



MEDIA RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ALK CAPITAL ENTERS UK FOOTBALL INDUSTRY WITH STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS IN AIScout AND PLAYER LENS

- Leading US management firm ALK Capital makes first entry into UK sports industry
- Investments come as AiScout and Player LENS support leading clubs with scouting and recruitment during the summer transfer window

LONDON, UK: ALK Capital – the leading US management firm specialising in investments, acquisitions and operations in the sports and media sectors - today announces two strategic investments in London-based football technology businesses AiScout and Player LENS.

The deals mark ALK Capital's first entry into the UK sports industry and build on the company's belief that talent identification and player development can be aided and enhanced by state-of-the-art technology and predictive analytics.

ALK Capital's new investments come as talent identification tool AiScout and transfer market platform Player LENS support leading professional clubs with their scouting, recruitment and transfer dealings during the summer transfer window, which has been heavily disrupted by COVID-19.

The investments provide both businesses with resources and support from ALK Capital's experienced leadership team, headed by former Real Salt Lake CEO and Citi executive Alan Pace. ALK Capital aims to support the growth of both businesses in the multi-billion-dollar global football industry and expand technology adoption across the professional game.

Alan Pace, Managing Partner of ALK Capital said:

“At a time when technology has never played a more important role in global football, we are delighted to complete our investments in AiScout and Player LENS. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated professional football's need to embrace new technology and digital solutions, particularly in areas like scouting and recruitment, which have previously relied on human manpower and traditional forms of communication and negotiation. These are two of the most exciting start-up businesses in the football industry, and I am looking forward to working closely with both founders to grow their technology's presence throughout the global game.”

Darren Peries. Founder & CEO of AiScout, said:

“The investment from ALK Capital helps to continue the development of AiScout, following a recent successful test of the app with 50 youth footballers. Of those, six were offered trials at Premier League clubs and one has since signed for AFC Bournemouth and gone on to represent the Republic of Ireland at Under 19 level, demonstrating the strength of AiScout's technology. We are looking forward to working with ALK Capital to take development of AiScout to the next level, particularly at a time when traditional interaction with junior football is impossible.”

Lee Hemmings, Founder & Managing Director of Player LENS, said:

“The current transfer window has already proved to be the most digitally connected in history, with COVID-19 accelerating football's adoption of new technologies like Player LENS to aid recruitment and the trading of players. With over 600 clubs now using our platform, the backing of ALK Capital provides not just financial support, but also the expertise of people who understand the football industry and have a shared goal for its future direction. We're delighted to be working with them.”

Media Contacts:

For further information or interview requests, please contact:

Paul Garbett, +44 7467 446231, paul.garbett@csm.com
Harry Benyon, +44 7384 455475, harry.benyon@csm.com

About ALK Capital:

ALK Capital LLC is the leading US management firm specialising in investments, acquisitions and operations in sports and media. Registered in the State of Delaware, the company benefits from a seasoned team of sports, finance and investment professionals with decades of experience in maximising the performance, operations and investment of multiple Fortune 100 companies.

The group is headed by Managing Partner Alan Pace, an accomplished leader in sports and financial services turnarounds with over 20 years of Wall Street experience and 10+ years of delivering results through sports management and consulting. Most recently, Alan was a Managing Director and Global Head of Sales for Securities Services at Citi, responsible for overseeing all facets of client experience for a multibillion-dollar division.

Alan is a former partner at SCP Worldwide LLC – owner of sports, entertainment and media properties – and a previous CEO of Major League Soccer franchise Real Salt Lake, where he oversaw the turnaround of a consistently last-place team to winning the 2009 MLS championship. He is an advisor to team owners and leagues.

About AiScout:

AiScout is a fully automated talent identification platform for professional football clubs, associations and federations to scout amateur players worldwide.

Requiring just a mobile phone, AiScout's artificial intelligence app allows scouts to find, analyse, score, rate, benchmark and identify players' technical, athletic, cognitive and psychometric ability.

Based in London, AiScout is supported by a team of leading, highly respected experts across the sport, data and technology sectors. The platform was founded by entrepreneur Darren Peries following his experience of dealing with football scouts' interest in his son, and was developed with assistance from Chelsea FC, Loughborough University London and IBM.

AiScout is one just four companies in the world nominated for the "Most innovative use of A.i 2020" at the DataIQ awards. At the World Football Summit, AiScout was also named one of 16 leading start-ups that are transforming the football & sports tech industries.

About Player LENS:

Player LENS was founded in 2015 and is an electronic platform allowing over 600 clubs worldwide to source and execute player transfers. It is currently used by 10 of the 20 Premier League clubs.

The platform - open to football clubs, professional players and FIFA registered intermediaries - allows clubs to have free access to performance data, advanced analytics and player videos to identify the perfect player for their requirements and budgets.

Founded by former Goldman Sachs executive Lee Hemmings, the team behind Player LENS includes Real Madrid's former Head of Football Operations Jose Ramón Capdevila. Its users include leading football agent Pere Guardiola.