

# GLOBAL SPORTS SALARIES SURVEY 2019

AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, TEAM-BY-TEAM,  
IN THE WORLD'S MOST POPULAR SPORTS LEAGUES

350 TEAMS  
18 LEAGUES  
12 COUNTRIES  
8 SPORTS  
10,070 PLAYERS  
\$22.6 BILLION IN WAGES

1 AIM

THE  
**POPULARITY**  
ISSUE

sportingintelligence

*“It is not a coincidence that Barcelona, Real Madrid and Juventus, the world’s top three wage payers, are also among the top five most popular teams in any sport, anywhere.”*



## MESSI'S BARCELONA REMAIN NO1 IN WORLD PAY

Barcelona have retained their status as the best paid team in global sport. The average basic first-team pay at the Spanish giants - where genius Lionel Messi has starred for 15 years and counting - is £9,827,644 per year for the current season, 2019-20, according to research for this 10th edition of Sportingintelligence's Global Sports Salaries Survey (GSSS).

That number represents a slight drop on last year's table-topping figure of £10.5m but keeps Barça in first place in professional team sport, worldwide, ahead of their biggest domestic rivals. Real Madrid have an average just above £8.9m in second place this year (the same ranking as last year) with Serie A giants Juventus averaging almost £8.1m in third place, up from ninth last year.

Basketball teams from North America's NBA fill out the rest of the places in this year's top 10.

The wage figures represent basic annual pay and do not include signing-on fees, loyalty bonuses, performance add-ons or any of the other remarkable extras that can be part of contracts nowadays.

Last year was the first time Barça had been back at the top of the world in pay terms since the GSSS of 2012, when their table-topping figure was half the current number. There is a detailed explanation of our definitions and

methodology later. To celebrate the 10th edition of this report, this 2019 GSSS is a 'Popularity Issue' special, with features and data dives to explore which teams and leagues can objectively be considered the most popular in the world.

Analysis in these pages will consider metrics as diverse as attendance, the financial value of non-domestic broadcast rights sales, and cumulative social media followings across the major platforms.

It is not entirely a coincidence that Barcelona, Real Madrid and Juventus, the world's top three wage payers (by average salary) are also among the top five most popular teams in any sport, anywhere, measured by their popularity across Facebook, Instagram and Twitter combined.

With Juventus taking third spot this year, there is no podium place for any NBA team. As recently as 2017, the top three teams in the GSSS were all NBA teams: Oklahoma City Thunder, Cleveland Cavaliers and Golden State Warriors.

Last year's No3 team, Oklahoma, are down to No6 this year, with average basic pay of almost £7.55m. Above them at No4 and No5 are NBA rivals Portland Trail Blazers (just over £8m) and the Warriors (just over £7.9m). Last year there were three NBA teams breaking the average pay ceiling of \$10m (US dollars) per man per

year. This year only Portland top that sum using the exchange rate applicable for this GSSS, with £1 being worth \$1.25. We use a mid-year rate for all currencies, detailed later.

All of the top dozen teams in this year's list are either from the the 'Big 5' European football leagues (Barcelona, Real Madrid and Juventus at No1, No2 and No3, and PSG at No12) or from the NBA. As recently as our 2017 report, Juventus were ranked No32, leaping to No10 last year not only because they signed Messi's nemesis and fellow superstar Cristiano Ronaldo, but also because of signing other costly players. They have doubled down on this strategy this season, as we will detail later in this introduction.

Of the top 20 teams in this year's list, 15 are from the NBA and five from elite European football: Barcelona, Real Madrid, Juventus, PSG and Manchester City (No13).

Of the teams ranked 21 to 30, nine are from the NBA, with just one more from elite European football, Bayern Munich of the Bundesliga at No22. For the first time in a decade of this study, there is no Major League Baseball team in the top 30 places. The inaugural survey had a baseball team, the New York Yankees, at No1, and they stayed inside the top 10 until 2016, before plunging.

## BARCELONA'S CONSISTENT SPENDING

An extraordinary combination of renewed contracts and new signings lifted Barcelona's average basic pay above £10m in last year's report from £6.6m the previous season.

Foremost among those contracts was the biggest pay deal in Barcelona's history awarded to Messi, widely regarded as the best footballer of all time. His gross basic (pre-tax) annual Barça pay tops £50m per year, including guaranteed image rights fees. There are other 'one-off' or variable elements including signing-on fee, loyalty payments, appearance money and performance bonuses which don't come under our 'basic pay' definition (for any player in any sport) and aren't included in our calculations.

When Barcelona formally announced Messi's contract extension, on 25 November 2017, they confirmed the new deal would run to the end of the 2020-21 season and that the contract included a buyout clause of €700m (then £619m).<sup>1</sup>

It was just one among a string of renewal deals for important players between GSSS 2017 being compiled and GSSS 2018; Gerard Pique, Sergi Roberto, Samuel Umtiti and Sergio Busquets all renewed in that period while signings included Philippe Coutinho, Arthur, Malcolm and Arturo Vidal.

The bottom line, according to our survey research, was an average basic Barça annual salary in excess of £10m a year for each of

the 23 members of the first-team squad; those 23 players formally declared by Barcelona on their website as first-team players at our cut-off point.

Now, a year later, Barcelona's official financial statements have shown the first-team player wage bill for football in 2018-19 (inclusive of bonuses and benefits) was £312m. This indicates bonuses and benefits of around 35 per cent per player on top of their basic pay last season.

Barcelona's total wage bill in 2018-19, as a sports club generating almost €1bn in revenues, was €532m (£475m), although that included salaries to fund a significant youth football set-up as well as basketball, handball, ice hockey and futsal teams, plus management and staffing of 'other activities' on and off the pitch / court / ice.

The reason for Barcelona's slight dip in average first-team pay is simply that the group of outgoing players collectively earned more than those counted for GSSS purposes this year. Philippe Coutinho isn't counted as a Barcelona player this year because he's on loan at Bayern Munich, which is where his salary resides for this report. Denis Suárez has gone to Celta Vigo, Thomas Vermaelen to Vissel Kobe, Munir to Sevilla, and so on. And while Barca's two most significant 'gets' of 2019 are not cheap in pay terms (Antoine Griezmann and Frenkie de Jong), other additions have been of young and relatively low paid players including Junior Firpo, 23, Moussa Wagué, 20, (promoted in 2019 from Barcelona's B team), and Jean-Clair Todibo, 19, who joined in January.

## RISERS AND FALLERS

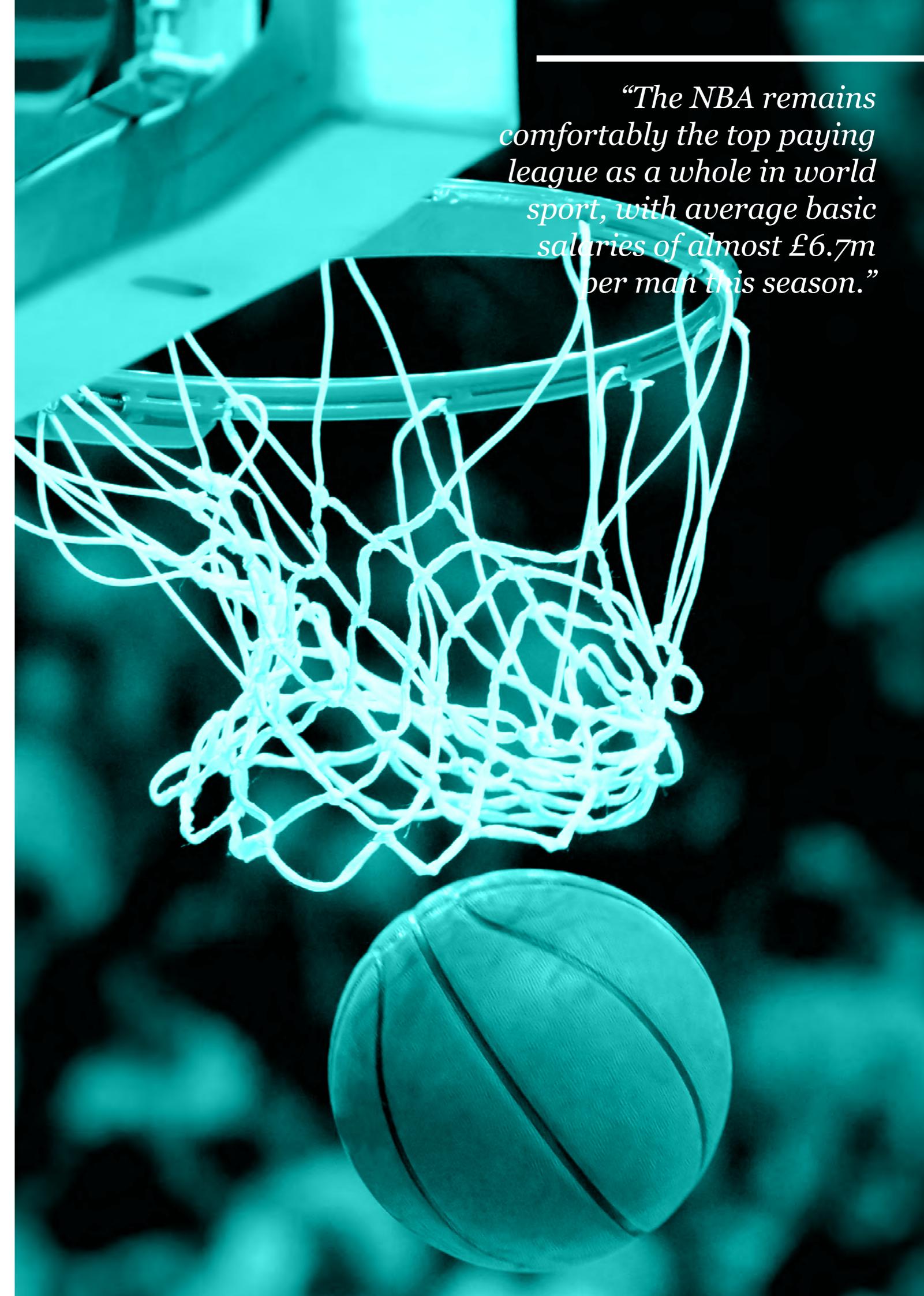
While Barcelona and Real Madrid haven't moved from the No1 and No2 spots they occupied last year, other teams in this GSSS have been rising and falling dramatically. The biggest climbers anywhere on this year's list in absolute terms are the Buffalo Bills of the NFL, up 60 places from No152 to No92, followed by the Atlanta Braves of MLB (up 59 places from No123 to No64) and then Rafa Benitez's Dalian Yifang of China's CSL, up 57 places from No235 to No178.

Four of the five biggest fallers this year are MLB teams, with the Toronto Blue Jays down 123 places to No172, the Baltimore Orioles down 99 places to No157, the Kansas City Royals down 84 places to No161, and the Arizona Diamondbacks down 68 places to No140. It has been speculated that more MLB teams than ever are trying to implement a "reboot" system whereby they are as poor as possible in a particular given season in order to benefit from the best draft picks the next season. To those who have no idea how MLB drafts work: the worst teams in any given season get the first choice of signing the best upcoming talent the next season.

## NBA STRETCH LEAD AS RICHEST LEAGUE

The NBA remains comfortably the top paying league as a whole in world sport, with average basic salaries of almost £6.7m per man this season. The details on how many teams and players are considered for each league are in the league-by-league analysis pages, as are the average salaries and median numbers.

*"The NBA remains comfortably the top paying league as a whole in world sport, with average basic salaries of almost £6.7m per man this season."*



The Premier League remains the highest paying football league in the world, at nearly £3.2m per player this season, up from £2.99m a year ago. The average weekly pay in the Premier League rose above £50,000 per week for the first time in 2017-18 and is now above £60,000 per week for the first time, or £61,024 per week to be precise.

In most leagues, money matters when it comes to performance; the more you pay, the better you do, all other things being equal. That is particularly true in elite football leagues but also true in the NBA and in MLB. The reason is fairly straightforward - better players cost more, and if you're spending more it's generally because you have better players.

The 18 leagues and 350 teams we consider in the main list start with the 'big four' from American sports, which are the NFL (gridiron, American football), the NBA (basketball), MLB (baseball) and NHL (ice hockey), continue with the 'big five' football leagues of Europe, which are the English Premier League (EPL), the Bundesliga of Germany, La Liga of Spain, Serie A of Italy and Ligue 1 of France, and include the AFL (Aussie Rules) from Australia, CFL football (gridiron) from Canada, NPB baseball from Japan and IPL cricket from India.

Our final five leagues are the Scottish Premiership from Scotland, MLS from North America, China's CSL and Japan's J-League - all as examples of smaller-scale leagues from the world's most popular sport, football - and the WNBA.

For the NBA, the NHL and the NFL, the numbers in this report pertain to the 2019-20 seasons. For the Premier League, Bundesliga, La Liga, Serie A, Ligue 1 and Scottish Premiership, the salaries are for the squads after the close of the 2019 summer transfer window for the 2019-20 seasons. For MLB, MLS, IPL, NPB, CSL, J-League and the WNBA the numbers are for 2019, and for the AFL and CFL they come from the end of the 2018 seasons.

### THE POPULARITY ISSUE

Recent editions of this report have each been thematic specials. The GSSS 2017 focussed on gender inequality in global team sport. We took an in-depth look at the state of play, financially, that keeps men's and women's sport miles apart, and gauged pay levels across a dozen of the best remunerated women's leagues in six sports across eight countries. You can find that here: <https://globalsportssalaries.com/GSSS%202017.pdf>

The GSSS 2018 theme, in a football World Cup year, was world football, examining in depth topics as diverse as how accurately the World Cup could be predicted using the salary levels of those involved; looking at average pay in the top divisions of 68 countries around the world; and looking at which clubs in elite European football were outperforming their spending, and which were doing the opposite.

You can find the GSSS 2018 here: <https://globalsportssalaries.com/GSSS%202018.pdf>

This edition of the GSSS, the 'Popularity Issue', has been prompted by several factors,

including a possible landmark season in the history of English football. As Ian Herbert explains in a piece on pages 16-19, Premier League crowds in 2019-20 are on course to be the highest average gates in top-flight English football, ever. In an age of football saturation, weariness at cynical owners, asset-squeezing, rampant agents' greed and widely perceived sky-high ticket prices, record all-time crowds would be remarkable.

On pages 20-25, we consider how one might make an objective assessment of which sports league in the world is really the most popular. And in the 72-page league-by-league analysis sections, on pages 42-113, we look at how each team fares in global popularity across the major social media networks.

Our hypothesis is that success leads to popularity, which is generally true. Popularity can lead to greater wealth. But in some leagues there is an enormous disparity between popularity (and therefore wealth) from the 'biggest' to the 'smallest' teams. And this can lead to a disparity in performance, and success. We wondered whether one glance at a graphic depicting relative social media popularity is all you need see whether a league is 'balanced' and 'fair', or not. Remarkably in many leagues, it is.

### CURRENCY NOTES

The GSSS takes currency conversion rates for each edition at mid-year for all currencies.

This year the major rates used are £1 = US\$1.25 and £1 = €1.12, with

£1 = ¥137 (Japanese yen) and £1 = AUS\$1.786 (Australian dollars) while CAN\$1 (Canadian dollars) = US\$0.76.

If a salary has been paid in US dollars, that figure is reported in dollars, and also converted to pounds. If a salary is paid in euros or any other currency, we have converted to pounds, and then to US dollars, and report it in pounds and dollars.

We mention this simply because, in previous years, figures have been taken from the report and converted into other currencies at the publication day's rate, then been picked up and converted again. Amounts can change quickly and significantly from their original state. Such is the effect of currency fluctuations. With that headache-inducing but essential digression out of the way, we can move on.

### GSSS 2018 - ORIGINS IN POPULARITY

We reiterate this each year to provide context and explain how this report has evolved: Sportingintelligence's global sports salaries survey was conceived in 2009 with several aims, one of them to produce a substantial piece of original research to help promote the full launch of [www.sportingintelligence.com](http://www.sportingintelligence.com) in early 2010.

The idea was to compare, on a like-for-like basis as closely as possible, how much 'average' sportsmen earned at hundreds of different clubs and teams around the world in hugely contrasting professional sports. This would

also allow us to examine the relationship between money and success in each sport.

To reflect global and not just western patterns, we needed to look beyond one or two 'hotspots' in European football and major North American sport. So the starting point for the first survey was considering the most popular domestic professional sports leagues - measured by average ticket-buying attendance per game - and included not only the NFL, the Premier League and other 'major' leagues but also Indian Premier League cricket and Japanese baseball.

Subsequent reports have expanded to add Australian Rules football and Canadian CFL gridiron, then Chinese Super League football, Japanese J-League football and Ligue 1 from France. The WNBA became the first women's league to join the main list in the survey in 2017 when we finally obtained the accurate team-by-team pay data required, from the WNBA players' union. As and when reliable numbers can be sourced for new or growing leagues, we'll be happy to include them, and welcome any assistance in obtaining such data.

For now, the 18 leagues in the GSSS comprise most of the biggest professional domestic sports leagues in the world (measured by average attendance per game), plus a handful of other leagues significant for their own reasons. The attendances for the 18 leagues in GSSS 2019 are as follows, each for the most recently completed seasons.

LEAGUE	Avg Attendance (Reg. Season)	Total Attendance (Reg.Season)
NFL	67,100	17,177,581
Bundesliga	43,449	13,295,405
EPL	38,168	14,503,954
AFL	35,122	6,954,187
NPB	30,929	26,536,962
MLB	28,176	68,494,752
La Liga	26,811	10,188,198
IPL	25,714*	1,440,000*
Serie A	25,237	9,590,166
CSL	23,985	5,756,354
CFL	22,917	1,856,263
Ligue 1	22,799	8,663,784
MLS	21,310	8,694,584
J-League	20,511	6,091,876
NBA	17,857	21,964,447
NHL	17,377	22,002,081
SPL	16,016	3,171,149
WNBA	6,535	1,333,093

\*Best guesstimate from local information; the IPL has been consistently poor in measuring and publishing accurate crowd levels.

Of the current 15 best-attended leagues in the world (by average gate) the GSSS 2019 includes 13 of them, the exceptions being the Big Bash (Australia, cricket) and Liga MX (Mexico, football), where full and accurate team-by-team wage data remains elusive. The Big Bash (average crowd 20,554) would be 14th in the table above, or one place above the J-League, while Liga MX (average 22,787) would be 13th, attracting a bigger average than Major League Soccer and a smaller average than Ligue 1 in France.

## GSSS - OUR METRIC EXPLAINED

The key metric in the GSSS has always been 'average first-team pay'. It sounds simple but to stay true to our like-for-like target requires a range of decisions about what to include. What does 'first team' constitute at a football (soccer) club? In the NBA? In Japanese baseball?

Typically, a first-team squad in football will be 25 players although it may be as few as 20 and it may be more than 30. It depends on the team. Similar numbers of players per 'first-team squad' are used for the two baseball leagues included - MLB and NPB.

In the ice hockey league, the NHL, we include the players per team on the opening day rosters of the 2019-20 season and in NBA basketball, we include the 14 or 15 players on each roster on the opening day of the 2019-20 season. In Canadian and Australian football (CFL and Aussie Rules AFL) the wages of around 40 players are counted per team and in the NFL it is those of 53 players per team.

By 'average', we mean 'arithmetic mean'. All the salaries are added up (and by salaries, we include basic guaranteed pay for playing sport for that team, not for bonuses or endorsements or sponsorship or anything else extra-curricular) and divided by the number of players. That's it. A simple list that provokes complicated arguments but does, at the very least, provide a 'ball park' reckoner of what different sports teams pay.

We believe average pay is important - as opposed to total wage outlay - because two teams spending the same totals on salaries will have starkly different averages if they are paying a significantly different number of players.

It happens, and it matters. You can employ a higher number of lower quality players for the same price as a smaller number of higher quality players, and we think it's worth exploring which is most effective for performance.

Arguably one of the most counter-intuitive findings in our reports has been the relatively low levels of average salaries in America's NFL - by far and away the richest sport in the world in terms of annual domestic TV contract earnings, often the bedrock of a league's income.

NFL players are earning \$3.26m (US dollars) a year each on average in 2019, or more than \$5m less per man than NBA basketball players this season. The NFL 'median' salary, where you consider the middle person in a list of all players ranked from best-paid to worst-paid, only crept above a million dollars per year in recent times and is now \$1.22m.

The best paid NFL team in this year's survey, the Atlanta Falcons, do not appear on the overall list until No65, with the average player there earning £3.76m.

## GSSS - OUR METRIC CRITIQUE

It has been argued by some sports fans, usually in North America, that pay-per-man is irrelevant because it is total outlay

that matters. In response: the majority of teams in the top 20 biggest total payroll size are from elite European football leagues or MLB, not from the NFL.

Whenever we publish a new edition of the report, complaints range from 'average pay is irrelevant' to 'You should publish the total / median / mode / range (delete as applicable) for each club / league / sport (ditto) by match / month / minute (and not year, delete as applicable) while taking into account the attendance / TV deal / TV audience / commercial revenue'. And on and on.

We have a lot of the numbers cited above but there are limits to what a relatively brief (100-page) report can carry. Anyone wanting to explore our data sets in depth can contact us about possibilities.

The salient point remains that we developed a metric that, as simply as possible, tries to illustrate, in the most like-for-like manner possible, what a typical sportsman earns in markedly different sports, and at teams within those sports.

If you want to know what sports teams pay overall in wages ... then in many sports you will never be able to find out. Especially in the USA, many teams have no requirement to publish it. Ever. And don't. And where there is a legal requirement to publish accounts, as is the case for most British football clubs (albeit long after a season is finished), there is no requirement to break down what part of a wage bill went to players, let alone to the core group of players who appear in the first team.

**"NFL players are earning \$3.26m (US dollars) a year each on average in 2019, or more than \$5m less per man than NBA basketball players"**





If you want to know the numbers for club wage bills at Europe's major teams for 2019-20 - via official channels but not broken down into players and others - then you can, around Spring 2021.

Our rationale is to try to capture what's happening at player level specifically, and now.

#### METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

The first six editions of this report, published annually from 2010 to 2015 inclusive, were released in Spring, usually April, and included salaries either for the 'active' or most recently completed season for each league at the time of publication.

For the European football leagues up to the 2015 report, completed seasons were used. From 2016 onwards, publication switched

from Spring to Autumn, with as much 'live' data for the ongoing seasons as possible - in as many leagues as possible.

Established access to better data gave us the confidence to use 'live' data for all the European football leagues from the GSSS 2016 onwards.

As the title of the report says, our numbers are compiled by surveys of either A) official player-by-player figures in the public domain, from unions or otherwise; or B) from multiple knowledgeable sources, more of which in a moment.

As ever, all the numbers can only ever be a snapshot of a situation at a point in time, whether the opening day of a season or the day after a transfer window has closed.

All figures (across all leagues) are sourced directly or indirectly from one or more of unions, player associations, players themselves, agents, leagues, clubs and/or club sources, and other reliable administrative bodies.

