# Metropolitan Police officers dressed as Batman and Robin tackle illegal gambling



Two officers from the Metropolitan Police have attracted significant attention after appearing in superhero costumes to address illegal gambling activity on Westminster Bridge. Inspector Darren Watson and Police Constable Abdi Osman dressed as Batman and Robin, respectively, in an effort to outsmart known offenders operating in the area.

The incident occurred on February 15, when the officers executed their plan to catch repeat offenders involved in what is colloquially referred to as the 'three cups challenge' or 'shell game'. These activities are known to target unsuspecting tourists, often resulting in financial losses for those who engage with the illegal gambling operations. Inspector Watson noted, "We know that two repeat offenders have been operating on Westminster Bridge and have come to recognise me and my team from our patrols."

To address this challenge, Watson said he had to "think outside the box". He recalled having Batman and Robin costumes available and concluded that this playful disguise could provide the necessary surprise element to apprehend the suspects. His decision proved to be effective, as the two officers successfully made arrests on the bridge.

The suspects, identified as Eugen Stoci and Constica-Gherorghe Barbu, were apprehended for facilitating gambling activities. Barbu faced trial at Croydon Magistrates' Court, where he was fined approximately £925 (Rs 1.03 lakh) following his conviction. Stoci, on the other hand, was convicted in his absence at Westminster Magistrates' Court, leading to a warrant being issued for his arrest.

The unusual approach taken by Watson and Osman stands in a line of similar creative policing actions seen globally. For instance, police officers in Brazil's São Paulo recently gained attention for arresting a suspected thief while dressed as Power Rangers during a carnival. Governor Tarcisio Gomes de Freitas commented on the officers' performance, stating, "The Power Rangers of our Civil Police are putting on another show this carnival! Always vigilant, our heroes noticed the suspicious behavior of a duo within the crowd."

In a similarly whimsical incident, a police officer in Lima, Peru, wore a capybara costume during a drug raid, resulting in the confiscation of 1,700 packages of cocaine and marijuana.

These varied operations present an interesting facet of modern policing, where creativity and a playful approach are employed alongside traditional methods to address and mitigate crime in various contexts. The Metropolitan Police’s initiative, featuring Batman and Robin, reflects a growing trend in law enforcement to engage with the public in unconventional ways while fulfilling their responsibilities to maintain public safety.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://news.met.police.uk/news/batman-and-robin-arrest-two-men-on-westminster-bridge-496277> - This article supports the claim that Metropolitan Police officers dressed as Batman and Robin to catch illegal gamblers on Westminster Bridge, specifically targeting scammers involved in the 'three cups challenge'. It details the arrests and convictions of Eugen Stocia and Constica-Gherorghe Barbu.
* <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/met-police-westminster-batman-robin-b2732060.html> - This news piece corroborates the information about the creative policing tactic used by the Metropolitan Police officers to arrest scam artists on Westminster Bridge. It highlights the unusual method used to counter scammers who had become accustomed to the officers' presence.
* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGPEWBcOIiA> - This video shows the Metropolitan Police’s efforts to combat street scammers using unorthodox methods, highlighting the success of officers disguised as Batman and Robin in apprehending suspects on Westminster Bridge.
* <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/02/24/americas/brazil-police-power-rangers-trnd/index.html> - This article provides an example of creative policing similar to the Batman and Robin incident. It covers a story about police officers in Brazil dressing as Power Rangers to catch a suspect during a carnival.
* <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-51759611> - This BBC News article mentions a variety of unconventional policing methods used around the world, including those similar to the capybara costume incident in Peru.