, Corbett went straight to the local police station to show them the parcel.

'I think I've found the World Cup,' he said, placing it down on the desk.

Don't worry, he didn't take full credit for it, though. 'Pickles saw it first!' he explained. At first, the officers didn't believe that it was the famous trophy, but it did turn out to be the real thing.

Phew – what a massive relief! The World Cup trophy was found. A dog had saved England from a major



embarrassment. Soon, Pickles was a national celebrity – everyone wanted to meet the hero who had saved the World Cup. For the next few months, he lived like a king, with champagne, caviar and big juicy bones in his dog bowl every day. Pickles was given a silver medal by the Dogs Trust, a free year's supply of dog food, and the 'Dog of the Year' award too. He travelled the country, opening Coventry Zoo, appearing on *Blue Peter*, and even starring in a movie. Corbett, meanwhile, was given a reward so big that he was able to buy a new house for himself and his dog detective.

No one was ever jailed for stealing the trophy, but never mind; the story had a much happier ending. At the 1966 World Cup, England made it all the way to the final, where they beat West Germany 4–2. For the first time ever, they were the Champions of the World!

Afterwards, their captain Bobby Moore climbed the





steps at Wembley to collect the Jules Rimet Trophy from Queen Elizabeth II. But if it wasn't for Pickles, there would have been no trophy, and maybe even no World Cup at all.

So to say a big thank you for all his help, Pickles was invited to be a guest of honour at the team's celebration banquet. It was the best night of his life. He had hugs and photos with all of England's heroes, including Moore, Bobby Charlton and manager Alf Ramsey. Then to top it all off, he was allowed to lick Corbett's plate clean!

Sadly, Pickles died a year later in 1967, but football fans around the world will always remember him as the dog that saved the World Cup.



Lots of football teams have big furry mascots cheering them on, from an alligator called 'Fritzele' (VfB Stuttgart) to a zebra called 'Jay' (Juventus). None of those, however, can compete with German club 1. FC Köln. Their mascot is a real, live animal – **Hennes the Goat**.

Yes, you've got that right. A goat.

The Köln (Cologne) football team formed in 1948 and, to celebrate their second birthday, a local circus owner gave them the best gift ever: a goat! He was only meant to bring them a bit of good luck, but the team coach, Hennes Weisweiler, loved the goat so much that he made him the official club mascot and the animal was named after him.