To be more specific, league by league: the NBA numbers are in the public domain, so too the IPL figures (via auctions) and the MLB numbers. For the Premier League, and all the other European football leagues (in Spain, Germany, Italy, France, Scotland) we source a specific number for each and every individual player, either from players themselves, their agents or other representatives, or club sources.

It is a painstaking exercise and the findings can only be, by a survey's definition, as accurate as the information provided. There are

'backstops' however, including public domain sources, not all widely known, that give a good indication of general financial situations. And there are sources not in the public domain. One example: Sportingintelligence has undertaken consultancy and advisory work over a number of years for both quantum claims (for loss of earnings in football, mostly because of injury), and clubs, and both have involved access to player contract data, which is corroborative. All data on individuals for the GSSS reports is gathered on a confidential basis - hence why we don't publish individual player salary information.

The NHL numbers come direct from the players' union, the NFL figures are in the public domain, as are, in Japan, the figures for both Japanese leagues (NPB and J-League).

The CSL is intriguing. We obtained official internal numbers a few years ago when we first included the Chinese Super League, and have tracked the significant changes since on a player by player basis. But the league-wide situation is at best opaque. The analysis section for the CSL explains the revelatory nature of Evergrande's annual reports, and the possibility that pay in China might be even bigger than we think.

On the subject of opaque finances, tranches of material that have entered the public domain via the Football Leaks organisation since 2015 have given some insight into the frankly astonishing contracts

of some of the world's leading footballers, many of them playing in the leagues we cover. These have been useful at times for corroboration, clearing up whether information provided has in fact been accurate or not. But more usefully, this material has made us consider further what should and shouldn't be included in 'basic pay.' The upshot is any sum a player will certainly earn - without caveats - in each year of their contract, for domestic club activity, is counted. And anything that is dependent on certain events (performance bonuses, loyalty bonuses, signing-on fees split annually over time and so on) or arises from external endorsements or activity away from their club, isn't.

The MLS numbers are from the players' union, made public to the last cent twice a year, and the union should be applauded for that. The one caveat with MLS salary figures is they do not include 'any compensation from any contracts with individual teams or their affiliates.' So a player may have his MLS salary (paid centrally and declared by the union) and a separate contract with his team we know nothing about.

The AFL numbers come from various sources in Australia and take more time to pull together, hence the 'accounting lag'; and the same is true of Canada's CFL (except sources in Canada). The WNBA figures were the official numbers in 2017, and we thank the union again for that, and have been updated by us for 2018 and 2019.

#### 'SHOWING THE WORKING' - SERIE A CASE STUDIES

The average Serie A salary, according to our metric, has grown by 17.5 per cent in a year, and this is likely to have been strongly influenced by new tax laws that will come into force in Italy in 2020. Certain categories of "inbound" (new) residents to the country who agree to transfer their tax residency status to Italy, will be given a complete tax break on a specified part of their income, under certain circumstances. "General workers" and entrepreneurs will pay personal income tax on only 30 per cent of their wages, for example, while professors and researchers will pay tax on only 10 per cent of earnings. For professional sportsmen, including footballers, the tax break will be on 50 per cent of their earnings, as long as they commit to staying and paying Italian taxes for a minimum of two years.

The new tax system won't come into force until next year, and until it has been up and running for several years, it won't be clear who is actually paying less tax. So all the Serie A salaries used for the purposes of this year's report have been calculated as gross (pre-tax) salaries under the current tax structure, not the new one.

We can still assume, however, that the incoming system will have had an effect on the hiring strategies at some clubs who have signed players in summer 2019, new to Italy and on lucrative contracts, such as Romelu Lukaku at Internazionale and Aaron Ramsey at Juventus. Player contracts in Italy are usually negotiated net of tax and then

the clubs pay the players' tax at source. Serie A clubs will have signed some of these new players with a reasonable expectation that they will be able to save tax in the future. But until it's happened, they cannot be sure.

All of the above is contextual background before explaining in detail why Juventus's average first-team basic salary from last year has leapt from £6,726,615 then to £8,805,317 now, and how Internazionale's average has actually fallen from £3,706,739 to £3,260,031, despite big signings. And by 'showing the working', it is hoped readers can better understand how all the calculations for all teams in this survey are made.

First, Juventus. Last year their first-team squad comprised 24 players - as defined by the club themselves on our 'snapshot date' after the summer 2018 transfer window closed. And those 24 players then had combined basic pay of £161,438,750. Divided by 24 players, that gave an average first-team figure of £6,726,615. The dozen best paid players alone in that squad, from Cristiano Ronaldo to Wojciech Szczęsny, collectively had basic annual pay of £125,375,000.

One year on, and all of those dozen players remain in the first-team squad, and on top of that, the current squad (now 27-men strong) contains four additional players with huge salaries: Matthijs de Ligt (from Ajax), Gonzalo Higuaín (back from a loan spell at Chelsea), Aaron Ramsey (picked up on a "free" after his Arsenal contract expired) and Adrien Rabiot (free after he left PSG).

Other players moved in (and out) but the upshot is a 27-man current squad where we calculate basic collective annual pay of £218,303,571 at an average of £8,085,317.

Internazionale took a different approach to squad re-structuring. Last year's first-team squad for GSSS purposes was a 23-man group (on 'snapshot date') earning collective basic pay of £85,255,000 at an average of £3,706,739. This year's squad is a 27-man group earning collective basic pay of £88,020,833, at an average of £3,260,031.

Of particular note is that Inter's five highest paid players in last year's group all earned at least £5m gross annually, and they were Mauro Icardi, Radja Nainggolan, Ivan Perišić, Stefan de Vrij and Miranda. Four of those five big earners are no longer in this year's squad: Icardi is on loan at PSG, Nainggolan is on loan at Cagliari, Perišić is on loan at Bayern Munich and Miranda has signed for Jiangsu Suning in the Chinese Super League. Not only that, but this year's squad contains more younger (and relatively low paid) players than last year, not least in Sebastiano Esposito, Lorenzo Pirolo and Lucien Agoumé (all 17), Alessandro Bastoni (20) and Federico Dimarco (22).

So when asked how Internazionale's basic salary has gone down while signing superstar names Lukaku and Alexis Sanchez (who isn't costing Inter all of his Man Utd salary), the answer is they have shipped out four of last season's five biggest earners and simultaneously injected cheap young blood in a slightly enlarged first-team group.

#### GSSS FOR THE FUTURE - AN APPEAL

Just as we would welcome data for the leagues mentioned earlier (Mexico's Liga MX and Australia's Big Bash), we remain interested in adding any other leagues of significance to a wide audience, either because of international reach or something that league can tell us about competitive balance and money. Suggestions are welcome. Rugby (both codes) and the Olympic team sports of water polo and volleyball would be interesting, if you are a senior administrator in one of those sports and want to get in touch.

We thank everyone who assisted with helping us to find the most reliable data possible. The uniqueness of this study lies in looking beyond total payrolls or club wage bills to what the players make per head.

Details and links to information about previous years' GSSS reports can be found via [www.globalsportssalaries.com](http://www.globalsportssalaries.com).

Thank you for reading.

**Nick Harris**  
Editor  
Sporting Intelligence  
December 2019

*"Inter's five highest paid players in last year's squad all earned at least £5m gross annually. Four of them are not in this year's squad."*



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# AS SOCIETY FRACTURES, THE CATHEDRALS OF SPORT BECOME THE COMMUNITIES TO WHICH ALL CAN BELONG.

By Ian Herbert



between 1948 and 1954. An iconic pre-war image of Chelsea fans, perched precariously on the huge advertising fences for Bovril and Dewars' whisky at Stamford Bridge reminds you that the game had been England's beating heart for a while. The 82,905 who packed in to see the team play Arsenal that day remains among the all-time highest attendances at an English club game.

But it was 70 years ago, in the 1948-49 season, in the days of Jackie Milburn doing his stuff under the great Stan Seymour, in a campaign when Newcastle had the biggest crowds of all, that England's top division hit an all-time peak average attendance per match of 38,776. A peak until now, that is.

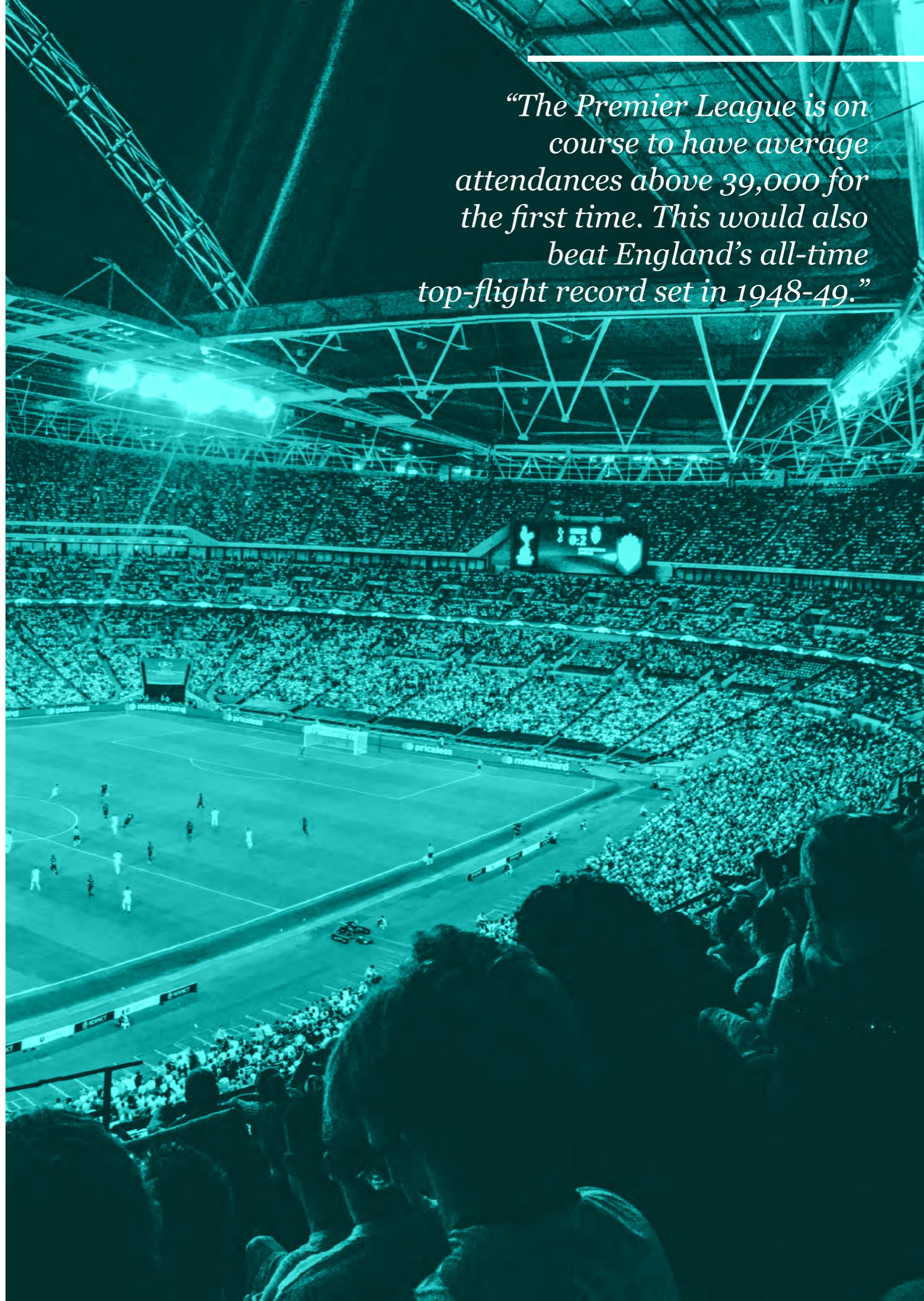
Taking into account the first 160 games of the current Premier League season, with more than two-fifths of the season gone, the division is on course to surpass every season before it, bar none. By the time each team had played eight games at home (by 9 December 2019) this season's numbers were tracking to attain an average well over 39,000 per game, and quite possibly closer to 39,500.

It's a different world now in so many ways and in part the

popularity of the Premier League is a reflection of the shiny, digital product it has become. Consider some of the images of pre-Premier League supporter experiences captured by the peerless documentary photographer Stuart Roy Clarke in his book 'The Homes of Football.' A Brighton supporter being led towards the wrecked fencing of a dilapidated terrace in 1991 after a play-off against Millwall descended into violence. Cardiff fans trying to break out of their terrace to fight Luton Town supporters. You see why modernisation has served supporters well. The 2019 grounds, all-seaters now, are a place where men, women and children all belong.

The appeal is a consequence of the Premier League transforming the product, of course, with previously unimaginable camera angles and unprecedented quality of analysis and, it has to be said, never-ending hype. All unimaginable in the 1980s when, as the respected British commentator Clive Tyldesley related recently, Liverpool chief executive Peter Robinson was so concerned about broadcasters appropriating his club that only the second half of the team's games could be 'called.' The monumental TV rights deals - the

*"The Premier League is on course to have average attendances above 39,000 for the first time. This would also beat England's all-time top-flight record set in 1948-49."*



economic core of the new world - have given the broadcasters the control and, in turn, given the football clubs the money to bring the best players into the new global league.

Once upon a time - say 1949 - the newspapers did not even report on all the big games played. Even the papers of the 1980s provided coverage which was relatively sparse, with the thoughts of the managers a marginal component. Now the manager's thoughts are a sub-genre, known the world over within in an instant and often the prime focus of football journalists, who know that describing who passed to whom and who scored the goal - 'run-of-play', in the parlance - is inadequate. The global audience will almost certainly have seen the goals already. Actually wanting to be there has become, demonstrably, a driver of crowds.

Luxembourgers and Belgians are to be found at Turf Moor, Burnley. The Finns love Norwich City. Manchester United and Liverpool have a huge Far East draw. Recently published research by VisitBritain showed that 800,000 international visitors attend English football matches annually, with many of those going to Premier League games. From China and India, Norway, Sweden, Brazil, the USA and dozen of other countries they come, to Old Trafford and the Emirates, to Tottenham and Villa and all points between, in record numbers.

But association football is only one strand to this story. Attendance numbers provide an extraordinary insight into the enduring worldwide popularity of myriad team sports at a time when action has never

been more available from tablet to TV, pub to public square and when ticket prices in many leagues have never been higher.

You could be forgiven for thinking that the NFL is feeling anxious about audiences as it seeks new ones in the UK, China and points in between. Yet it remains the best attended professional sports league in the world by average attendance. Baseball has also been undergoing something of an existential crisis, with sales of MLB tickets down one million on 2018 and 11 million on its 2007 peak of 79.5m. Nonetheless, the way it shifts 68 million tickets per season - average gate: nearly 30,000 - is still phenomenal for a league in which every team plays 162 regular season games.

And then there is US college football - the phenomenon surpassing all phenomena.

No fewer than 21 different US college gridiron teams had bigger average attendances in 2018 than the average NFL side. Michigan have had an average crowd of more than 100,000 for every game for 44 years. There are only seven home games most years, but 293 consecutive attendances of more than 100k is still extraordinary, testament to the way that US audiences are drawn to watch the young, unproven future stars of the game while most other nations are absorbed only by the superstars. This season's average crowd at Michigan's 'Big House' in Ann Arbor when the home campaign ended on the last day of November: 111,420.

The numbers in Germany's Bundesliga are not so stratospheric but they still point to the huge and

enduring appeal of being there, beside the field of play. The league - second only to NFL anywhere on the planet - will again record an average gate comfortably above 40,000 per match. At Dortmund the average is double that and more, with more than 24,000 occupying the famous 'Yellow Wall' terrace alone. Bundesliga rules barring commercial entities from owning more than 49 per cent of clubs have meant less oligarch or petro-dollar wealth flooding into the division than the Premier League. Yet the German game has more than made up for that in the quality of fan experience and affordability of tickets with far fewer priced out than in the top English division.

NPB, Japan's pro baseball league, has the fifth highest average attendance of the 18 leagues in this GSSS report, surpassing MLB, again. Higher than either of those, Aussie Rules football - fourth in our table - continues to be a huge draw in that country.

These astonishing numbers point incontrovertibly to sport's place as the new religion. Its vocabulary alone - faith, sacrifice, commitment, dedication, spirit, prayer - tells us it is the coalescing force that the church once was and so it continues to be. As an increasingly polarised society fractures and the numbers looking to organised religion decline, sport provides the great cathedrals; the communities to which all can belong.

The shrill populist voices in world politics have seized on the frustrations and suspicions of those left behind, disenfranchised and impoverished by globalisation, though everyone makes the

global journey with sport. The slums of Sao Paulo can, in a very real sense, access Anfield. Manchester United replica shirts are abundant in the dusty streets of Kampala.

For very many, sport provides a sense of identity which can be hard to locate and a way to fit in. Sociologists, who have been poring over the reasons for this for years, identify the way it provides 'totems': points of connection and outlets for ritual and religiosity. But there is no need to intellectualise it. Sport binds together old and young, rich and poor in a communion of the highs and, just as much, lows. The intensity of a moment of extraordinary skill, endurance or good fortune, delivered to the benefit of a team, is no more a source of communion than the cruel bitterness of defeat. For some, being there is also a source of personal motivation. 'You have to expect things of yourself before you do them.'

Michael Jordan memorably once said. Many of sport's most legendary utterances crystallise its capacity to inspire. That religiosity, again.

For some, the thrill now comes from following more than one team. Many of the younger generations will follow multiple clubs, following players they cherish from place to place because of a loyalty which transcends teams. Those players are more reachable in an age when they can communicate directly through social media platforms and not through the traditional prism of clubs or media.

It's not a universally positive picture. A stubborn strand of bigotry witnessed towards football players reveals that racism is alive and well - most tangibly in Italy, Russia and some areas of the former Yugoslavia. But football has done far more to promote understanding and connect fans

to a wider world than to stoke intolerance.

And the unifying effect prevails more than ever. One of the most vivid images in Stuart Roy Clarke's book depicts a group of Newcastle United fans on a 1990 journey to Suffolk to support their struggling team, near the bottom of Division Two at the time. The look of joyful optimism on their faces as they stand together in the dusk, with the floodlights in the background, distils what it means to travel in unison to a far-flung stadium and what that experience actually brings. Friendship, community, laughter, hope. The world needs more of all four.

Ian Herbert is a sportswriter for the Daily Mail and Mail on Sunday. You can follow him on Twitter @ianherbs



# PREMIER LEAGUE: THE WORLD'S MOST POPULAR SPORTS LEAGUE?

The headline carries a question mark because debates of this kind are inevitably partisan and highly charged. But in assessing objective data to find which professional domestic sports league is the most popular in the world, England's Premier League has the strongest claim. Perhaps.

Spanish football's top division, La Liga, is certainly a challenger, driven by two sporting giants in Real Madrid and Barcelona. So too is the NBA, the world's premium product in basketball, the second most popular global professional team sport after football (soccer).

The NFL can rightly argue it puts more bums on seats per match than anyone, and is increasingly doing so on foreign soil. And Major League Baseball can point to more than 68m tickets sold in 2019.

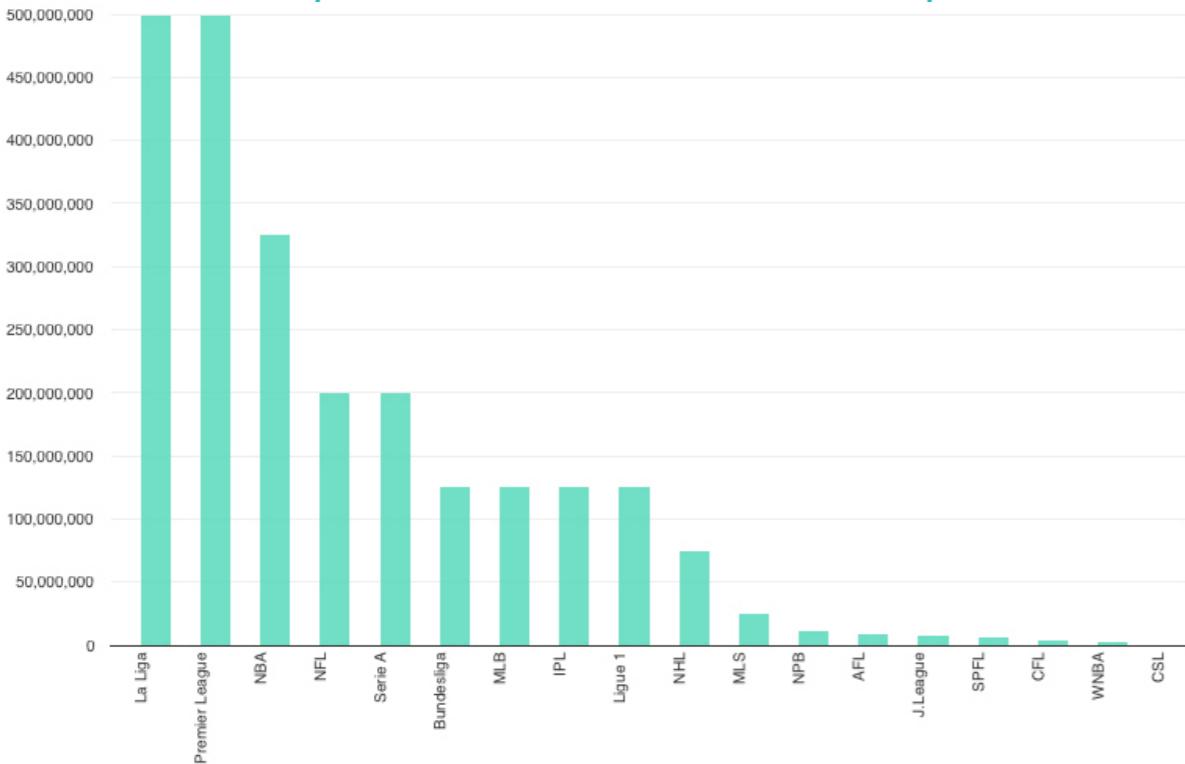
And then there is the Indian Premier League, the IPL, the most prominent club competition now in a sport that almost certainly had the most eyeballs on a single fixture this year. India's victory over Pakistan in the group stage of the cricket World Cup on 16 June in Manchester, England, attracted low hundreds of millions of viewers, with India's official audience monitoring agency, BARC, telling us most of them were in the sub-continent.

But without further ado, we'll move to the data.

## SOCIAL MEDIA POPULARITY

In the social media age, the most simple, obvious way to measure popularity is social media. So for the 350 teams featured in this report, we first counted the aggregate number of followers that all the teams in each league had amassed (combined) by mid-November 2019 on the principal accounts of the three most popular social media channels: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Rounding up the nearest 25m (for leagues over 50m) and to the nearest million (for leagues under 25m), this graphic tells the story.

**TOTAL SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS BY LEAGUE, FOR ALL CLUBS COMBINED, ON CLUBS' PRINCIPAL FACEBOOK, TWITTER AND INSTAGRAM ACCOUNTS, DECEMBER 2019**



La Liga and the Premier League are the joint most popular leagues in the world, followed by the NBA (clear in third), then the NFL and Serie A (basically equal), then the Bundesliga, MLB, IPL and Ligue 1 (ditto). A drop-off leads to the NHL, and another to MLS.

