



MEET THE  
INVENTOR  
OF  
FOOTBALL  
STICKERS

If you enjoy Match Attax and Panini you'll love the tale of John Baines, who was nicknamed the Football Card King

## 1. CROWNING THE KING

If you think football stickers and cards are a modern invention, think again! Kids have been going mad for them for more than 130 years. Football cards were invented in Bradford in 1887 by a man called John Baines. Back then Queen Victoria was on the throne, there was no league football and big clubs such as Liverpool and Chelsea had not even been formed.

Baines was the owner of a "Dolls' Hospital", which was a big toy shop where broken dolls were repaired. He noticed that **baseball cards** were popular in America, and he thought football cards could be very popular in Britain. He began to call himself "The Football Card King", and sold his cards from a colourful cart pulled by a horse with a monkey on its back. (Yes, a real monkey!)





## 2. MEDAL HUNTING

The Baines football cards were cut into the shape of a shield and featured **colourful drawings** of teams, kits and popular players. Baines used drawings because photography was too difficult and expensive back then. The cards were sold in **packets of six**, and cost an old halfpenny (worth around 15p in today's money).

Kids queued outside **sweet shops** waiting for fresh deliveries of new cards. Shop windows advertised details of exciting competitions and giveaways. Weekly prizes – including football shirts, leather footballs and music boxes – were awarded to anyone who could find **limited edition** “medal” cards.



## 3. A RARE FIND

Instead of swapping them or sticking them in albums, kids traded their cards by playing a popular game called “**Skaging**” or “**Who's Nearest?**” Players took turns flicking their cards against a wall, and whoever got nearest to the wall won the whole pile.

As well as covering professional clubs, Baines produced cards for hundreds of amateur and local clubs, and even **school teams**. He also produced rugby and cricket cards, and eventually covered pretty much every sport, from horse racing and tennis to golf and bowls. Back then millions of Baines cards were printed each year, but today they are **very rare**. Collectors pay £25 for a single card, so if you ever find one don't flick it against a wall!