Looking at which league is the most popular by average followers produces a different outcome. The Premier League and La Liga remain joint first but the IPL jumps to No3, pushing the NBA to No4, before Serie A and Bundesliga in No5 and No6. The NFL in this measurement

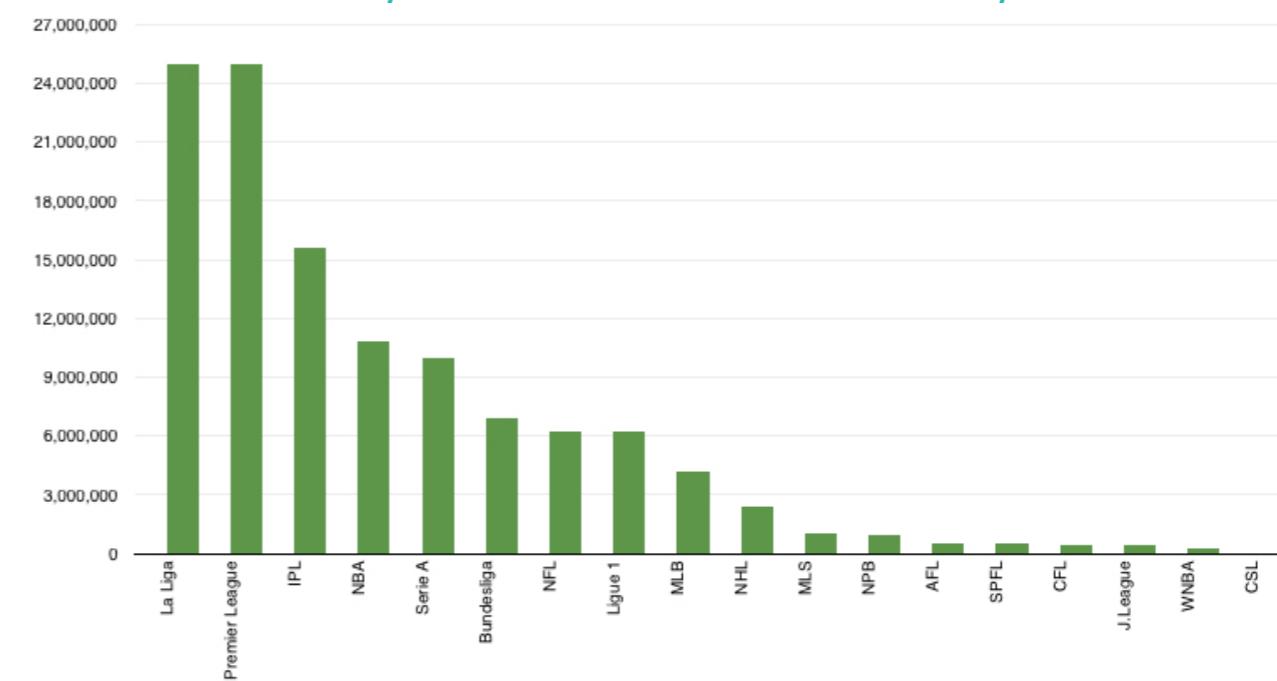
is down to No7. Ligue 1 and MLB are almost equally popular on total social media following but MLB has 10 more teams than Ligue 1, so each MLB team, on average, has fewer followers than the clubs in France's top football division.

Our third social media table shows how individual teams within the 18 assessed leagues fare in social media. The 20 most followed are comprised of 15 football clubs, four basketball teams and a cricket team. The precise number of followers for all 350 teams in this

GSSS are in the league-by-league pages.

If the Premier League and La Liga are essentially equal in total followers and equal in followers by club on average then this table acts as a tie-breaker. La Liga has two representatives in the top 10 and three in the top 20. The Premier League has five in the top 10 and six in the top 20. The NBA has four in the top 20. On this metric, simple as it is, the world's three most popular sports leagues are the Premier League, La Liga and the NBA.

**AVERAGE SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS BY CLUBS WITHIN EACH LEAGUE, ON CLUB'S PRINCIPAL FACEBOOK, TWITTER AND INSTAGRAM ACCOUNTS, DECEMBER 2019**



RANK TEAM	SPORT LEAGUE	RANK TEAM	SPORT LEAGUE
1 Real Madrid	La Liga	11 Los Angeles Lakers	NBA
2 Barcelona	La Liga	12 Milan	Serie A
3 Man Utd	Premier League	13 Golden State Warriors	NBA
4 Chelsea	Premier League	14 Borussia Dortmund	Bundesliga
5 Juventus	Serie A	15 Atlético Madrid	La Liga
6 Bayern Munich	Bundesliga	16 Chicago Bulls	NBA
7 PSG	Ligue 1	17 Internazionale	Serie A
8 Liverpool	Premier League	18 Miami Heat	NBA
9 Arsenal	Premier League	19 Tottenham	Premier League
10 Man City	Premier League	20 Mumbai Indians	IPL

## MONEY TALKING: GLOBAL BROADCASTING RIGHTS VALUES

Perceptions of a sports league's global allure are inevitably skewed when viewed from within. So within the USA, where the biggest single socio-cultural annual event each year is Super Bowl - typically drawing an average of more than 100m TV viewers just within America's borders - the NFL could not be a bigger deal. Many NFL fans inside the USA will perceive Super Bowl as a huge global event. Yet even as the NFL is doing excellent work in trying to nurture and expand foreign audiences, there remains - relatively speaking - marginal interest in much of the world. The number of viewers inside the USA dwarfs the number in the entire rest of the world combined, comfortably.

Similarly, within European football, all of the 'Big 5' top-division football leagues routinely make claims about the number of billions of people they 'reach', or can reach. Claimed TV audiences are routinely exaggerated so far beyond reality that fans of La Liga's big two clubs actually believe El Clásico is watched by more than 600m people. Indeed La Liga's own official website has boasted the fixture has "a potential audience of 600 million viewers and can be followed live and in HD in over 170 countries." The most important word in that sentence is "potential". What La Liga don't say is that the figure stated is around 10 times the reality that transpires, and probably more. One way to consider the global (non-domestic) popularity of leagues is look at cold, hard cash, or the annual earnings from all

broadcasting rights for each league derived from foreign markets. For the purposes of this exercise we have looked at the 'Big 5' leagues of North America (NFL, NBA, MLB, NHL and MLS) and the 'Big 5' football leagues of Europe.

Most neutral observers can probably agree that the most popular league in the world - with genuine widespread popularity across all continents - comes from somewhere within that group. Our table ranks the leagues in order of their current annual foreign rights income, and also details their domestic rights income, total income, and what percentage of total income comes from foreign rights. We would argue that this is not a bad proxy for genuine global popularity.

### ANNUAL BROADCASTING INCOME BY LEAGUE, RANKED BY HIGHEST EARNINGS FROM FOREIGN (NON-DOMESTIC) SOURCES

LEAGUE	OVERSEAS RIGHTS £ per year	OVERSEAS RIGHTS \$ per year	DOMESTIC RIGHTS £ per year	DOMESTIC RIGHTS \$ per year	TOTAL RIGHTS £ per year	TOTAL RIGHTS \$ per year	OVERSEAS % OF TOTAL RIGHTS
EPL	£1,400,000,000	\$1,750,000,000	£1,665,000,000	\$2,081,250,000	£3,065,000,000	\$3,831,250,000	45.7%
La Liga	£800,000,000	\$1,000,000,000	£1,017,857,143	\$1,272,321,429	£1,817,857,143	\$2,272,321,429	44.0%
NBA	£360,000,000	\$450,000,000	£2,133,333,333	\$2,666,666,666	£2,493,333,333	\$3,116,666,666	14.4%
Serie A	£336,607,143	\$420,758,929	£868,750,000	\$1,085,937,500	£1,205,357,143	\$1,506,696,429	27.9%
Bundesliga	£218,000,000	\$272,500,000	£1,035,714,286	\$1,294,642,857	£1,253,714,286	\$1,567,142,857	17.4%
MLB	£120,000,000	\$150,000,000	£1,200,000,000	\$1,500,000,000	£1,320,000,000	\$1,650,000,000	9.1%
NFL	£96,000,000	\$120,000,000	£3,520,000,000	\$4,400,000,000	£3,616,000,000	\$4,520,000,000	2.7%
Ligue 1	£71,428,571	\$89,285,714	£1,026,785,714	\$1,283,482,143	£1,098,214,286	\$1,372,767,857	6.5%
NHL	£12,000,000	\$15,000,000	£160,000,000	\$200,000,000	£172,000,000	\$215,000,000	7.0%
MLS	£12,000,000	\$15,000,000	£72,000,000	\$90,000,000	£84,000,000	\$105,000,000	14.3%

The Premier League is way out in front in foreign broadcasting earnings, making £1.4BN a year, or £4.2bn for the current three-year rights cycle from 2019-22. The Chinese digital broadcaster PPTV alone is paying around £185m a year, and NBC in the USA is paying \$1bn (around £800m) over six years to 2022, or around £133m per year. Broadcasters in Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Scandinavia, France, the Middle East, South America and sub-Saharan Africa are each paying tens of millions per year for Premier League rights.

Of total annual broadcasting right of around £3.1bn per year, the Premier League's overseas rights contribute nearly 46 per cent of the total.

La Liga, with £800m annual earnings from foreign rights, are a long way second on aggregate but that still equates to 44 per cent of La Liga earnings, and still puts them well clear of the third highest foreign rights earners, the NBA, on £360m. For the NBA this equates to 14 per cent of rights earnings. The five North American leagues all make the vast majority of rights income from within North America. The figures for the European football leagues are all a matter of public record, and we thank SportBusiness for the foreign rights figures for the North American leagues. Other knowledgeable sources inside US sport assisted in clarifying some details. We asked all the leagues for confirmation of the numbers and none wanted to confirm them, on the record. In a rapidly changing marketplace it is quite feasible that the North American leagues are making additional sums, relatively small at the moment, from direct-to-

consumer international digital channels on top of 'traditional' rights income.

Using the metric of annual foreign rights income, the world's most popular three leagues, again, are the Premier League, La Liga, and the NBA.

It should be noted that if considered in the same way, then cricket's IPL has total and foreign rights annually that are dwarfed by these bigger leagues. Star India hold the current global rights (for India and everywhere else) in a £2bn, five-year deal that runs to 2022 and is worth just under £400m per year. Given the vast majority of the IPL's global audience is within India, which has a population of more than 1.3bn people, we would attribute most of that £400m per year to 'domestic' value, and some tens of millions of pounds at most to foreign rights value.

### DO RIGHTS FEES REFLECT VIEWERS?

In trying to gauge whether rights earnings are an accurate reflection of audience size, the honest answer is: it is impossible to tell, definitively, but probably yes. It is impossible to tell because, for the most part, sports leagues never publish detailed breakdowns of their global viewing figures. And they never do it, we have to assume, because the figures are much smaller than most people believe, and are absolutely nowhere close to claims of hundreds of millions for a single "ordinary" game. The NFL has huge domestic TV contracts because the NFL draws huge domestic TV audiences,

of 15.8m people inside the USA on average for a regular season game in 2018. Super Bowl is the cherry on top. But again, most of the viewers are inside the USA. MLB's premium content, the World Series, has averaged between 10m and 20m viewers for the past 20 years, inside the USA. Regular season games averaged 2.4m on FOX in 2019, and 1.6m on ESPN, both of those increases on 2018. An MLB spokesman told Sportingintelligence: "It is impossible to secure the average viewership for a game outside the US when there are so many countries carrying games." But the reality is audiences in most countries will be tiny. To give one example: baseball is huge in Japan, and Ichiro Suzuki, who spent 19 years in MLB, including with the New York Yankees and the Seattle Mariners, is viewed in Japan as among the greatest Japanese sportsmen of all time. His final MLB match was played in March, on Japanese soil, as the MLB 2019 season opened with the Mariners facing the Oakland A's in a series in Tokyo. Japan's greatest contemporary sporting hero, on home soil, in a competitive MLB match, drew a household rating of 2.2m in Japan, the highest rating for an MLB game since 2004. That equates to around 2.5m people in a nation of 127m. This is not to belittle MLB or indeed Ichiro, rather to illustrate even some 'huge' occasions are not as huge as widely perceived.

The average global audience for a 'big' Premier League will reach a few tens of millions, as will El Clásico in Spain. There is more reading about this on the Sportingintelligence website, especially in a report called The Premier League In Numbers, and

in associated materials, all of which can be found at this link: <https://www.sportingintelligence.com/2015/12/31/the-premier-league-in-numbers311201/>

The Premier League gave an indication of their real recent numbers earlier this year when announcing the global cumulative audience for 2018-19 was 3.2bn, and that the global live cumulative audience was 1.35bn. Given that there are 380 games in the season, that equates to an average of 8.4m per game (including non-live coverage in highlights show) and 3.55m per game for live coverage. And that's globally. Not all games are shown in all markets, of course, including in the Premier League's home market of the UK. So the actual average audience per shown game (including highlights) is somewhere over 10m and the live total will be higher than 3.55m. "Big" games will be seen by substantially more people and "small" games by virtually nobody.

Those familiar with the data for other leagues confirm the same phenomena there. And a fascinating academic paper from 2016, "English Soccer's Mysterious Worldwide Popularity", cited an average global audience per game for the Premier League at 12m while Europe's other big leagues attracted between 2m and 4.5m per game.

These are bewilderingly small numbers to many people assuming massive audiences are common. And the market is changing, rapidly and in different ways, not least digitally.

But if you start with home market averages and reason that your product won't be as popular

elsewhere, it starts to make sense. The average Premier League game in the UK will attract an average of maybe 1m people. The average La Liga game in Spain will be half of that. Any given Premier League match won't hit even 1m in most markets and only reach the hundreds of thousands in a few.

Barring the release of detailed figures by those who know them - the leagues themselves - the full picture won't be known. But overseas rights values are almost certainly a good indication of the real size of a worldwide audience.

### AND FINALLY... THE CROWDS

Our final table in this section details average crowds for the most recent completed seasons of the leagues featured in this GSSS, plus how they measure up to all-time highest averages in those leagues. As detailed elsewhere in these pages, it is forecast the Premier League in 2019-20 will register the highest top-division average of all time. For now that record is held by the 1948-49 season. Notable this year is that both Japanese baseball (NPB) and football (J-League) set all-time attendance records in 2019, with the NPB now attracting more fans per game than MLB in North America. Conversely, Italy's Serie A and Canada's CFL must look back more than three decades to the mid 1980s for their heydays.

For the final element in this table - a proxy measurement of foreign popularity for 10 of the leagues - we are grateful to StubHub, the world's largest ticket marketplace, for mining their massive database to provide some insights. StubHub have tens of millions

of customers around the world buying tickets to entertainment events, not least sporting events. Their database knows where all the buyers are from, and so we asked them to tell us what percent of their ticket purchases for each of 10 leagues (the Big 5 of North America and the Big 5 of European football) were made by fans who would travel outside their own borders to watch the game or match in question. Clearly there will be flaws in this, not least a bias that StubHub is US-based with a big US customer base. But it is nonetheless interesting that all five European football leagues have high percentages of StubHub sales to people travelling across borders to watch, and no US league had more than 16 per cent of StubHub sales doing likewise.

The 10 nations buying most Premier League tickets via StubHub in 2019 are, in order, the USA, Korea, Ireland, Canada, Germany, Spain, France, Australia, Japan and the Netherlands. For La Liga it is the USA, the UK, Mexico, Japan, South Korea, France, Canada, Brazil, Israel and China. For Serie A it is the USA, the UK, Switzerland, Germany, Japan, France, Mexico, Thailand, China and Brazil. For the Bundesliga it is the USA, the UK, Korea, Japan, Switzerland, Canada, Austria, China, France and Mexico. And for Ligue 1 it is the USA, Brazil, the UK, Japan, Mexico, Germany, the Netherlands, Ireland, Spain and Korea.

StubHub say the UK is "the most popular destination for international travellers to book an event [of any kind via StubHub]" and that 60 per cent of people travelling across borders to the UK for an event are going to a sports event. This includes US sports events being played on British soil.

### ATTENDANCES IN GSSS 2019 LEAGUES... AND THEIR ALL-TIME BEST FIGURES

LEAGUE		AVG ATTENDANCE, MOST RECENTLY COMPLETED SEASON	BEST EVER AVG ATTENDANCE, REGULAR SEASON	SEASON OF BEST AVG ATTENDANCE	% OF STUBHUB TICKETS SOLD IN 2019 TO THIS LEAGUE WHO WERE FOREIGN VISITORS
NFL		67,100	69,487	2016-17	6%
Bundesliga		43,449	45,116	2011-12	43%
Premier League		38,168	38,776	1948-49	38%
AFL		35,122	36,996	2008	-
NPB		30,929	30,929	2019	-
MLB		28,176	32,704	2007	3%
La Liga		26,811	30,532	1994-95	66%
IPL		C.26,000	Unknown	Unknown	-
Serie A		25,237	38,872	1984-85	67%
CSL		23,985	24,238	2016	-
CFL		22,917	30,203	1983	-
Ligue 1		22,799	23,160	2000-01	73%
MLS		21,310	22,106	2017	7%
J-League		20,750	20,750	2019	-
NBA		17,857	17,987	2017-18	16%
NHL		17,377	17,690	2013-14	15%
Scottish Premiership		16,016	18,534	1998-99	-
WNBA		6,535	10,869	1998	-

The baseball series between the New York Yankees and the Boston Red Sox in London in June, for example, saw people from 42 different countries buying tickets for them via Stub Hub alone, as well as fans from 44 of the USA's 50 states. Demand for the Yankees-

Red Sox game on 29 June outstripped demand on StubHub for any other entertainment event of any genre, including concerts by the Spice Girls, Drake, Pink and Fleetwood Mac. For the autumn's NFL games in London, StubHub sold tickets to people from 43

different countries. For the NBA's UK game in January, StubHub sold tickets to fans in 32 countries.

# SERIE A GAMBLES ON WAGES PAYING SPORTING DIVIDEND



**Omar Chaudhuri is Head of Football Intelligence at 21st Club, an advisory business for football clubs, assisting key decision makers in strategic problem-solving and recruitment. Formed in 2013, they work with forward-thinking clubs who are looking to outsmart rather than outspend their rivals, using an evidence-based approach and leveraging the power of analytics to help teams gain a competitive edge.**

**Taking into account the GSSS 2019 wage data for the 98 teams in the 'Big 5' divisions of Europe, Chaudhuri explores why the clubs of Serie A in Italy are collectively experiencing the biggest year-on-year spike in average basic pay. But this renewed level of investment in talent comes with risk, not least whether the extra financial outlay will bring commensurate rewards in terms of results. Or are they, like the Premier League, paying over the odds?**

Italy's Serie A was perhaps the first high-achieving global football league. Between 1989 and 1998, 22 out of the 40 European Cup and UEFA Cup finalists were Italian, with a further three making the Cup-Winners' Cup final. In the same period, the global transfer record was broken five times by Italian teams, and by the summer of 1998 nearly half of the 100 most expensive deals in history involved an Italian buyer.

In the 1990s, it was Italian football that paid the best wages in world football. In fact up until 2002, the highest average take-home pay, inclusive of bonuses and benefits was in Serie A. The Premier League took that mantle in 2002-03 and has kept it since. But in an era when the Premier League currently reigns supreme, it is easy to forget that the centre of the football universe was not so long ago some 900 miles further south.

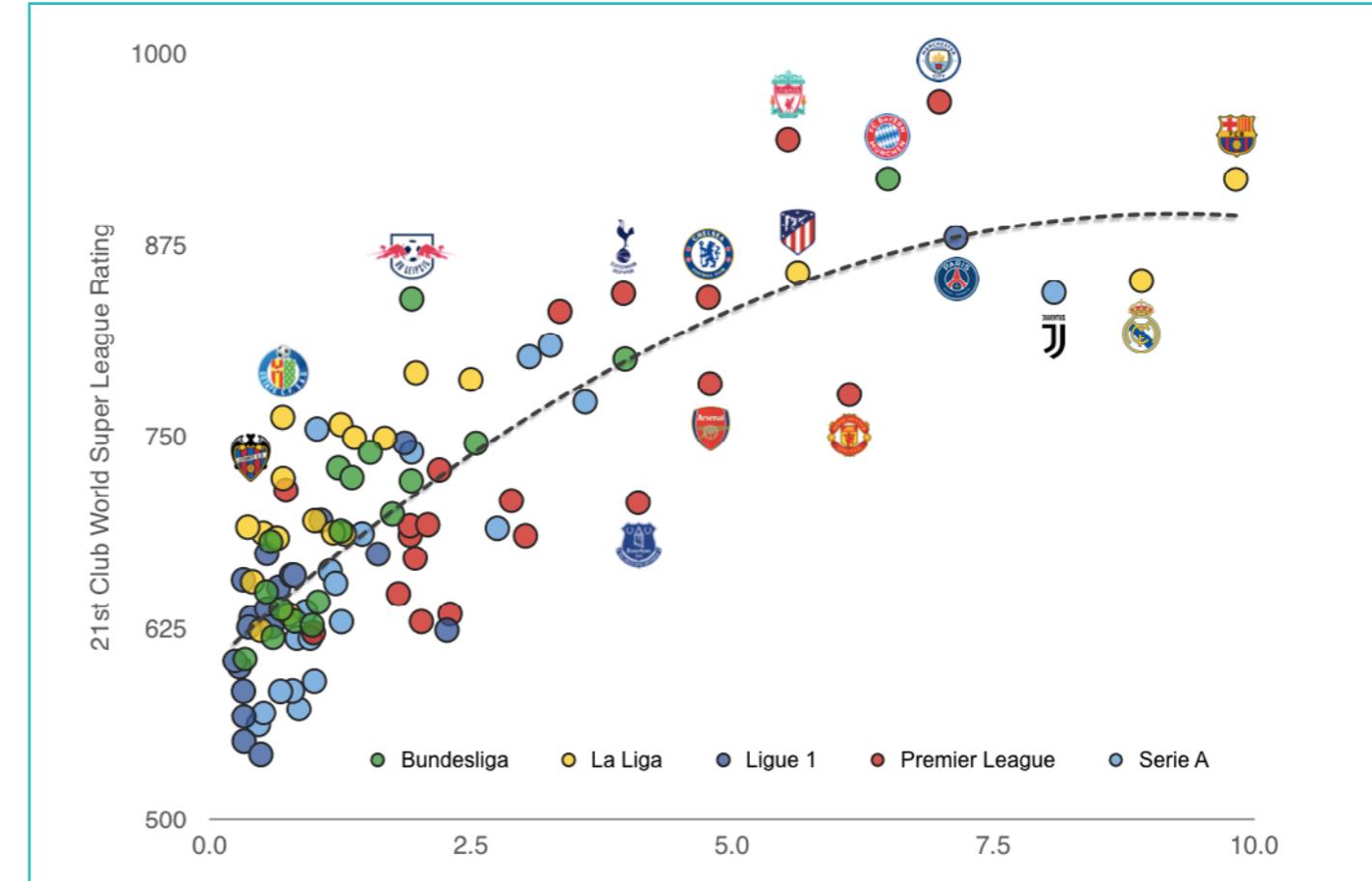
The decline of Serie A is well-documented, with eroding infrastructure, issues with Ultra culture, and corruption scandals all weakening the league's position globally. According to UEFA, the average club in the league now earns less annually than teams in England, Spain and Germany's top flights, and since 2008 has been the slowest growing of the traditional big five European leagues.

However, there are signs that the league is beginning to punch back, driven by clubs investing substantially in their playing

squads. The Global Sports Salary Survey 2019 reveals that the average pay of a Serie A player rose 17 per cent from last season, to almost £1.8million per man. The other major leagues collectively increased pay by two percent, with Premier League pay rising by six percent. From being some way behind England and Spain as the third-biggest payer in the big five leagues last year, Italian clubs have this year halved the pay gap to their La Liga counterparts.

In the absence of a new broadcast deal, part of the uplift in spending can perhaps be attributed to future changes in the Italian tax system, whereby from 2020 players who move from abroad and stay for two years will be given a tax exemption on 50 percent of their salaries. Clubs have seemingly reacted to this future change in regulation, with a series of high-profile Premier League players joining Serie A clubs last summer. It's not just the top end of Serie A investing either - clubs outside the top six or seven teams in Italy have experienced the highest wage growth over the last twelve months.

As we explored in last year's report though, bigger spending is no guarantee of future success. The 21st Club World Super League – an index that ranks teams globally in one league table – allows us to compare the GSSS wage data to performance, and therefore the efficiency of spending of different teams. In 2018, the Premier League was highlighted as the biggest



under-performers of the big five leagues, with some clubs paying over twice as much in salaries as teams on the continent to achieve comparable performance. In many ways this was the cost of being known as the biggest spenders, with selling clubs and agents willing to wait until Premier League teams paid the price.

In 2019, it seems as though Serie A clubs are stuck in the same trap. Of the 30 most inefficient teams in the major leagues, ten are Italian and eleven are English. Of the 30 most efficient, it's just three and five respectively. Spanish and German teams dominate the top of these rankings. Clubs like Torino and Fiorentina have seen performance fall backwards despite notable increases in pay. While last season the average Premier League team was rated as having the lowest performance return for salaries spent, this season

it is the average Serie A team who comes bottom of the pile.

You can find teams on parallel paths in Serie A and the Premier League, too. Manchester United and Milan rank as the 6th and 14th-most inefficient teams respectively in the big five leagues; they're in the region of 10 to 15 points per season worse off than we would expect based on their first-team pay. However, both clubs are looking to address this by turning to youth. As of the start of December 2019, only 10 teams in the major leagues had a starting 11 average age of under 25, and two of those were United and Milan. For both clubs, there's been a strategic shift away from signing big-money, peak-age players. In Milan's case, a change in ownership has catalysed this approach, while United have complemented younger signings with prospects from their

academy, which is the most productive in England.

Of course, while it is possible to change strategy overnight, it is not possible to change your squad over the same time frame, and both Milan and United are to a degree still encumbered by players whose performance does not match the expectations of their pay. RB Leipzig have however shown how a long-term dedication to youth can reap rewards. With the fourth-youngest team in the big five leagues, the German club are rated as the most efficient at turning pay into points. They have been the 11th-best team this season in the big five leagues with the 31st-highest wages, with an average first team salary below that of Newcastle United, Watford and Aston Villa. The club – and the wider Red Bull group – dedicate a significant amount of its resources to young

<b>La Liga club</b>	<b>PAY (£M)</b>	<b>TEAM RATING</b>
Barcelona	9.8	918
Real Madrid	8.9	851
Atlético Madrid	5.6	857
Valencia	2.5	787
Sevilla	2.0	791
Athletic Club	1.7	749
Villarreal	1.4	749
Celta Vigo	1.3	686
Real Sociedad	1.3	757
Real Betis	1.2	687
Espanyol	1.0	695
Leganés	0.8	634
Levante	0.7	722
Getafe	0.7	762
Granada	0.6	683
Eibar	0.6	683
Deportivo Alavés	0.5	687
Mallorca	0.5	623
Real Valladolid	0.4	655
Osasuna	0.4	691

<b>EPL club</b>	<b>Pay (£m)</b>	<b>Team Rating</b>
Manchester City	7.0	968
Manchester United	6.1	777
Liverpool	5.5	943
Arsenal	4.8	784
Chelsea	4.8	840
Everton	4.1	707
Tottenham Hotspur	4.0	843
Leicester City	3.4	831
West Ham	3.0	685
Crystal Palace	2.9	708
Southampton	2.3	634
Wolverhampton	2.2	728
Newcastle	2.1	692
Watford	2.0	629
Aston Villa	2.0	670
Bournemouth	1.9	685
Burnley	1.9	691
Brighton	1.8	647
Norwich City	1.0	622
Sheffield United	0.7	715

<b>Bundesliga club</b>	<b>Pay (£m)</b>	<b>Team Rating</b>
Bayern Munich	6.5	918
Borussia Dortmund	4.0	800
Bayer Leverkusen	2.5	745
RB Leipzig	1.9	839
Wolfsburg	1.9	721
Schalke 04	1.7	699
Borussia M'gladbach	1.5	739
Hoffenheim	1.4	723
Werder Bremen	1.3	688
Eintracht Frankfurt	1.2	729
Hertha BSC	1.0	642
Köln	1.0	627
Augsburg	0.8	629
Mainz 05	0.7	637
Fortuna Düsseldorf	0.6	619
Freiburg	0.6	681
Union Berlin	0.5	648
Paderborn	0.3	604

<b>Serie A club</b>	<b>PAY (£M)</b>	<b>TEAM RATING</b>
Juventus	8.1	844
Roma	3.6	772
Internazionale	3.3	809
Napoli	3.1	802
Milan	2.8	690
Lazio	1.9	739
Torino	1.5	686
Bologna	1.3	629
Florentina	1.2	654
Cagliari	1.2	662
Atalanta	1.0	755
Genoa	1.0	590
Sampdoria	1.0	618
Sassuolo	0.9	635
Lecce	0.9	572
Parma	0.8	618
SPAL	0.8	584
Udinese	0.7	583
Hellas Verona	0.5	569
Brescia	0.5	562

<b>Ligue 1 club</b>	<b>Pay (£m)</b>	<b>Team Rating</b>
PSG	7.1	879
Monaco	2.3	623
Lyon	1.9	745
Marseille	1.6	673
Lille	1.1	695
Saint-Étienne	0.8	659
Rennes	0.8	659
Bordeaux	0.7	651
Nice	0.6	626
Montpellier	0.5	673
Nantes	0.5	637
Toulouse	0.5	542
Angers	0.4	631
Strasbourg	0.4	625
Dijon	0.3	551
Amiens	0.3	567
Metz	0.3	583
Reims	0.3	656
Brest	0.3	599
Nîmes	0.2	603

player recruitment, and both on-field results and player sales attest to that strategy being a success.

However, this isn't the only route to overachievement. Spanish side Getafe are second to RB Leipzig in the efficiency rankings – and they have the 11th-oldest team in the big five leagues. Getafe narrowly missed out on Champions League football last season, and this season still comfortably pay bottom-half salaries in La Liga. Their success is built on a miserly defence and direct, counter-attacking football, eschewing modern demands to attack and dominate and therefore going against the grain of what opponents are used to playing (not unlike Leicester in 2015-16). Sheffield United, who are rated as the third-most efficient team in England behind Liverpool and Manchester City,

have also surprised opponents with a 'alternative' playing style approach. For both these teams it is crucial that this 'IP' isn't lost with a change of head coach in the future.

While in our work with clubs we have identified several areas of best practice in recruitment and squad planning processes, the GSSS data proves that there are different models to find efficiency, and that there's no one-size-fits-all approach. Getafe and Leipzig provide credence to the view that clarity of vision and strategy are good starting points, and observations about teams on the inefficient end of the scale backs this up. It is not uncommon for us to see shortlists of players and coaches who have no consistent attributes, or business plans that grossly misjudge the team's underlying performance.

Ultimately, it is efficiency of spending by its teams that will enable the Serie A to catch up with rival leagues. With broadcast rights beginning to plateau for domestic competitions, Italian clubs will only be able to spend so much to attract better players in the future. This means a return to the heydays of the 1990s are contingent on clubs up and down the division discovering their identity and forming strategies that are precise, coherent, and not dependent on winning a spending arms race with the rest of Europe.

For contact details and more background information on what 21st Club do, please visit: <https://www.21stclub.com>

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# VALUE FOR MONEY BY POSITIONS AND AGE IN FOOTBALL: THAT STRIKER ON BIG WAGES IS PROBABLY NOT BEING PAID ENOUGH

**By Omar Chaudhuri**

Head of Football Intelligence at 21st Club

One of the starker transfer trends at the elite end of the football in recent years has been an increase in spending on goalkeepers. The transfer record for the position stood for 17 years, until it was broken twice in the space of a few weeks in 2018 by Liverpool and Chelsea. For years, it was questioned whether the position was undervalued, and the response from the industry seemed at the very least to be "not anymore".

That, however, did not fully answer the question – it was merely a moving of market forces. Were goalkeepers realising their worth, or had they just simply become more fashionable, like New York apartments with exposed brick? One of the things that the smartest clubs in world football are beginning to do is quantifying the intrinsic value of a player. This is different to their market value, which is simply the price at which buyers and sellers are willing to meet. The intrinsic value of a player refers to their actual performance contribution to the team, in points terms, and can be

evaluated against market price to determine whether the player is worth the money.

As you can imagine, assessing this is horrifyingly complex. Fortunately, machine learning algorithms allow us to handle complex problems and, without boring you with the details, can learn from the results of teams to provide an estimate for the intrinsic value of players – or overall positions - at any given team.

One of the outputs from the algorithms we at 21st Club have been working with is that defensive players simply are less valuable than attacking players. Teams tend to suffer less when their first-choice goalkeeper or centre-back is out compared to their first-choice striker, accounting for all other factors. Attacking players need to operate their skills on the ball in the areas of the field with the least space and time, and rely slightly more on individual talent than collective work. It's no surprise that when a player moves up a level (or begins to get old), he tends to move into

slightly more defensive roles – think of how players like Victor Moses, Fabian Delph and Trent Alexander-Arnold have moved to full-back positions as they've stepped up into a better team. It's simply more difficult to be an attacking player, especially in central areas.

The Global Sports Salaries Survey this year details pay by age brackets and position in each of Europe's 'Big 5' top divisions, as summarised by the table on these pages. And we can see that the performance value of attacking players is reflected in earnings. The different leagues have variable pay levels, with the Premier League paying most, then La Liga, Serie A, Bundesliga and Ligue 1.

But across the quintet of divisions combined, an average goalkeeper earns about £1.4 million a year (basic), a defender £1.6 million, a midfielder £2 million and forward £2.6 million. A surface-level observation would suggest that goalkeepers are indeed underpaid, given how cheap they are relative to forwards. However, by combining the insight from our

COUNTRY	LEAGUE	AGE BRACKET	GK	DF	MF	FW	TOTAL
England	Premier League	Up to 23	£843,143	£1,832,629	£2,115,750	£3,037,273	£2,129,750
Spain	La Liga	Up to 23	£503,425	£646,403	£1,004,163	£2,273,109	£1,149,710
Italy	Serie A	Up to 23	£1,053,241	£987,202	£1,037,311	£961,982	£1,004,783
Germany	Bundesliga	Up to 23	£420,625	£792,430	£1,090,518	£1,046,339	£895,737
France	Ligue 1	Up to 23	£182,049	£405,659	£432,564	£843,505	£498,332
England	Premier League	23-29	£3,212,182	£3,005,443	£3,819,563	£4,032,261	£3,521,556
Spain	La Liga	23-29	£1,826,392	£1,489,928	£2,253,666	£2,117,644	£1,908,790
Italy	Serie A	23-29	£1,111,820	£1,678,972	£1,803,992	£2,447,385	£1,817,017
Germany	Bundesliga	23-29	£1,378,327	£1,659,948	£2,046,790	£1,612,373	£1,774,016
France	Ligue 1	23-29	£1,000,095	£1,020,252	£980,542	£1,859,236	£1,199,863
England	Premier League	30-plus	£2,197,000	£2,918,933	£4,632,000	£4,573,833	£3,278,035
Spain	La Liga	30-plus	£1,551,282	£2,016,120	£2,533,964	£6,432,656	£2,963,852
Italy	Serie A	30-plus	£1,298,701	£1,880,631	£2,342,033	£4,749,589	£2,576,631
Germany	Bundesliga	30-plus	£1,343,508	£1,880,733	£1,751,063	£3,766,579	£2,135,075
France	Ligue 1	30-plus	£1,514,713	£1,320,250	£1,895,000	£3,189,727	£1,752,085
England	Premier League	ALL AGES	£2,407,770	£2,751,537	£3,555,354	£3,839,875	£3,173,264
Spain	La Liga	ALL AGES	£1,514,951	£1,479,128	£2,066,977	£3,090,194	£2,037,648
Italy	Serie A	ALL AGES	£1,156,775	£1,536,945	£1,743,234	£2,625,975	£1,785,497
Germany	Bundesliga	ALL AGES	£1,074,167	£1,440,928	£1,748,059	£1,836,067	£1,583,710
France	Ligue 1	ALL AGES	£863,615	£894,835	£891,896	£1,573,857	£1,038,759

performance models with these pay figures, our analysis suggests it is attacking players who are undervalued, despite being the best-paid position.

We analysed the 'points above replacement' value of players in top-half teams in the big five leagues – essentially looking at how many points worse off an average top-half team would be if they replaced a starting player with an average player in the division - and found that an attacker costs about £2 million per point above replacement, compared to roughly £3 million for a goalkeeper. It is very hard to build a powerful attack on the cheap, but – as teams like Getafe and Burnley have shown – it is possible to do so with a defence. On the whole, therefore, it is justifiable that goalkeepers and defenders earn less than

midfielders and attackers; this isn't a glaring market inefficiency.

The salary data also allows us to see if certain age groups are overvalued or undervalued. The average under-23 player in the big five leagues costs £1.1 million a year in basic pay, while 23-29-year olds and 30-plus year olds cost £2 million and £2.5 million respectively, with significant positional variation. If we take defenders, our assessment is that in the big five leagues the leading 23-29-year olds deliver roughly the same performance benefit to a team as the leading 30-plus year olds, but at about 12 percent lower cost. This might point to older players being overvalued, though clearly experience brings other, less tangible attributes that could help a team in the long run, such as leadership.

This remains true across other positions – especially as strikers and midfielders tend to peak younger than centre-backs - and highlights the challenges clubs face when they have players in their late 20s coming up to contract renewals. Do they renew at a higher salary, even though the player is beginning to pass peak age, or choose not to, and risk losing the player for free?

Ultimately, the goal of virtually every club in player recruitment is to identify undervalued individuals – that is, when their performance benefit is greater than their cost. Sophisticated analysis can provide a clue as to whether trends in the market, such as price inflation for goalkeepers, will deliver value for money in the long run.



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# GLOBAL SPORTS SALARIES SURVEY 2019: TOP 12

RANK & TEAM (LAST YEAR)	LEAGUE	AVG ANNUAL PAY £ (AVG WEEKLY PAY)	AVG ANNUAL PAY \$ (AVG WEEKLY PAY)
1 (1) <b>Barcelona</b>	La Liga	£9,827,644 (£188,993)	\$12,284,555 (\$236,241)
2 (2) <b>Real Madrid</b>	La Liga	£8,923,754 (£171,611)	\$11,154,692 (\$214,513)
3 (9) <b>Juventus</b>	Serie A	£8,085,317 (£155,487)	\$10,106,647 (\$194,359)
4 (14) <b>Portland Trail Blazers</b>	NBA	£8,031,862 (£154,459)	\$10,039,828 (\$193,074)
5 (4) <b>Golden State Warriors</b>	NBA	£7,937,513 (£152,644)	\$9,921,892 (\$190,806)
6 (28) <b>Orlando Magic</b>	NBA	£7,580,606 (£145,781)	\$9,475,757 (\$182,226)
7 (3) <b>Oklahoma City Thunder</b>	NBA	£7,545,658 (£145,109)	\$9,432,072 (\$181,386)
8 (24) <b>Denver Nuggets</b>	NBA	£7,449,554 (£143,261)	\$9,311,943 (\$179,076)
9 (8) <b>Miami Heat</b>	NBA	£7,438,863 (£143,055)	\$9,298,579 (\$178,819)
10 (16) <b>Cleveland Cavaliers</b>	NBA	£7,365,725 (£141,649)	\$9,207,157 (\$177,061)
11 (7) <b>Houston Rockets</b>	NBA	£7,328,490 (£140,932)	\$9,160,612 (\$176,166)
12 (18) <b>PSG</b>	Ligue 1	£7,147,376 (£137,450)	\$8,934,220 (\$171,812)

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RANK (LAST YEAR)	TEAM	LEAGUE	AVG ANNUAL PAY £ (AVG WEEKLY PAY)	AVG ANNUAL PAY \$ (AVG WEEKLY PAY)
13 (20)	Man City	EPL	£6,987,500 (£134,375)	\$8,734,375 (\$167,969)
14 (26)	LA Clippers	NBA	£6,935,044 (£133,366)	\$8,668,805 (\$166,708)
15 (33)	Philadelphia 76ers	NBA	£6,897,440 (£132,643)	\$8,621,800 (\$165,804)
16 (5)	Washington Wizards	NBA	£6,800,264 (£130,774)	\$8,500,330 (\$163,468)
17 (22)	Detroit Pistons	NBA	£6,779,675 (£130,378)	\$8,474,594 (\$162,973)
18 (11)	Charlotte Hornets	NBA	£6,625,909 (£127,421)	\$8,282,386 (\$159,277)
19 (12)	Minnesota Timberwolves	NBA	£6,617,213 (£127,254)	\$8,271,517 (\$159,068)
20 (29)	Milwaukee Bucks	NBA	£6,534,807 (£125,669)	\$8,168,508 (\$157,087)
21 (6)	Toronto Raptors	NBA	£6,520,233 (£125,389)	\$8,150,291 (\$156,736)
22 (15)	Bayern Munich	Bundesliga	£6,495,917 (£124,921)	\$8,119,896 (\$156,152)
23 (43)	Brooklyn Nets	NBA	£6,429,059 (£123,636)	\$8,036,324 (\$154,545)
24 (32)	Dallas Mavericks	NBA	£6,333,432 (£121,797)	\$7,916,790 (\$152,246)
25 (21)	San Antonio Spurs	NBA	£6,305,720 (£121,264)	\$7,882,150 (\$151,580)
26 (50)	Sacramento Kings	NBA	£6,301,303 (£121,179)	\$7,876,629 (\$151,474)
27 (41)	Los Angeles Lakers	NBA	£6,286,190 (£120,888)	\$7,857,738 (\$151,110)
28 (37)	Phoenix Suns	NBA	£6,262,365 (£120,430)	\$7,827,956 (\$150,538)
29 (13)	Boston Celtics	NBA	£6,245,338 (£120,103)	\$7,806,673 (\$150,128)
30 (23)	Utah Jazz	NBA	£6,191,232 (£119,062)	\$7,739,041 (\$148,828)
31 (25)	New Orleans Pelicans	NBA	£6,180,056 (£118,847)	\$7,725,070 (\$148,559)
32 (46)	New York Yankees	MLB	£6,153,759 (£118,342)	\$7,692,199 (\$147,927)
33 (10)	Man Utd	EPL	£6,125,600 (£117,800)	\$7,657,000 (\$147,250)
34 (54)	Atlanta Hawks	NBA	£5,980,159 (£115,003)	\$7,475,199 (\$143,754)
35 (34)	Indiana Pacers	NBA	£5,971,367 (£114,834)	\$7,464,208 (\$143,542)
36 (31)	Chicago Bulls	NBA	£5,958,427 (£114,585)	\$7,448,034 (\$143,231)
37 (19)	Memphis Grizzlies	NBA	£5,673,155 (£109,099)	\$7,091,444 (\$136,374)
38 (42)	New York Knicks	NBA	£5,662,249 (£108,889)	\$7,077,811 (\$136,112)
39 (17)	Atletico Madrid	La Liga	£5,631,364 (£108,295)	\$7,039,205 (\$135,369)
40 (36)	Boston Red Sox	MLB	£5,564,455 (£107,009)	\$6,955,569 (\$133,761)
41 (38)	Liverpool	EPL	£5,537,600 (£106,492)	\$6,922,000 (\$133,115)
42 (30)	Chicago Cubs	MLB	£5,115,629 (£98,377)	\$6,394,536 (\$122,972)
43 (48)	Houston Astros	MLB	£5,084,841 (£97,785)	\$6,356,051 (\$122,232)
44 (39)	Arsenal	EPL	£4,790,240 (£92,120)	\$5,987,800 (\$115,150)
45 (35)	Chelsea	EPL	£4,774,000 (£91,808)	\$5,967,500 (\$114,760)
46 (91)	Philadelphia Phillies	MLB	£4,682,528 (£90,049)	\$5,853,160 (\$112,561)
47 (56)	Mumbai Indians	IPL	£4,375,791 (£84,150)	\$5,469,739 (\$105,187)
48 (61)	Royal Challengers Bangalore	IPL	£4,347,519 (£83,606)	\$5,434,399 (\$104,508)
49 (55)	Kings XI Punjab	IPL	£4,271,113 (£82,137)	\$5,338,891 (\$102,671)
50 (64)	Chennai Super Kings	IPL	£4,180,354 (£80,391)	\$5,225,443 (\$100,489)
51 (59)	Sunrisers Hyderabad	IPL	£4,167,462 (£80,144)	\$5,209,328 (\$100,179)
52 (52)	Kolkata Knight Riders	IPL	£4,167,117 (£80,137)	\$5,208,896 (\$100,171)
53 (40)	LA Angels	MLB	£4,166,369 (£80,122)	\$5,207,961 (\$100,153)
54 (57)	Rajasthan Royals	IPL	£4,160,540 (£80,010)	\$5,200,675 (\$100,013)
55 (53)	St Louis Cardinals	MLB	£4,148,306 (£79,775)	\$5,185,383 (\$99,719)
56 (44)	Washington Nationals	MLB	£4,144,720 (£79,706)	\$5,180,900 (\$99,633)
57 (69)	Everton	EPL	£4,101,760 (£78,880)	\$5,127,200 (\$98,600)

\* NB: all IPL annual salaries calculated on a pro rata basis from weekly pay

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RANK (LAST YEAR)	TEAM	LEAGUE	Avg Annual Pay £ (Avg Weekly Pay)	Avg Annual Pay \$ (Avg Weekly Pay)
58 (60)	Delhi Capitals	IPL	£4,090,677 (£78,667)	\$5,113,346 (\$98,334)
59 (47)	New York Mets	MLB	£4,085,983 (£78,577)	\$5,107,479 (\$98,221)
60 (51)	LA Dodgers	MLB	£4,035,461 (£77,605)	\$5,044,326 (\$97,006)
61 (70)	Borussia Dortmund	Bundesliga	£3,977,086 (£76,482)	\$4,971,358 (\$95,603)
62 (66)	Tottenham	EPL	£3,961,043 (£76,174)	\$4,951,304 (\$95,217)
63 (27)	San Francisco Giants	MLB	£3,906,440 (£75,124)	\$4,883,050 (\$93,905)
64 (123)	Atlanta Braves	MLB	£3,812,891 (£73,325)	\$4,766,113 (\$91,656)
65 (105)	Atlanta Falcons	NFL	£3,764,846 (£72,401)	\$4,706,057 (\$90,501)
66 (63)	Colorado Rockies	MLB	£3,757,200 (£72,254)	\$4,696,500 (\$90,317)
67 (76)	Roma	Serie A	£3,594,322 (£69,122)	\$4,492,903 (\$86,402)
68 (81)	Leicester	EPL	£3,352,960 (£64,480)	\$4,191,200 (\$80,600)
69 (62)	Internazionale	Serie A	£3,260,031 (£62,693)	\$4,075,039 (\$78,366)
70 (87)	Milwaukee Brewers	MLB	£3,131,998 (£60,231)	\$3,914,998 (\$75,288)
71 (115)	Philadelphia Eagles	NFL	£3,127,120 (£60,137)	\$3,908,900 (\$75,171)
72 (78)	Napoli	Serie A	£3,058,862 (£58,824)	\$3,823,578 (\$73,530)
73 (71)	West Ham	EPL	£3,022,240 (£58,120)	\$3,777,800 (\$72,650)
74 (86)	Minnesota Vikings	NFL	£3,000,088 (£57,694)	\$3,750,110 (\$72,118)
75 (93)	Pittsburgh Steelers	NFL	£2,996,257 (£57,620)	\$3,745,321 (\$72,025)
76 (126)	New Orleans Saints	NFL	£2,955,064 (£56,828)	\$3,693,831 (\$71,035)
77 (67)	Cleveland Indians	MLB	£2,919,721 (£56,148)	\$3,649,651 (\$70,186)
78 (101)	Green Bay Packers	NFL	£2,917,696 (£56,110)	\$3,647,120 (\$70,137)
79 (68)	Minnesota Twins	MLB	£2,910,188 (£55,965)	\$3,637,734 (\$69,956)
80 (134)	New York Jets	NFL	£2,907,032 (£55,904)	\$3,633,790 (\$69,881)
81 (80)	Crystal Palace	EPL	£2,887,500 (£55,529)	\$3,609,375 (\$69,411)
82 (108)	Detroit Lions	NFL	£2,858,812 (£54,977)	\$3,573,515 (\$68,721)
83 (96)	San Francisco 49ers	NFL	£2,775,870 (£53,382)	\$3,469,837 (\$66,728)
84 (74)	Texas Rangers	MLB	£2,755,434 (£52,989)	\$3,444,293 (\$66,236)
85 (65)	Milan	Serie A	£2,752,976 (£52,942)	\$3,441,220 (\$66,177)
86 (92)	Tampa Bay Bucs	NFL	£2,708,131 (£52,079)	\$3,385,163 (\$65,099)
87 (97)	Tennessee Titans	NFL	£2,673,665 (£51,417)	\$3,342,081 (\$64,271)
88 (121)	Oakland Raiders	NFL	£2,661,634 (£51,185)	\$3,327,042 (\$63,982)
89 (84)	Minnesota Wild	NHL	£2,654,000 (£51,038)	\$3,317,500 (\$63,798)
90 (45)	Seattle Mariners	MLB	£2,638,382 (£50,738)	\$3,297,977 (\$63,423)
91 (88)	Pittsburgh Penguins	NHL	£2,622,742 (£50,437)	\$3,278,428 (\$63,047)
92 (152)	Buffalo Bills	NFL	£2,618,633 (£50,358)	\$3,273,291 (\$62,948)
93 (99)	Denver Broncos	NFL	£2,605,349 (£50,103)	\$3,256,686 (\$62,629)
94 (85)	Jacksonville Jaguars	NFL	£2,587,467 (£49,759)	\$3,234,333 (\$62,199)
95 (112)	New England Patriots	NFL	£2,566,789 (£49,361)	\$3,208,486 (\$61,702)
96 (100)	St Louis Blues	NHL	£2,550,080 (£49,040)	\$3,187,600 (\$61,300)
97 (116)	Bayer Leverkusen	Bundesliga	£2,549,201 (£49,023)	\$3,186,501 (\$61,279)
98 (107)	Los Angeles Rams	NFL	£2,542,268 (£48,890)	\$3,177,835 (\$61,112)
99 (144)	Seattle Seahawks	NFL	£2,532,659 (£48,705)	\$3,165,824 (\$60,881)
100 (89)	Nashville Predators	NHL	£2,530,273 (£48,659)	\$3,162,841 (\$60,824)
101 (137)	Arizona Cardinals	NFL	£2,525,526 (£48,568)	\$3,156,908 (\$60,710)
102 (114)	Cleveland Browns	NFL	£2,521,090 (£48,483)	\$3,151,363 (\$60,603)
103 (73)	Detroit Tigers	MLB	£2,499,160 (£48,061)	\$3,123,950 (\$60,076)
104 (75)	Valencia	La Liga	£2,499,098 (£48,060)	\$3,123,873 (\$60,074)
105 (129)	Vegas Golden Knights	NHL	£2,497,385 (£48,027)	\$3,121,731 (\$60,033)
106 (120)	Cincinnati Bengals	NFL	£2,482,754 (£47,745)	\$3,103,443 (\$59,682)

## 107-155

RANK (LAST YEAR)	TEAM	LEAGUE	Avg Annual Pay £ (Avg Weekly Pay)	Avg Annual Pay \$ (Avg Weekly Pay)
107 (113)	Colorado Avalanche	NHL	£2,474,417 (£47,585)	\$3,093,021 (\$59,481)
108 (135)	Houston Texans	NFL	£2,461,782 (£47,342)	\$3,077,228 (\$59,177)
109 (95)	Cincinnati Reds	MLB	£2,459,403 (£47,296)	\$3,074,254 (\$59,120)
110 (106)	Buffalo Sabres	NHL	£2,454,000 (£47,192)	\$3,067,500 (\$58,990)
111 (90)	Winnipeg Jets	NHL	£2,450,278 (£47,121)	\$3,062,847 (\$58,901)
112 (111)	Florida Panthers	NHL	£2,444,741 (£47,014)	\$3,055,926 (\$58,768)
113 (102)	Carolina Panthers	NFL	£2,441,242 (£46,947)	\$3,051,553 (\$58,684)
114 (98)	Calgary Flames	NHL	£2,438,609 (£46,896)	\$3,048,261 (\$58,620)
115 (104)	Chicago Bears	NFL	£2,405,743 (£46,264)	\$3,007,179 (\$57,830)
116 (133)	Kansas City Chiefs	NFL	£2,394,393 (£46,046)	\$2,992,991 (\$57,558)
117 (127)	New York Giants	NFL	£2,394,162 (£46,042)	\$2,992,702 (\$57,552)
118 (145)	Dallas Cowboys	NFL	£2,379,184 (£45,754)	\$2,973,979 (\$57,192)
119 (155)	San Diego Padres	MLB	£2,373,096 (£45,636)	\$2,966,369 (\$57,046)
120 (153)	New Jersey Devils	NHL	£2,372,417 (£45,623)	\$2,965,521 (\$57,029)
121 (140)	Columbus Blue Jackets	NHL	£2,335,256 (£44,909)	\$2,919,070 (\$56,136)
122 (148)	Carolina Hurricanes	NHL	£2,328,727 (£44,783)	\$2,910,909 (\$55,979)
123 (142)	Baltimore Ravens	NFL	£2,315,488 (£44,529)	\$2,894,360 (\$55,661)
124 (154)	Indianapolis Colts	NFL	£2,310,945 (£44,441)	\$2,888,681 (\$55,552)
125 (83)	Southampton	EPL	£2,299,440 (£44,220)	\$2,874,300 (\$55,275)
126 (173)	Monaco	Ligue 1	£2,269,960 (£43,653)	\$2,837,450 (\$54,566)
127 (136)	Anaheim Ducks	NHL	£2,260,385 (£43,469)	\$2,825,481 (\$54,336)
128 (110)	Philadelphia Flyers	NHL	£2,257,913 (£43,421)	\$2,822,391 (\$54,277)
129 (94)	Chicago White Sox	MLB	£2,257,048 (£43,405)	\$2,821,310 (\$54,256)
130 (169)	Oakland Athletics	MLB	£2,212,529 (£42,549)	\$2,765,661 (\$53,186)
131 (125)	Washington Redskins	NFL	£2,212,154 (£42,541)	\$2,765,193 (\$53,177)
132 (156)	Arizona Coyotes	NHL	£2,206,600 (£42,435)	\$2,758,250 (\$53,043)
133 (159)	Wolves	EPL	£2,197,565 (£42,261)	\$2,746,957 (\$52,826)
134 (138)	Dallas Stars	NHL	£2,167,000 (£41,673)	\$2,708,750 (\$52,091)
135 (119)	Detroit Red Wings	NHL	£2,139,680 (£41,148)	\$2,674,600 (\$51,435)
136 (131)	New York Islanders	NHL	£2,113,778 (£40,650)	\$2,642,222 (\$50,812)
137 (124)	Los Angeles Chargers	NFL	£2,104,538 (£40,472)	\$2,630,672 (\$50,590)
138 (166)	Newcastle	EPL	£2,086,240 (£40,120)	\$2,607,800 (\$50,150)
139 (157)	Watford	EPL	£2,025,111 (£38,944)	\$2,531,389 (\$48,681)
140 (72)	Arizona Diamondbacks	MLB	£2,023,288 (£38,909)	\$2,529,110 (\$48,637)
141 (149)	Chicago Blackhawks	NHL	£2,015,414 (£38,758)	\$2,519,268 (\$48,447)
142 (122)	Tampa Bay Lightning	NHL	£1,979,417 (£38,066)	\$2,474,271 (\$47,582)
143 (79)	Sevilla	La Liga	£1,973,490 (£37,952)	\$2,466,862 (\$47,440)
144 (-)	Aston Villa	EPL	£1,965,600 (£37,800)	\$2,457,000 (\$47,250)
145 (117)	New York Rangers	NHL	£1,935,273 (£37,217)	\$2,419,091 (\$46,521)
146 (174)	RB Leipzig	Bundesliga	£1,933,091 (£37,175)	\$2,416,364 (\$46,469)
147 (172)	Lazio	Serie A	£1,931,662 (£37,147)	\$2,414,578 (\$46,434)
148 (146)	Wolfsburg	Bundesliga	£1,928,316 (£37,083)	\$2,410,395 (\$46,354)
149 (151)	Edmonton Oilers	NHL	£1,924,214 (£37,004)	\$2,405,268 (\$46,255)
150 (109)	Washington Capitals	NHL	£1,922,538 (£36,972)	\$2,403,173 (\$46,215)
151 (141)	Bournemouth	EPL	£1,917,760 (£36,880)	\$2,397,200 (\$46,100)
152 (168)	Burnley	EPL	£1,915,333 (£36,833)	\$2,394,167 (\$46,042)
153 (147)	Boston Bruins	NHL	£1,906,385 (£36,661)	\$2,382,981 (\$45,827)
154 (103)	San Jose Sharks	NHL	£1,899,667 (£36,532)	\$2,374,583 (\$

## 156-204

RANK (LAST YEAR)	TEAM	LEAGUE	AVG ANNUAL PAY £ (AVG WEEKLY PAY)	AVG ANNUAL PAY \$ (AVG WEEKLY PAY)
156 (82)	Los Angeles Kings	NHL	£1,864,160 (£35,849)	\$2,330,200 (\$44,812)
157 (58)	Baltimore Orioles	MLB	£1,852,334 (£35,622)	\$2,315,417 (\$44,527)
158 (165)	Shanghai SIPG	CSL	£1,832,419 (£35,239)	\$2,290,524 (\$44,049)
159 (163)	Guangzhou Evergrande	CSL	£1,823,054 (£35,059)	\$2,278,818 (\$43,823)
160 (161)	Brighton	EPL	£1,805,304 (£34,717)	\$2,256,630 (\$43,397)
161 (77)	Kansas City Royals	MLB	£1,785,747 (£34,341)	\$2,232,184 (\$42,927)
162 (130)	Schalke	Bundesliga	£1,748,145 (£33,618)	\$2,185,181 (\$42,023)
163 (150)	Ottawa Senators	NHL	£1,728,815 (£33,246)	\$2,161,019 (\$41,558)
164 (158)	Athletic Bilbao	La Liga	£1,674,220 (£32,197)	\$2,092,775 (\$40,246)
165 (164)	Montreal Canadiens	NHL	£1,671,037 (£32,135)	\$2,088,796 (\$40,169)
166 (139)	Miami Marlins	MLB	£1,652,869 (£31,786)	\$2,066,086 (\$39,732)
167 (132)	Miami Dolphins	NFL	£1,641,145 (£31,560)	\$2,051,431 (\$39,451)
168 (170)	Vancouver Canucks	NHL	£1,617,417 (£31,104)	\$2,021,771 (\$38,880)
169 (167)	Hebei China Fortune	CSL	£1,610,425 (£30,970)	\$2,013,031 (\$38,712)
170 (128)	Marseille	Ligue 1	£1,609,766 (£30,957)	\$2,012,208 (\$38,696)
171 (143)	Tampa Bay Rays	MLB	£1,580,422 (£30,393)	\$1,975,527 (\$37,991)
172 (49)	Toronto Blue Jays	MLB	£1,541,140 (£29,637)	\$1,926,425 (\$37,047)
173 (177)	Borussia Monchengladbach	Bundesliga	£1,535,462 (£29,528)	\$1,919,327 (\$36,910)
174 (180)	Torino	Serie A	£1,458,333 (£28,045)	\$1,822,917 (\$35,056)
175 (162)	Villarreal	La Liga	£1,383,633 (£26,608)	\$1,729,542 (\$33,260)
176 (183)	Hoffenheim	Bundesliga	£1,359,973 (£26,153)	\$1,699,966 (\$32,692)
177 (118)	Pittsburgh Pirates	MLB	£1,352,612 (£26,012)	\$1,690,764 (\$32,515)
178 (235)	Dalian Yifang	CSL	£1,320,105 (£25,387)	\$1,650,131 (\$31,733)
179 (178)	Celta Vigo	La Liga	£1,287,325 (£24,756)	\$1,609,156 (\$30,945)
180 (194)	Bologna	Serie A	£1,258,929 (£24,210)	\$1,573,661 (\$30,263)
181 (186)	Vissel Kobe	J.League	£1,257,790 (£24,188)	\$1,572,238 (\$30,235)
182 (175)	Real Sociedad	La Liga	£1,253,606 (£24,108)	\$1,567,008 (\$30,135)
183 (197)	Werder Bremen	Bundesliga	£1,252,983 (£24,096)	\$1,566,229 (\$30,120)
184 (196)	Eintracht Frankfurt	Bundesliga	£1,230,655 (£23,666)	\$1,538,319 (\$29,583)
185 (185)	Toronto Maple Leafs	NHL	£1,230,069 (£23,655)	\$1,537,586 (\$29,569)
186 (176)	Fukuoka SoftBank Hawks	NPB	£1,214,599 (£23,358)	\$1,518,248 (\$29,197)
187 (188)	Fiorentina	Serie A	£1,204,427 (£23,162)	\$1,505,534 (\$28,953)
188 (211)	Shanghai Shenua	CSL	£1,197,164 (£23,022)	\$1,496,455 (\$28,778)
189 (189)	Jiangsu Suning	CSL	£1,194,117 (£22,964)	\$1,492,647 (\$28,705)
190 (179)	Real Betis	La Liga	£1,181,752 (£22,726)	\$1,477,191 (\$28,408)
191 (187)	Yomiuri Giants	NPB	£1,173,710 (£22,571)	\$1,467,138 (\$28,214)
192 (198)	Shandong Luneng	CSL	£1,156,687 (£22,244)	\$1,445,859 (\$27,805)
193 (200)	Cagliari	Serie A	£1,150,452 (£22,124)	\$1,438,064 (\$27,655)
194 (190)	Lille	Ligue 1	£1,062,131 (£20,426)	\$1,327,664 (\$25,532)
195 (201)	Hertha Berlin	Bundesliga	£1,036,288 (£19,929)	\$1,295,360 (\$24,911)
196 (207)	Atalanta	Serie A	£1,025,492 (£19,721)	\$1,281,865 (\$24,651)
197 (182)	Espanyol	La Liga	£1,004,186 (£19,311)	\$1,255,233 (\$24,139)
198 (205)	Genoa	Serie A	£999,504 (£19,221)	\$1,249,380 (\$24,027)
199 (-)	Norwich	EPL	£991,000 (£19,058)	\$1,238,750 (\$23,822)
200 (-)	FC Koln	Bundesliga	£979,537 (£18,837)	\$1,224,422 (\$23,547)
201 (191)	Sampdoria	Serie A	£959,325 (£18,449)	\$1,199,157 (\$23,061)
202 (208)	Sassuolo	Serie A	£915,751 (£17,611)	\$1,144,689 (\$22,013)
203 (246)	Guangzhou	R&F CSL	£910,051 (£17,501)	\$1,137,564 (\$21,876)
204 (199)	Celtic	SPL	£895,564 (£17,222)	\$1,119,455 (\$21,528)

## 205-254

RANK (LAST YEAR)	TEAM	LEAGUE	AVG ANNUAL PAY £ (AVG WEEKLY PAY)	AVG ANNUAL PAY \$ (AVG WEEKLY PAY)
205 (-)	Lecce	Serie A	£852,055 (£16,386)	\$1,065,068 (\$20,482)
206 (225)	Parma	Serie A	£832,738 (£16,014)	\$1,040,923 (\$20,018)
207 (229)	Augsburg	Bundesliga	£813,708 (£15,648)	\$1,017,136 (\$19,560)
208 (203)	Saint-Etienne	Ligue 1	£806,746 (£15,514)	\$1,008,433 (\$19,393)
209 (234)	SPAL	Serie A	£791,667 (£15,224)	\$989,583 (\$19,030)
210 (195)	Beijing Guoan	CSL	£789,867 (£15,190)	\$987,333 (\$18,987)
211 (204)	Rennes	Ligue 1	£780,481 (£15,009)	\$975,602 (\$18,762)
212 (209)	Hanshin Tigers	NPB	£780,389 (£15,007)	\$975,487 (\$18,759)
213 (202)	Leganes	La Liga	£757,602 (£14,569)	\$947,003 (\$18,212)
214 (241)	Tianjin Teda	CSL	£731,633 (£14,070)	914,541 (\$17,587)
215 (-)	Sheff Utd	EPL	£728,000 (£14,000)	\$910,000 (\$17,500)
216 (216)	Levante	La Liga	£700,637 (£13,474)	\$875,796 (\$16,842)
217 (223)	Tokyo Yakult Swallows	NPB	£699,757 (£13,457)	\$874,696 (\$16,821)
218 (215)	Getafe	La Liga	£696,906 (£13,402)	\$871,133 (\$16,753)
219 (220)	Mainz	Bundesliga	£681,484 (£13,105)	\$851,855 (\$16,382)
220 (226)	Udinese	Serie A	£675,843 (£12,997)	\$844,804 (\$16,246)
221 (221)	Bordeaux	Ligue 1	£657,031 (£12,635)	\$821,288 (\$15,794)
222 (230)	Hiroshima Toyo Carp	NPB	£651,034 (£12,520)	\$813,793 (\$15,650)
223 (227)	Tohoku Rakuten Golden Eagles	NPB	£650,243 (£12,505)	\$812,804 (\$15,631)
224 (243)	Rangers	SPL	£649,771 (£12,496)	\$812,213 (\$15,619)
225 (-)	Granada	La Liga	£645,598 (£12,415)	\$806,998 (\$15,519)
226 (233)	Yokohama DeNA Bay Stars	NPB	£636,910 (£12,248)	\$796,137 (\$15,310)
227 (213)	Eibar	La Liga	£634,282 (£12,198)	\$792,852 (\$15,247)
228 (222)	Saitama Seibu Lions	NPB	£613,260 (£11,793)	\$766,575 (\$14,742)
229 (214)	Toronto FC	MLS	£606,677 (£11,667)	\$758,346 (\$14,584)
230 (239)	Fortuna Dusseldorf	Bundesliga	£604,020 (£11,616)	\$755,025 (\$14,520)
231 (212)	Nice	Ligue 1	£593,511 (£11,414)	\$741,889 (\$14,267)
232 (-)	Wuhan Zall	CSL	£590,038 (£11,347)	\$737,547 (\$14,184)
233 (244)	Freiburg	Bundesliga	£582,394 (£11,200)	\$727,992 (\$14,000)
234 (254)	Montpellier	Ligue 1	£544,706 (£10,475)	\$680,882 (\$13,094)
235 (228)	Nantes	Ligue 1	£543,609 (£10,454)	\$679,511 (\$13,068)
236 (-)	Union Berlin	Bundesliga	£541,123 (£10,406)	\$676,404 (\$13,008)
237 (266)	Chongqing Lifan	CSL	£533,646 (£10,262)	\$667,058 (\$12,828)
238 (242)	Hokkaido Nippon Ham Fighters	NPB	£529,562 (£10,184)	\$661,953 (\$12,730)
239 (247)	Chiba Lotte Marines	NPB	£528,078 (£10,155)	\$660,097 (\$12,694)
240 (261)	Henan Jianye	CSL	£523,754 (£10,072)	\$654,693 (\$12,590)
241 (240)	LA Galaxy	MLS	£523,303 (£10,064)	\$654,129 (\$12,579)
242 (-)	Hellas Verona	Serie A	£514,593 (£9,896)	\$643,241 (\$12,370)
243 (206)	Alaves	La Liga	£510,792 (£9,823)	\$638,490 (\$12,279)
244 (245)	Chunichi Dragons	NPB	£497,567 (£9,569)	\$621,959 (\$11,961)
245 (249)	Chicago Fire	MLS	£488,999 (£9,404)	\$611,249 (\$11,755)
246 (237)	Toulouse	Ligue 1	£487,059 (£9,367)	\$608,824 (\$11,708)
247 (-)	Mallorca	La Liga	£484,370 (£9,315)	\$605,463 (\$11,644)
248 (-)	Brescia	Serie A	£464,744 (£8,937)	\$580,929 (\$11,172)
249 (218)	Orix Buffaloes	NPB	£426,521 (£8,202)	\$533,151 (\$10,253)
250 (-)	Shenzhen FC	CSL	£418,528 (£8,049)	\$523,160 (\$10,061)
251 (258)	LAFC	MLS	£407,999 (£7,846)	\$509,998 (\$9,808)
252 (232)	Valladolid	La Liga	£406,563 (£7,81	

# 255-302

RANK (LAST YEAR)	TEAM	LEAGUE	Avg Annual Pay £ (Avg Weekly Pay)	Avg Annual Pay \$ (Avg Weekly Pay)
255 (251)	Angers	Ligue 1	£392,968 (£7,557)	\$491,210 (\$9,446)
256 (260)	Seattle Sounders	MLS	£390,812 (£7,516)	\$488,515 (\$9,395)
257 (253)	Strasbourg	Ligue 1	£372,095 (£7,156)	\$465,119 (\$8,945)
258 (271)	Portland Timbers	MLS	£371,968 (£7,153)	\$464,960 (\$8,942)
259 (-)	Osasuna	La Liga	£362,245 (£6,966)	\$452,806 (\$8,708)
260 (267)	Urawa Red Diamonds	J.League	£357,947 (£6,884)	\$447,433 (\$8,604)
261 (262)	Montreal Impact	MLS	£350,727 (£6,745)	\$438,409 (\$8,431)
262 (319)	Sagan Tosu	J.League	£344,838 (£6,632)	\$431,048 (\$8,289)
263 (279)	Orlando City	MLS	£335,086 (£6,444)	\$418,858 (\$8,055)
264 (-)	Paderborn	Bundesliga	£334,998 (£6,442)	\$418,748 (\$8,053)
265 (265)	Sporting Kansas City	MLS	£332,984 (£6,404)	\$416,230 (\$8,004)
266 (270)	Kawasaki Frontale	J.League	£330,852 (£6,363)	\$413,564 (\$7,953)
267 (282)	New England Revolution	MLS	£327,945 (£6,307)	\$409,932 (\$7,883)
268 (252)	Dijon	Ligue 1	£327,186 (£6,292)	\$408,983 (\$7,865)
269 (275)	Amiens	Ligue 1	£325,263 (£6,255)	\$406,579 (\$7,819)
270 (268)	Atlanta United	MLS	£323,928 (£6,229)	\$404,910 (\$7,787)
271 (257)	Reims	Ligue 1	£320,097 (£6,156)	\$400,121 (\$7,695)
272 (283)	Minnesota United	MLS	£303,785 (£5,842)	\$379,732 (\$7,303)
273 (272)	DC United	MLS	£302,082 (£5,809)	\$377,603 (\$7,262)
274 (264)	Nagoya Grampus	J.League	£300,753 (£5,784)	\$375,942 (\$7,230)
275 (255)	New York City FC	MLS	£297,588 (£5,723)	\$371,985 (\$7,154)
276 (-)	Metz	Ligue 1	£296,843 (£5,709)	\$371,054 (\$7,136)
277 (290)	Columbus Crew	MLS	£292,817 (£5,631)	\$366,021 (\$7,039)
278 (291)	Real Salt Lake	MLS	£286,911 (£5,518)	\$358,638 (\$6,897)
279 (-)	Brest	Ligue 1	£283,354 (£5,449)	\$354,193 (\$6,811)
280 (281)	San Jose Earthquakes	MLS	£273,935 (£5,268)	\$342,419 (\$6,585)
281 (276)	Philadelphia Union	MLS	£271,110 (£5,214)	\$338,887 (\$6,517)
282 (273)	Kashima Antlers	J.League	£248,710 (£4,783)	\$310,888 (\$5,979)
283 (274)	Colorado Rapids	MLS	£245,714 (£4,725)	\$307,143 (\$5,907)
284 (313)	Houston Dynamo	MLS	£241,237 (£4,639)	\$301,547 (\$5,799)
285 (296)	New York Red Bulls	MLS	£239,143 (£4,599)	\$298,929 (\$5,749)
286 (278)	Nimes	Ligue 1	£238,817 (£4,593)	\$298,522 (\$5,741)
287 (-)	FC Cincinnati	MLS	£231,877 (£4,459)	\$289,846 (\$5,574)
288 (285)	FC Dallas	MLS	£226,340 (£4,353)	\$282,925 (\$5,441)
289 (295)	Vancouver Whitecaps	MLS	£217,390 (£4,181)	\$271,738 (\$5,226)
290 (286)	Richmond	AFL	£210,503 (£4,048)	\$263,128 (\$5,060)
291 (304)	West Coast Eagles	AFL	£206,662 (£3,974)	\$258,328 (\$4,968)
292 (292)	Sydney Swans	AFL	£206,630 (£3,974)	\$258,287 (\$4,967)
293 (277)	Cerezo Osaka	J.League	£205,994 (£3,961)	\$257,493 (\$4,952)
294 (297)	Brisbane Lions	AFL	£204,806 (£3,939)	\$256,008 (\$4,923)
295 (302)	St Kilda	AFL	£204,806 (£3,939)	\$256,008 (\$4,923)
296 (306)	Carlton	AFL	£204,796 (£3,938)	\$255,995 (\$4,923)
297 (287)	Greater Western Sydney	AFL	£203,381 (£3,911)	\$254,226 (\$4,889)
298 (300)	Port Adelaide	AFL	£203,366 (£3,911)	\$254,208 (\$4,889)
299 (299)	Gold Coast	AFL	£203,352 (£3,911)	\$254,190 (\$4,888)
300 (284)	FC Tokyo	J.League	£203,249 (£3,909)	\$254,062 (\$4,886)
301 (305)	Western Bulldogs	AFL	£202,375 (£3,892)	\$252,969 (\$4,865)
302 (303)	Fremantle	AFL	£200,925 (£3,864)	\$251,156 (\$4,830)

# 303-350

RANK (LAST YEAR)	TEAM	LEAGUE	Avg Annual Pay £ (Avg Weekly Pay)	Avg Annual Pay \$ (Avg Weekly Pay)
303 (294)	Collingwood	AFL	£200,915 (£3,864)	\$251,143 (\$4,830)
304 (298)	Hawthorn	AFL	£199,475 (£3,836)	\$249,344 (\$4,795)
305 (288)	Adelaide Crows	AFL	£199,044 (£3,828)	\$248,805 (\$4,785)
306 (307)	Melbourne	AFL	£199,044 (£3,828)	\$248,805 (\$4,785)
307 (293)	Geelong	AFL	£197,996 (£3,808)	\$247,495 (\$4,760)
308 (301)	North Melbourne	AFL	£197,594 (£3,800)	\$246,992 (\$4,750)
309 (289)	Essendon	AFL	£196,201 (£3,773)	\$245,251 (\$4,716)
310 (308)	Shimizu S-Pulse	J.League	£194,512 (£3,741)	\$243,140 (\$4,676)
311 (311)	Jubilo Iwata	J.League	£171,582 (£3,300)	\$214,477 (\$4,125)
312 (280)	Gamba Osaka	J.League	£169,526 (£3,260)	\$211,907 (\$4,075)
313 (310)	Yokohama F Marinos	J.League	£161,665 (£3,109)	\$202,082 (\$3,886)
314 (315)	Consadole Sapporo	J.League	£161,226 (£3,101)	\$201,533 (\$3,876)
315 (309)	Sanfrecce Hiroshima	J.League	£155,157 (£2,984)	\$193,946 (\$3,730)
316 (320)	Vegalta Sendai	J.League	£141,774 (£2,726)	\$177,218 (\$3,408)
317 (314)	Aberdeen	SPL	£140,461 (£2,701)	\$175,576 (\$3,376)
318 (317)	Hearts	SPL	£137,942 (£2,653)	\$172,428 (\$3,316)
319 (-)	Matsumoto Yamaga	J.League	£120,209 (£2,312)	\$150,261 (\$2,890)
320 (318)	Hibernian	SPL	£119,700 (£2,302)	\$149,625 (\$2,877)
321 (316)	Shonan Bellmare	J.League	£105,931 (£2,037)	\$132,413 (\$2,546)
322 (322)	Calgary Stampeders	CFL	£80,735 (£1,553)	\$100,919 (\$1,941)
323 (326)	Ottawa Redblacks	CFL	£74,468 (£1,432)	\$93,085 (\$1,790)
324 (323)	Saskatchewan Roughriders	CFL	£73,686 (£1,417)	\$92,107 (\$1,771)
325 (325)	Winnipeg Blue Bombers	CFL	£71,410 (£1,373)	\$89,262 (\$1,717)
326 (324)	Edmonton Eskimos	CFL	£71,185 (£1,369)	\$88,982 (\$1,711)
327 (328)	Hamilton Tiger-Cats	CFL	£69,855 (£1,343)	\$87,319 (\$1,679)
328 (336)	Kilmarnock	SPL	£68,412 (£1,316)	\$85,514 (\$1,645)
329 (329)	BC Lions	CFL	£68,091 (£1,309)	\$85,113 (\$1,637)
330 (330)	Montreal Alouettes	CFL	£64,806 (£1,246)	\$81,008 (\$1,558)
331 (321)	Toronto Argonauts	CFL	£64,463 (£1,240)	\$80,579 (\$1,550)
332 (345)	St Johnstone	SPL	£62,691 (£1,206)	\$78,364 (\$1,507)
333 (331)	Phoenix Mercury	WNBA	£62,099 (£1,194)	\$81,709 (\$1,571)
334 (342)	Chicago Sky	WNBA	£61,120 (£1,175)	\$80,421 (\$1,547)
335 (339)	Atlanta Dream	WNBA	£60,114 (£1,156)	\$79,098 (\$1,521)
336 (341)	Washington Mystics	WNBA	£59,609 (£1,146)	\$78,433 (\$1,508)
337 (347)	Motherwell	SPL	£59,304 (£1,140)	\$74,130 (\$1,426)
338 (340)	Connecticut Sun	WNBA	£59,143 (£1,137)	\$77,820 (\$1,497)
339 (344)	Las Vegas Aces	WNBA	£58,995 (£1,135)	\$77,624 (\$1,493)
340 (332)	Los Angeles Sparks	WNBA	£58,123 (£1,118)	\$76,477 (\$1,471)
341 (337)	Seattle Storm	WNBA	£56,815 (£1,093)	\$74,757 (\$1,438)
342 (-)	Oita Trinita	J.League	£56,465 (£1,086)	\$70,581 (\$1,357)
343 (334)	Minnesota Lynx	WNBA	£56,405 (£1,085)	\$74,217 (\$1,427)
344 (-)	Ross County	SPL	£55,574 (£1,069)	\$69,467 (\$1,336)
345 (338)	New York Liberty	WNBA	£53,747 (£1,034)	\$70,720 (\$1,360)
346 (343)	Indiana Fever	WNBA	£51,429 (£989)	\$67,669 (\$1,301)
347 (348)	St Mirren	SPL	£48,621 (£935)	\$60,776 (\$1,169)
348 (333)	Dallas Wings	WNBA	£48,048 (£924)	\$63,221 (\$1,216)
349 (349)	Livingston	SPL	£43,105 (£829)	\$53,881 (\$1,036)
350 (346)	Hamilton	SPL	£41,154 (£791)	\$51,443 (\$989)

# NBA ANALYSIS

## NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION



**TEAMS  
30**

**PLAYERS  
440**

TOTAL SALARIES:  
**£2,929,321,798**  
**\$3,661,652,248**

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:  
**£6,657,550** (UP 12.7% YEAR-ON-YEAR)  
**\$8,321,937**

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:  
**No1 LEAGUE**

MEDIAN SALARY:  
**£3,200,000**  
**\$4,000,000**

### THE STATE OF PLAY

The NBA remains comfortably the best paid sports league in the world by average salary, cementing that status with another annual hike in wages, this time by 12.7% in a year.

NBA average pay levels have rocketed since the current 9-year \$24 billion TV deals came on stream in 2016-17. They soared from \$4.6m in 2015-16 to \$6.4m a year later, then rose again to \$7.1m in 2017-18, again to \$7.8m last year, and now to more than \$8.32m a year.

Our NBA figures for 2019-20 include only the 440 'full-time' NBA players on the opening day rosters, and not the two-way (TW) players who are effectively the developmental part-timers.

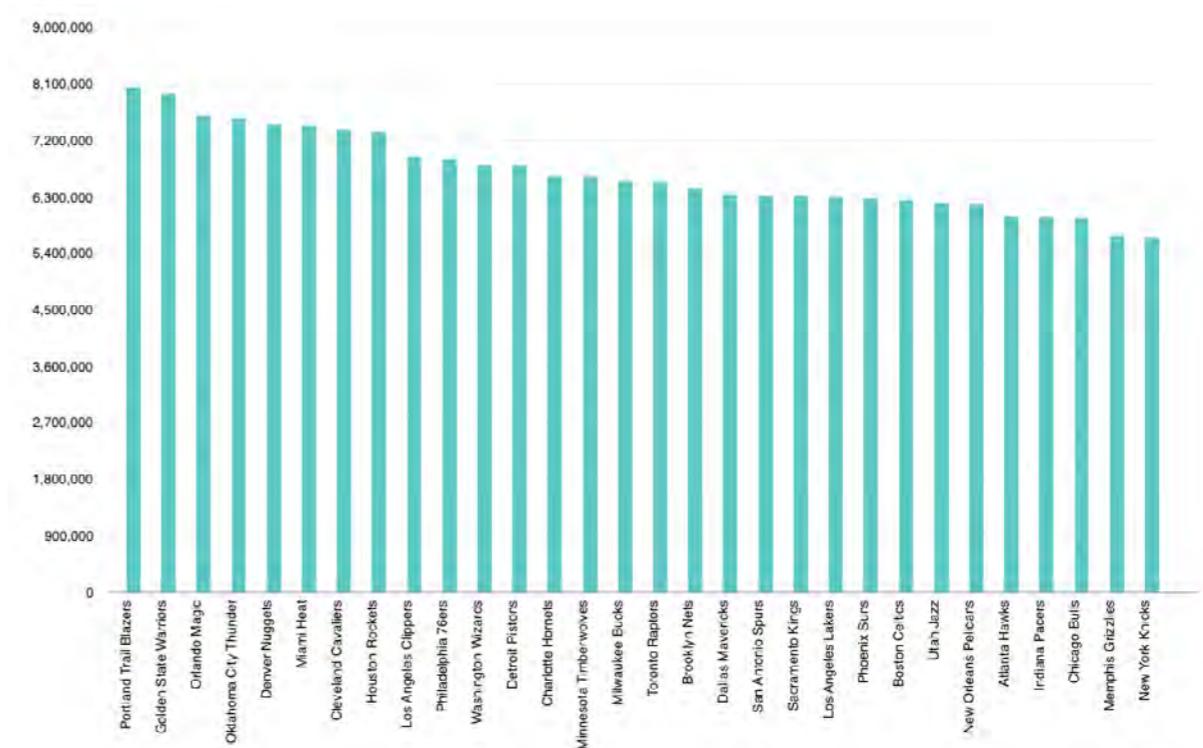
No fewer than 123 of the 440 players will make at least \$10m this season for their on-court activity alone, or 28% of the players.

### THE MONEY TALK

If the money talks, then big things should be expected of Portland Trail Blazers, Golden State Warriors, Orlando Magic and Oklahoma City Thunder to name the top four payers by average salary. The early stage of the season has thrown doubt on that. More reliable - for most years of the GSSS series at least - is that if an NBA team is among the 10 lowest paid teams by our metric, their chances of reaching the post-season are considerably diminished compared to other teams.

### AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, NBA, 2019-20 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	Avg Annual Per Player, £	Avg Annual Per Player, \$
1	Portland Trail Blazers	£8,031,862	\$10,039,828
2	Golden State Warriors	£7,937,513	\$9,921,892
3	Orlando Magic	£7,580,606	\$9,475,757
4	Oklahoma City Thunder	£7,545,658	\$9,432,072
5	Denver Nuggets	£7,449,554	\$9,311,943
6	Miami Heat	£7,438,863	\$9,298,579
7	Cleveland Cavaliers	£7,365,725	\$9,207,157
8	Houston Rockets	£7,328,490	\$9,160,612
9	Los Angeles Clippers	£6,935,044	\$8,668,805
10	Philadelphia 76ers	£6,897,440	\$8,621,800
11	Washington Wizards	£6,800,264	\$8,500,330
12	Detroit Pistons	£6,779,675	\$8,474,594
13	Charlotte Hornets	£6,625,909	\$8,282,386
14	Minnesota Timberwolves	£6,617,213	\$8,271,517
15	Milwaukee Bucks	£6,534,807	\$8,168,508
16	Toronto Raptors	£6,520,233	\$8,150,291
17	Brooklyn Nets	£6,429,059	\$8,036,324
18	Dallas Mavericks	£6,333,432	\$7,916,790
19	San Antonio Spurs	£6,305,720	\$7,882,150
20	Sacramento Kings	£6,301,303	\$7,876,629
21	Los Angeles Lakers	£6,286,190	\$7,857,738
22	Phoenix Suns	£6,262,365	\$7,827,956
23	Boston Celtics	£6,245,338	\$7,806,673
24	Utah Jazz	£6,191,232	\$7,739,041
25	New Orleans Pelicans	£6,180,056	\$7,725,070
26	Atlanta Hawks	£5,980,159	\$7,475,199
27	Indiana Pacers	£5,971,367	\$7,464,208
28	Chicago Bulls	£5,958,427	\$7,448,034
29	Memphis Grizzlies	£5,673,155	\$7,091,444
30	New York Knicks	£5,662,249	\$7,077,811



# NBA ANALYSIS

## NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION



SUCCESS LEADS TO POPULARITY? SOCIAL MEDIA SAYS...

TEAM	TWITTER	INSTAGRAM	FACEBOOK	TOTAL
Los Angeles Lakers	8,155,399	9,960,137	21,583,829	<b>39,699,365</b>
Golden State Warriors	6,382,948	13,201,981	11,695,064	<b>31,279,993</b>
Chicago Bulls	4,113,064	4,776,771	17,651,233	<b>26,541,068</b>
Miami Heat	4,677,528	3,710,653	15,188,432	<b>23,576,613</b>
Houston Rockets	2,972,379	4,344,989	12,974,848	<b>20,292,216</b>
Cleveland Cavaliers	3,255,990	7,451,311	8,537,880	<b>19,245,181</b>
Boston Celtics	3,489,217	4,583,689	8,982,943	<b>17,055,849</b>
Oklahoma City Thunder	2,761,474	4,387,822	7,022,622	<b>14,171,918</b>
San Antonio Spurs	3,471,531	2,866,486	7,017,398	<b>13,355,415</b>
New York Knicks	2,154,511	2,313,686	5,808,330	<b>10,276,527</b>
Sacramento Kings	1,065,005	1,315,785	7,735,945	<b>10,116,735</b>
LA Clippers	1,533,715	2,670,642	3,806,452	<b>8,010,809</b>
Toronto Raptors	2,114,854	2,994,500	2,672,265	<b>7,781,619</b>
Dallas Mavericks	1,632,318	1,412,667	4,364,820	<b>7,409,805</b>
Indiana Pacers	1,228,323	1,684,935	3,233,798	<b>6,147,056</b>
Philadelphia 76ers	1,812,422	2,235,941	1,752,623	<b>5,800,986</b>
Brooklyn Nets	1,055,105	1,826,072	2,734,352	<b>5,615,529</b>
Washington Wizards	1,017,624	1,397,876	3,191,765	<b>5,607,265</b>
Portland Trail Blazers	1,253,838	1,648,030	2,453,147	<b>5,355,015</b>
Milwaukee Bucks	1,130,626	2,341,409	1,843,668	<b>5,315,703</b>
Orlando Magic	1,492,566	1,027,624	2,736,367	<b>5,256,557</b>
Minnesota Timberwolves	968,057	1,696,954	1,882,062	<b>4,547,073</b>
New Orleans Pelicans	1,011,403	1,697,066	1,758,523	<b>4,466,992</b>
Phoenix Suns	1,086,645	1,269,761	1,878,933	<b>4,235,339</b>
Atlanta Hawks	1,253,734	1,177,581	1,607,529	<b>4,038,844</b>
Denver Nuggets	926,393	1,082,183	2,003,609	<b>4,012,185</b>
Charlotte Hornets	957,488	1,139,120	1,733,481	<b>3,830,089</b>
Detroit Pistons	925,622	1,042,112	1,848,071	<b>3,815,805</b>
Memphis Grizzlies	1,052,319	896,548	1,800,241	<b>3,749,108</b>
Utah Jazz	952,978	914,880	1,805,671	<b>3,673,529</b>

Data: mid-November 2019

### PROPORTIONAL SHARE OF TOTAL SOCIAL MEDIA BY TEAM



### SNAPSHOTS OF ORIGINAL MISCELLANY

i: The four most successful all-time NBA teams are among the top seven in current global popularity: Celtics, Lakers, Warriors, Bulls. The others in that top seven are either multiple NBA finals winners (Heat, Rockets) or employed LeBron James (Cavaliers).

ii: It requires all those top seven teams combined in social media numbers to amass more than half the league's total popularity. This points to a spread of on-court contenders.

iii: The ratio between the highest payers in this league (Trail Blazers) and the lowest payers (Knicks) is 1.42 to 1, a relatively low figure and an indication of decent balance.

iv: The top 10% of NBA earners this season make 36.6% of all basic pay. Only three other leagues in this study are less 'top heavy' in this regard, and therefore more balanced or 'fairer'.

# IPL ANALYSIS

## INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE



TOTAL SALARIES:  
**£72,715,080**  
\$90,893,850

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:  
**£81,155 PER WEEK**  
(ANNUAL PRO RATA = £4.22M, UP 9.8%)  
**\$101,444 PER WEEK**  
(ANNUAL PRO RATA = \$5.3M)

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:  
**No2 LEAGUE**

MEDIAN SALARY:  
**£57,960 PER WEEK**  
\$72,450 PER WEEK

### THE STATE OF PLAY

A wage trend notable between 2017 and last year is repeated again this time, with salaries getting bigger per man (up 9.8% on average) at the same time as the gap in pay between teams has got even smaller. Pro-rated average annual salaries rose from \$3.9m in 2017 to just more than \$5m last year, a leap of 29.8 per cent, with another hike this time. That is no doubt related to the fact that the team owners are now making more money and are passing some of it on.

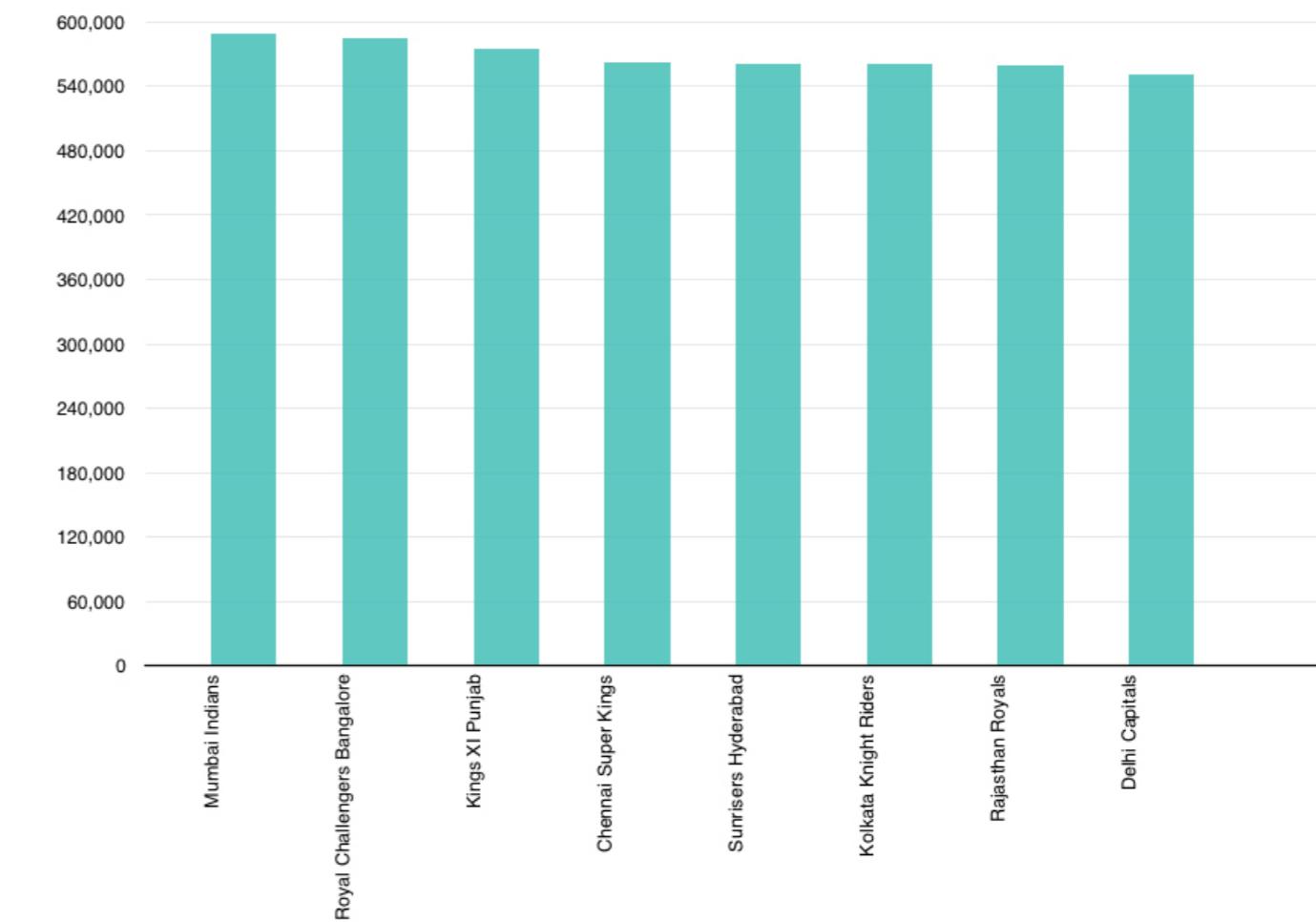
Uniquely in the GSSS, IPL salaries are pro-rated from weekly pay to annual pay because, again uniquely, IPL players typically have multiple different professional employers concurrently. The vast majority of other teams in other leagues contract their players for at least a year at a time. You simply don't get NFL stars playing a season in the USA then another in Germany in the same year; or a Premier League player appearing freelance for six different teams in a campaign, as some IPL players do.

### THE MONEY TALK

There's barely any difference in pay levels now across teams, but if the money talked purely on the basis of best paid team to the worst paid, we'd have expected Mumbai Indians to win the IPL in 2019 (and they did), with Bangalore runners-up (they were eighth), with Kings XI Punjab third best (actually 6th) and Chennai Super Kings fourth best (actually runners-up).

### AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, IPL, 2019 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	Avg Annual Per Player, £	Avg Annual Per Player, \$
1	Mumbai Indians	£589,049	\$736,311
2	Royal Challengers Bangalore	£585,243	\$731,554
3	Kings XI Punjab	£574,958	\$718,697
4	Chennai Super Kings	£562,740	\$703,425
5	Sunrisers Hyderabad	£561,005	\$701,256
6	Kolkata Knight Riders	£560,958	\$701,198
7	Rajasthan Royals	£560,073	\$700,091
8	Delhi Capitals	£550,668	\$688,335



# IPL ANALYSIS

## INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

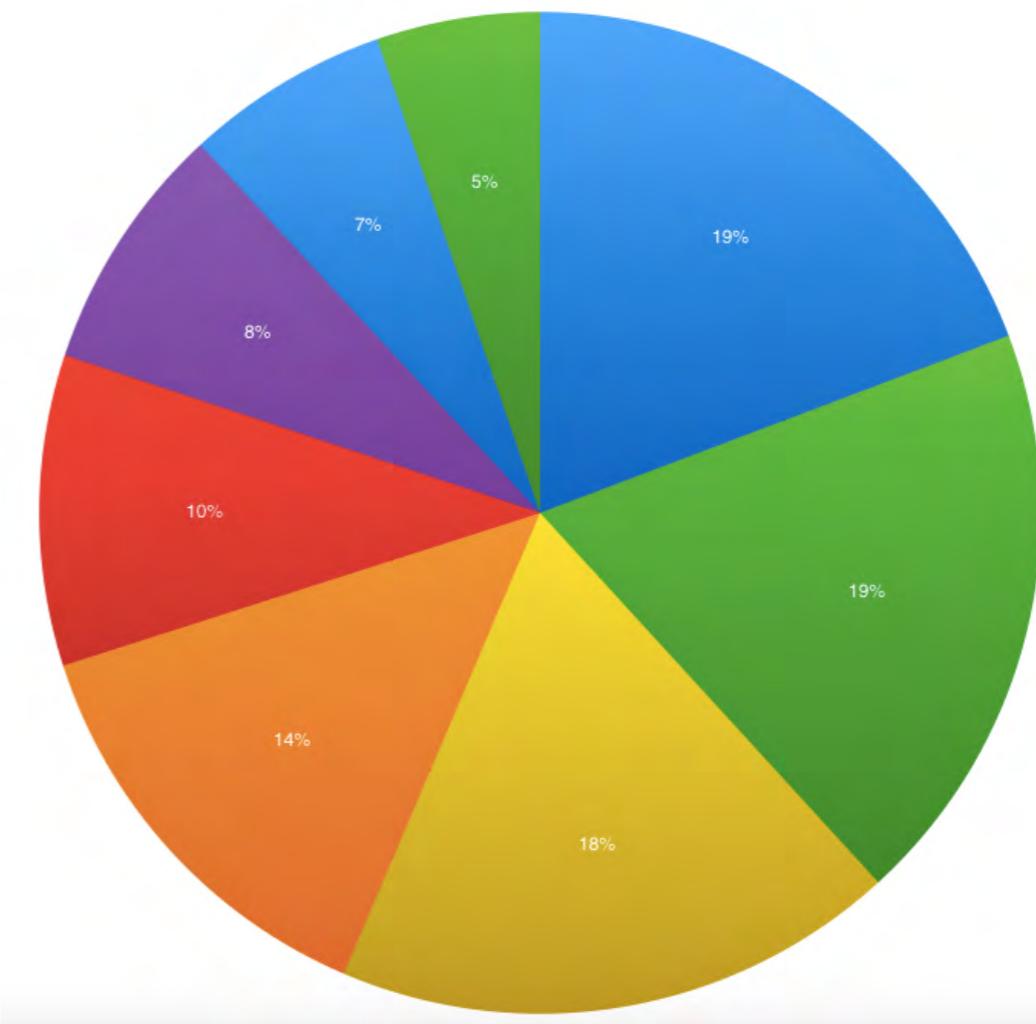


SUCCESS LEADS TO POPULARITY? SOCIAL MEDIA SAYS...

TEAM	TWITTER	INSTAGRAM	FACEBOOK	TOTAL
Mumbai Indians	5,351,264	3,700,000	13,302,189	22,353,453
Kolkata Knight Riders	4,244,886	1,300,000	16,476,130	22,021,016
Chennai Super Kings	5,149,001	3,500,000	12,510,199	21,159,200
Royal Challengers Bangalore	3,563,434	3,000,000	9,296,217	15,859,651
Kings XI Punjab	2,024,950	1,000,000	8,623,115	11,648,065
Sunrisers Hyderabad	2,161,548	1,200,000	5,973,151	9,334,699
Delhi Capitals	1,447,461	1,000,000	5,206,757	7,654,218
Rajasthan Royals	1,207,192	736,000	4,187,321	6,130,513

Data: mid-November 2019

### PROPORTIONAL SHARE OF TOTAL SOCIAL MEDIA BY TEAM



### SNAPSHOTS OF ORIGINAL MISCELLANY

- i: The four most successful IPL teams in its 12-season history (Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata and Bangalore) also fill the top four in current global popularity.
- ii: It requires just those first three teams combined in social media numbers to amass more than half the league's total popularity. But in this eight-team league, there is no dominating elite group.
- iii: The ratio between the highest payers in this league (Mumbai) and the lowest payers (Delhi) is 1.07 to 1, the lowest ratio of any league in this GSSS. All teams are effectively spending the same.
- iv: The top 10% of IPL earners this season make 28.7% of all basic pay. The other league in this GSSS which is more egalitarian in this regard is the WNBA.

# MLB ANALYSIS

## MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL



TOTAL SALARIES:  
**£2,760,804,686**  
**\$3,451,005,858**

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:  
**£3,225,239** (DOWN 5.95% YEAR-ON-YEAR)  
**\$4,031,549**

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:  
**No3 LEAGUE**

MEDIAN SALARY:  
**£724,000**  
**\$905,000**

### THE STATE OF PLAY

Major League Baseball players saw a tiny rise in pay between 2017 and 2018, indicating a financial slowdown that has been realised with a drop in pay by almost six per cent on average this year. Median pay also drops this time, but this may be more to do with a quirk in data compilation, with fewer players part of the 2019 opening day data set (856) than last year (877). MLB retains its place as No3 in the list of best paid leagues (by average pay), although this might not be the case for much longer, given the relentless wage growth in the Premier League just behind.

The highest placed MLB team last year in the overall GSSS list were the San Francisco Giants at No27. This year it's the New York Yankees at No32. The Yankees' place in the GSSS lists in some ways provides a barometer for MLB's relative declining fortunes. In every GSSS before 2017, the Yankees were inside the top 10, from No1 in the inaugural study in 2010 to No3 the following year, No6 in 2012, then No5, No2, No9 and No2 in 2016. They fell to No31 in 2017 and then to No46 last year.

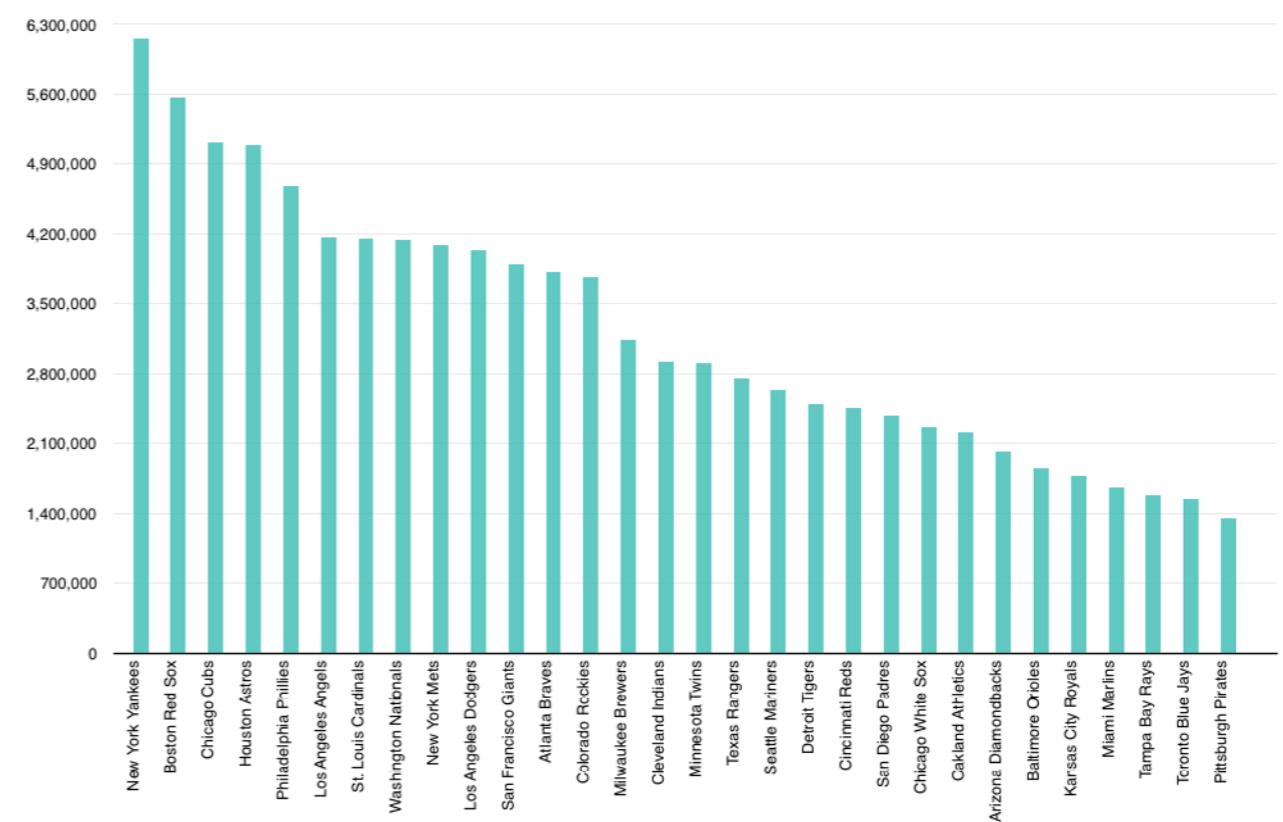
Until last year, MLB still had more individual players earning \$10m+ each than any sports league, at 134 of them. That figure has fallen to 118 this year, while the NBA has 123 players earning \$10m+ each and the NFL has 140 of them.

### THE MONEY TALK

If money alone talked, we would have expected the Yankees to win the World Series, after serious competition from the Red Sox, Cubs and Astros. At the other extreme we'd have expected the Pirates, Blue Jays, Rays and Marlins to tank. The Yankees won the American League East, where the Red Sox were third, missing out on the post-season, as did the Cubs, while the Astros were World Series' runners-up. A mixed bag, then. The Marlins and Pirates had terrible years while the Blue Jays did a bit better, but were second bottom of their league. The Rays reached the Division Series.

### AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, MLB, 2019 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	Avg Annual Per Player, £	Avg Annual Per Player, \$
1	New York Yankees	£6,153,759	\$7,692,199
2	Boston Red Sox	£5,564,455	\$6,955,569
3	Chicago Cubs	£5,115,629	\$6,394,536
4	Houston Astros	£5,084,841	\$6,356,051
5	Philadelphia Phillies	£4,682,528	\$5,853,160
6	Los Angeles Angels	£4,166,369	\$5,207,961
7	St. Louis Cardinals	£4,148,306	\$5,185,383
8	Washington Nationals	£4,144,720	\$5,180,900
9	New York Mets	£4,085,983	\$5,107,479
10	Los Angeles Dodgers	£4,035,461	\$5,044,326
11	San Francisco Giants	£3,906,440	\$4,883,050
12	Atlanta Braves	£3,812,891	\$4,766,113
13	Colorado Rockies	£3,757,200	\$4,696,500
14	Milwaukee Brewers	£3,131,998	\$3,914,998
15	Cleveland Indians	£2,919,721	\$3,649,651
16	Minnesota Twins	£2,910,188	\$3,637,734
17	Texas Rangers	£2,755,434	\$3,444,293
18	Seattle Mariners	£2,638,382	\$3,297,977
19	Detroit Tigers	£2,499,160	\$3,123,950
20	Cincinnati Reds	£2,459,403	\$3,074,254
21	San Diego Padres	£2,373,096	\$2,966,369
22	Chicago White Sox	£2,257,048	\$2,821,310
23	Oakland Athletics	£2,212,529	\$2,765,661
24	Arizona Diamondbacks	£2,023,288	\$2,529,110
25	Baltimore Orioles	£1,852,334	\$2,315,417
26	Kansas City Royals	£1,785,747	\$2,232,184
27	Miami Marlins	£1,652,869	\$2,066,086
28	Tampa Bay Rays	£1,580,422	\$1,975,527
29	Toronto Blue Jays	£1,541,140	\$1,926,425
30	Pittsburgh Pirates	£1,352,612	\$1,690,764



# MLB ANALYSIS

## MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

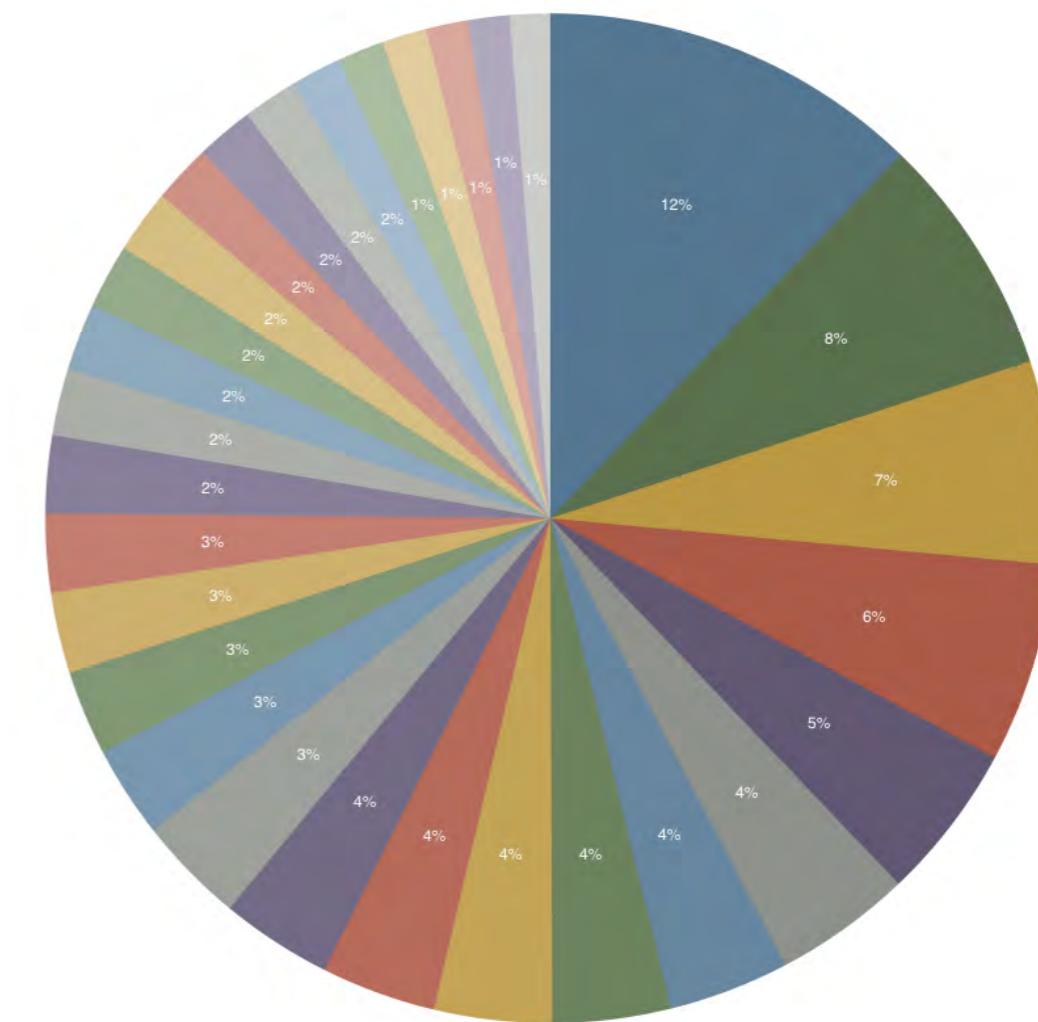


## SUCCESS LEADS TO POPULARITY? SOCIAL MEDIA SAYS...

TEAM	TWITTER	INSTAGRAM	FACEBOOK	TOTAL
New York Yankees	3,456,551	2,493,077	8,558,092	14,507,720
Boston Red Sox	2,138,982	1,796,215	5,274,662	9,209,859
LA Dodgers	2,179,027	2,131,897	3,422,590	7,733,514
Chicago Cubs	2,580,173	1,563,001	3,450,038	7,593,212
San Francisco Giants	1,776,497	1,195,649	2,989,753	5,961,899
Toronto Blue Jays	2,262,768	1,234,828	1,733,735	5,231,331
Atlanta Braves	1,313,068	1,028,853	2,256,785	4,598,706
St Louis Cardinals	1,248,795	834,793	2,410,630	4,494,218
Detroit Tigers	1,458,223	692,188	2,337,033	4,487,444
Texas Rangers	1,437,434	592,816	2,330,295	4,360,545
Philadelphia Phillies	1,852,945	689,954	1,694,015	4,236,914
Houston Astros	1,565,248	1,114,734	1,422,292	4,102,274
New York Mets	1,080,199	877,975	1,522,462	3,480,636
LA Angels	1,106,436	783,716	1,331,823	3,221,975
Kansas City Royals	1,061,179	772,503	1,257,268	3,090,950
Cleveland Indians	1,070,504	546,091	1,363,084	2,979,679
Chicago White Sox	923,908	375,340	1,652,032	2,951,280
Pittsburgh Pirates	753,274	620,469	1,185,042	2,558,785
Cincinnati Reds	857,219	424,695	1,255,627	2,537,541
Baltimore Orioles	794,208	411,434	1,251,286	2,456,928
Seattle Mariners	567,383	610,259	1,231,186	2,408,828
Minnesota Twins	644,242	382,220	1,216,895	2,243,357
Milwaukee Brewers	627,429	443,770	1,112,807	2,184,006
Washington Nationals	760,587	594,711	730,917	2,086,215
Colorado Rockies	579,273	410,302	931,686	1,921,261
Oakland Athletics	567,033	377,313	814,154	1,758,500
Arizona Diamondbacks	589,123	344,226	774,293	1,707,642
Tampa Bay Rays	564,384	301,333	729,443	1,595,160
San Diego Padres	414,515	405,313	752,859	1,572,687
Miami Marlins	343,871	472,047	722,241	1,538,159

Data: mid-November 2019

## PROPORTIONAL SHARE OF TOTAL SOCIAL MEDIA BY TEAM



## SNAPSHOTS OF ORIGINAL MISCELLANY

i: Seven of the 10 most successful all-time MLB teams are among the top 10 MLB teams in current global popularity, headed by the Yankees. The three that aren't (Oakland As, Cincinnati Reds, Pittsburgh Pirates) last won the WS respectively in 1989, 1990 and 1979.

ii: It requires as many as nine teams combined in social media numbers to amass more than half the league's total popularity. This points to a spread of regular contenders.

iii: The ratio between the highest payers (the Yankees) and the lowest payers (the Pirates) is 4.55 to 1, the biggest ratio of any North American league. Teams deploy starkly different resources.

iv: The top 10% of MLB earners this season make 46.6% of all basic pay. Ten other leagues in this GSSS are less 'top heavy' in this regard, and therefore more balanced or 'fairer'; seven are more top heavy.

# EPL ANALYSIS

## ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE FOOTBALL



**TOTAL SALARIES:**  
**£1,573,939,000**  
**\$1,967,423,750**

**AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:**  
**£3,173,264** (UP BY 6.1%, YEAR-ON-YEAR)  
**\$3,966,580**

**AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:**  
**No4 LEAGUE**

**MEDIAN SALARY:**  
**£2,340,000**  
**\$2,925,000**

### THE STATE OF PLAY

The Premier League's status as the world's wealthiest football league endures. The 20 clubs who competed in the 2018-19 season split 'central revenues' of £2.46bn in May at an average £122.8m each, and this will rise. For the 2019-20 season, the 20 clubs are earning £349.1m between them just for the names of their principal shirt sponsors on their jerseys. Sleeve deals, training complex sponsorship and (non-shirt) betting partners keep bringing yet more cash. And that is before a ticket, pie or replica kit is sold.

The 20 clubs who comprise the cast for this season spent £1.4 billion gross on new players in the summer window alone. Our survey meanwhile indicates average basic pay is up by more than six per cent year-on-year, and there are a few notable developments.

We calculate that Manchester City's average basic first-team pay (at almost £7m) has risen about Manchester United's (£6.1m), with Liverpool in third followed by Arsenal and Chelsea. We think it can reasonably be expected that when the 2019-20 club accounts are published around a year from now, City's total club wage bill will (just) have overtaken United's.

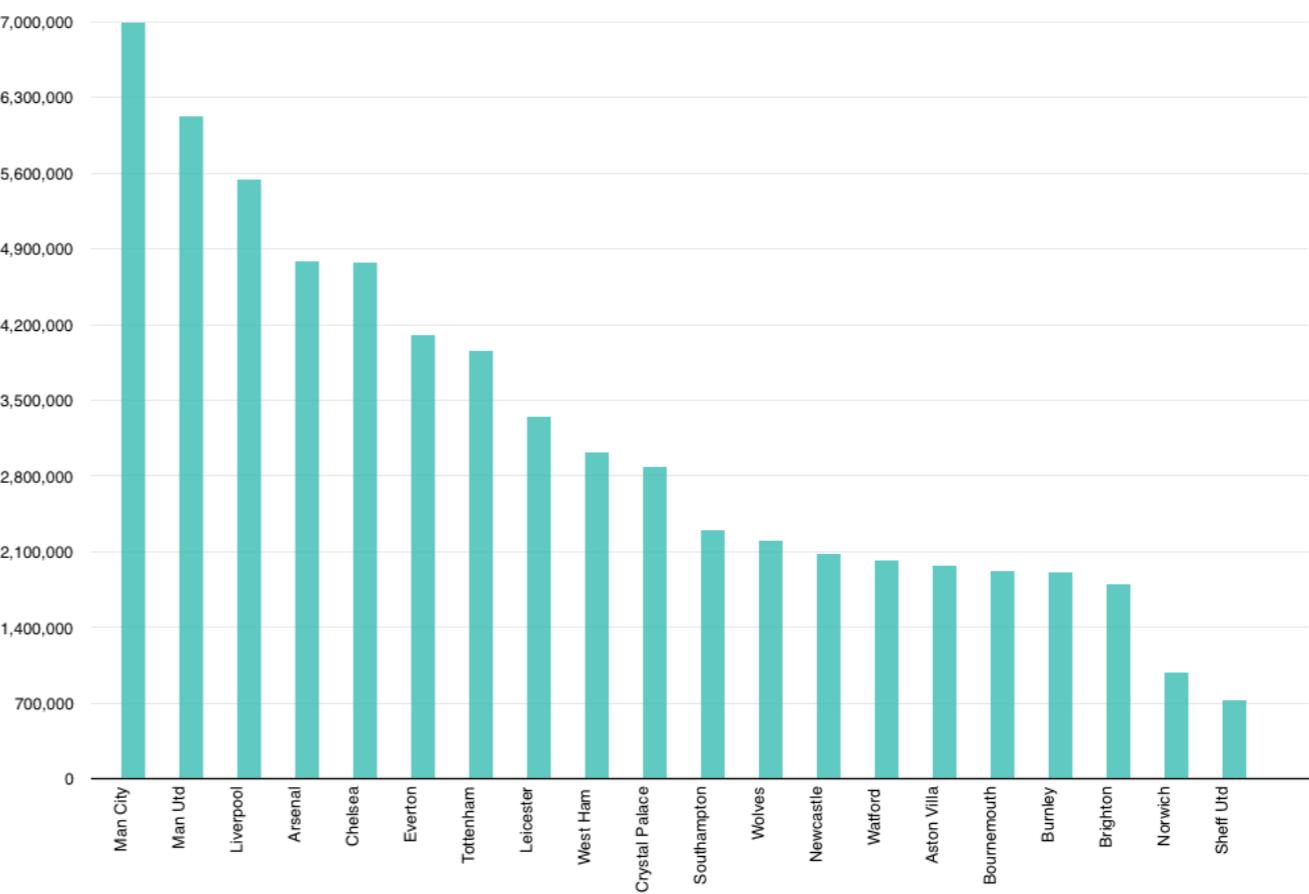
Also notable is we calculate Everton's average basic first-team pay has now overtaken that of Tottenham. At the other end of the scale, Sheffield United have the lowest average first-team basic pay at any Premier League club for several years, while fellow promoted club Norwich are not so far ahead of them. And then a clutch of clubs - Brighton, Burnley, Bournemouth, Villa, Watford and Newcastle - each have roughly double Norwich's figure, with figures ranging from £1.8m to £2.2m.

### THE MONEY TALK

If money alone talks, then Manchester City would be wrapping up a third straight title ahead of local rivals United, with Liverpool third, then Arsenal, Chelsea and ... Everton. Sheffield United, Norwich and Brighton would be heading down. Correlation between wage spending and finishing position has been strong across all of Europe's elite leagues for years, especially in England. This season it seems likely that dysfunction at multiple 'big' clubs will be highlighted by finishing positions below expectation, while excellence on relatively small budgets will be highlighted elsewhere.

### AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, PREMIER LEAGUE, 2019-20

RANK	TEAM	Avg Annual Per Player, £	Avg Annual Per Player, \$
1	Man City	£6,987,500	\$8,734,375
2	Man Utd	£6,125,600	\$7,657,000
3	Liverpool	£5,537,600	\$6,922,000
4	Arsenal	£4,790,240	\$5,987,800
5	Chelsea	£4,774,000	\$5,967,500
6	Everton	£4,101,760	\$5,127,200
7	Tottenham	£3,961,043	\$4,951,304
8	Leicester	£3,352,960	\$4,191,200
9	West Ham	£3,022,240	\$3,777,800
10	Crystal Palace	£2,887,500	\$3,609,375
11	Southampton	£2,299,440	\$2,874,300
12	Wolves	£2,197,565	\$2,746,957
13	Newcastle	£2,086,240	\$2,607,800
14	Watford	£2,025,111	\$2,531,389
15	Aston Villa	£1,965,600	\$2,457,000
16	Bournemouth	£1,917,760	\$2,397,200
17	Burnley	£1,915,333	\$2,394,167
18	Brighton	£1,805,304	\$2,256,630
19	Norwich	£991,000	\$1,238,750
20	Sheff Utd	£728,000	\$910,000



# EPL ANALYSIS

## ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE FOOTBALL

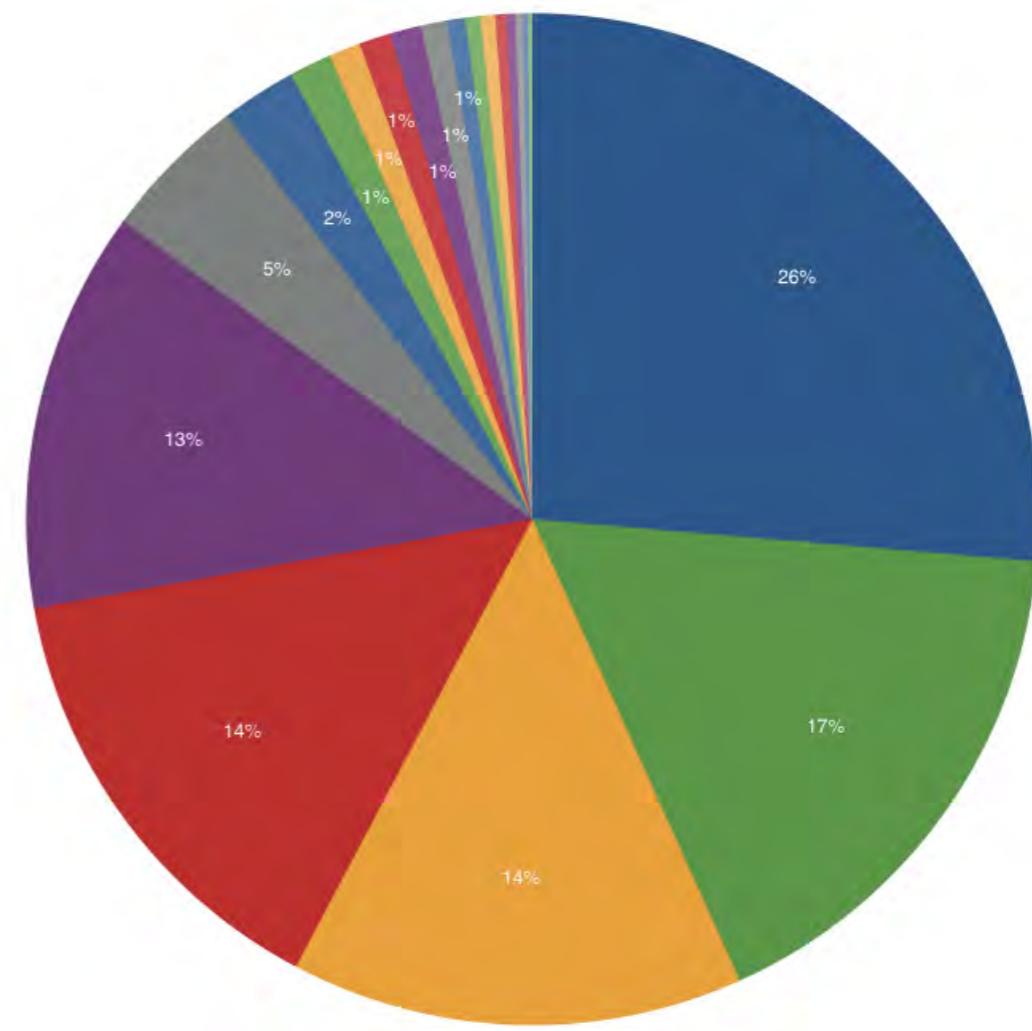


SUCCESS LEADS TO POPULARITY? SOCIAL MEDIA SAYS...

TEAM	TWITTER	INSTAGRAM	FACEBOOK	TOTAL
Man Utd	20,519,033	32,182,041	73,278,177	125,979,251
Chelsea	13,552,702	19,422,288	48,112,961	81,087,951
Liverpool	12,878,231	20,929,798	35,381,750	69,189,779
Arsenal	15,173,913	16,163,545	37,742,062	69,079,520
Man City	7,381,914	15,921,795	38,185,830	61,489,539
Tottenham	3,841,956	6,196,544	12,331,544	22,370,044
Leicester	1,434,812	3,390,646	6,626,796	11,452,254
Everton	1,952,053	1,364,219	3,161,605	6,477,877
Southampton	1,140,755	654,535	3,048,204	4,843,494
West Ham	1,530,176	982,123	2,320,391	4,832,690
Aston Villa	1,294,067	471,470	2,981,880	4,747,417
Newcastle	1,452,431	355,506	2,188,845	3,996,782
Crystal Palace	893,439	758,691	1,136,314	2,788,444
Watford	638,193	556,939	1,124,428	2,319,560
Wolves	496,685	637,812	1,107,706	2,242,203
Norwich	673,608	191,332	842,646	1,707,586
Bournemouth	479,546	469,262	407,024	1,355,832
Burnley	443,304	277,120	422,180	1,142,604
Brighton	252,534	245,488	276,234	774,256
Sheff Utd	280,359	142,843	203,428	626,630

Data: mid-November 2019

### PROPORTIONAL SHARE OF TOTAL SOCIAL MEDIA BY TEAM



### SNAPSHOTS OF ORIGINAL MISCELLANY

i: The five most popular English football teams in current global popularity are all among the eight most successful all-time English football teams (in league titles): Man Utd, Chelsea, Liverpool, Arsenal and Man City. Recency bias aids Chelsea and Man City in this regard. Everton, Aston Villa and Sunderland are the "other three" from those eight.

ii: It requires as few as three teams combined in social media numbers (Man Utd, Chelsea and Liverpool) to amass more than half the league's total popularity. These are clearly 'big' global clubs, but so are Arsenal and Manchester City, and to a lesser extent, Tottenham. This suggests there are (or have been) as many as six realistic contenders for the Premier League in recent times. Which is considerably more than in any other major European league in the same period.

iii: The ratio between the highest payers (Man City) and the lowest payers (Sheff Utd) is 9.6 to 1, a PL ratio rising for a third straight year but still much lower than any other 'Big 5' European division.

iv: The top 10% of EPL earners this season make 26.9% of all basic pay. This makes the Premier League the most "balanced" of the nine football leagues in this GSSS, most of which (5/9) have skewed payrolls with the top 10% of players making more than half of all the money.

# NFL ANALYSIS

## NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE



TEAMS  
**32**

PLAYERS  
**1,696**



TOTAL SALARIES:  
**£4,419,644,798**  
**\$5,524,555,998**

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:  
**£2,605,923** (UP BY 17.7% YEAR-ON-YEAR)  
**\$3,257,403**

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:  
**No5 LEAGUE**

MEDIAN SALARY:  
**£982,442**  
**\$1,228,053**

### THE STATE OF PLAY

NFL average pay climbed a whopping 17.7 per cent from 2018 to 2019, to just over £2.6m (\$3.26m). The NFL remains ahead of every league in the world by total wage spend, at more than £4.4bn (\$5.5bn) in basic pay for the active rosters, but that is divided among 1,696 players.

On the field, the season reached mid-December with the Baltimore Ravens as the unlikely 2020 Super Bowl favourites, followed in the betting at that point by the San Francisco 49ers, then the New England Patriots and the New Orleans Saints. The 2019-20 season is the 100th season of the NFL and will conclude at the Hard Rock Stadium in Miami on 2 February 2020. Super Bowl remains - by many country miles - the biggest single event in the USA's annual sporting calendar. Of the 20 most-watched events on American television, ever, from any genre of programming, 19 of them have been Super Bowls, headed by the 2015 Super Bowl, watched by an average TV audience in the USA alone by 114.4m people.

The only non-Super Bowl programme in the all-time top 20 is the final episode of M\*A\*S\*H, broadcast in 1983. A 30-second commercial slot cost advertisers \$450,000 during that episode, which is equivalent to around \$1.16m today. That was more than 1983 Super Bowl ads cost.

But, in November 2019, FOX TV announced it had already sold its entire in-game advertising inventory for the 2020 Super Bowl, for between \$5m and \$5.6m per 30-second block.

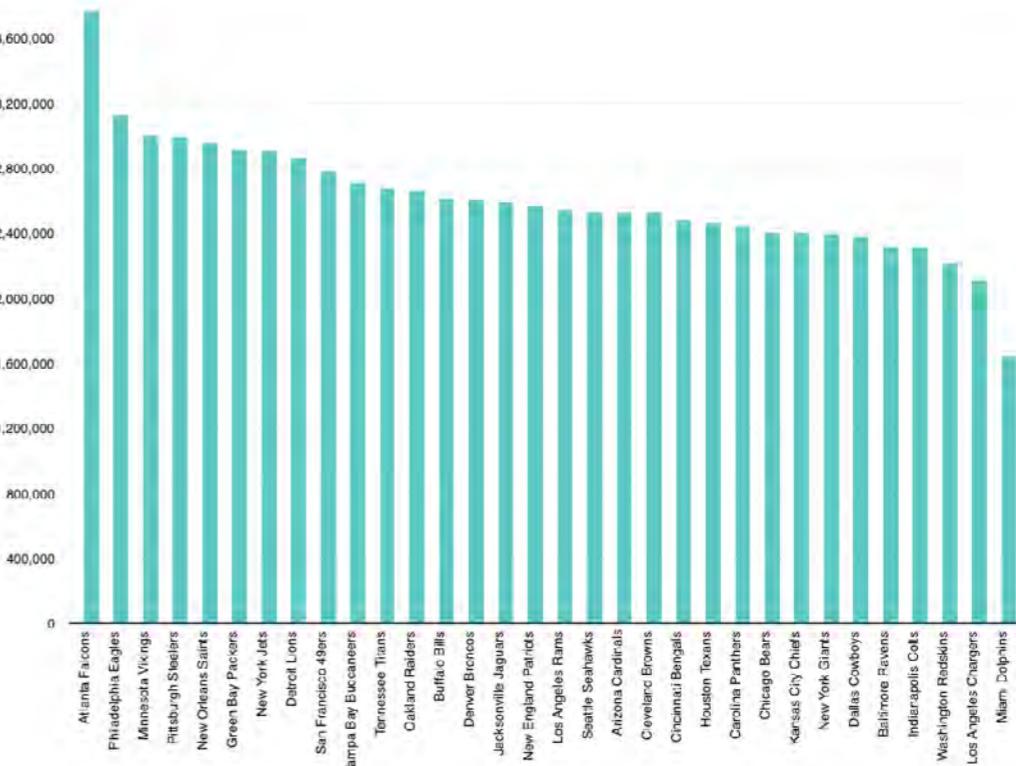
### THE MONEY TALK

If the money talked then the major contenders would have been the Falcons, Eagles, Vikings, Steelers, Saints, Packers and Jets - the seven teams with average basic pay of more than \$3.6m. After 14 rounds of games, four of those seven best paid teams had winning records.

Conversely one might have expected lesser challenges from the five teams with average pay lower than \$2.9m: the Dolphins, Chargers, Redskins, Colts and Ravens. After 14 rounds of games, the Dolphins and Chargers were bottom of their divisions. The Redskins and Colts were both second bottom. And the Ravens - and their quarterback Lamar Jackson - were having unexpectedly brilliant seasons. So it was a mixed bag, as is often the case in a league where the chaos of relative fairness is so often evident.

### AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, NFL, 2019-20 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	Avg Annual Per Player, £	Avg Annual Per Player, \$
1	Atlanta Falcons	£3,764,846	\$4,706,057
2	Philadelphia Eagles	£3,127,120	\$3,908,900
3	Minnesota Vikings	£3,000,088	\$3,750,110
4	Pittsburgh Steelers	£2,996,257	\$3,745,321
5	New Orleans Saints	£2,955,064	\$3,693,831
6	Green Bay Packers	£2,917,696	\$3,647,120
7	New York Jets	£2,907,032	\$3,633,790
8	Detroit Lions	£2,858,812	\$3,573,515
9	San Francisco 49ers	£2,775,870	\$3,469,837
10	Tampa Bay Buccaneers	£2,708,131	\$3,385,163
11	Tennessee Titans	£2,673,665	\$3,342,081
12	Oakland Raiders	£2,661,634	\$3,327,042
13	Buffalo Bills	£2,618,633	\$3,273,291
14	Denver Broncos	£2,605,349	\$3,256,686
15	Jacksonville Jaguars	£2,587,467	\$3,234,333
16	New England Patriots	£2,566,789	\$3,208,486
17	Los Angeles Rams	£2,542,268	\$3,177,835
18	Seattle Seahawks	£2,532,659	\$3,165,824
19	Arizona Cardinals	£2,525,526	\$3,156,908
20	Cleveland Browns	£2,521,090	\$3,151,363
21	Cincinnati Bengals	£2,482,754	\$3,103,443
22	Houston Texans	£2,461,782	\$3,077,228
23	Carolina Panthers	£2,441,242	\$3,051,553
24	Chicago Bears	£2,405,743	\$3,007,179
25	Kansas City Chiefs	£2,394,393	\$2,992,991
26	New York Giants	£2,394,162	\$2,992,702
27	Dallas Cowboys	£2,379,184	\$2,973,979
28	Baltimore Ravens	£2,315,488	\$2,894,360
29	Indianapolis Colts	£2,310,945	\$2,888,681
30	Washington Redskins	£2,212,154	\$2,765,193
31	Los Angeles Chargers	£2,104,538	\$2,630,672
32	Miami Dolphins	£1,641,145	\$2,051,431



# NFL ANALYSIS

NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE



SUCCESS LEADS TO POPULARITY? SOCIAL MEDIA SAYS...

TEAM	TWITTER	INSTAGRAM	FACEBOOK	TOTAL
Dallas Cowboys	3,731,020	3,200,000	8,703,434	15,634,454
New England Patriots	4,279,333	4,100,000	7,084,705	15,464,038
Pittsburgh Steelers	3,328,566	2,300,000	6,502,905	12,131,471
Green Bay Packers	2,211,149	1,800,000	5,308,154	9,319,303
Seattle Seahawks	2,322,784	2,300,000	3,998,992	8,621,776
Denver Broncos	2,640,854	1,200,000	4,447,187	8,288,041
Philadelphia Eagles	3,246,958	1,900,000	3,028,067	8,175,025
San Francisco 49ers	2,039,539	1,700,000	4,242,686	7,982,225
New York Giants	1,795,192	1,900,000	3,930,670	7,625,862
Carolina Panthers	2,954,992	1,600,000	2,385,607	6,940,599
Chicago Bears	1,660,564	1,100,000	4,133,491	6,894,055
New Orleans Saints	1,306,348	1,400,000	4,077,010	6,783,358
Oakland Raiders	1,549,318	1,500,000	3,268,895	6,318,213
Houston Texans	1,816,579	1,200,000	2,166,753	5,183,332
Atlanta Falcons	2,309,113	1,000,000	1,843,418	5,152,531
Baltimore Ravens	1,441,607	1,000,000	2,350,971	4,792,578
Minnesota Vikings	1,237,635	911,000	2,091,594	4,240,229
Miami Dolphins	972,683	964,000	2,186,300	4,122,983
Washington Redskins	1,255,961	725,000	1,969,323	3,950,284
New York Jets	1,227,116	697,000	2,006,794	3,930,910
Indianapolis Colts	980,942	643,000	2,279,229	3,903,171
Detroit Lions	1,323,124	675,000	1,896,081	3,894,205
Kansas City Chiefs	1,135,475	1,000,000	1,503,998	3,639,473
Cleveland Browns	1,025,663	1,100,000	1,262,305	3,387,968
Los Angeles Chargers	807,747	647,000	1,701,744	3,156,491
Arizona Cardinals	910,227	728,000	1,403,570	3,041,797
Los Angeles Rams	738,629	940,000	790,820	2,469,449
Cincinnati Bengals	806,578	441,000	1,198,379	2,445,957
Buffalo Bills	945,936	596,000	846,970	2,388,906
Tampa Bay Bucs	747,847	438,000	924,127	2,109,974
Tennessee Titans	714,312	470,000	918,014	2,102,326
Jacksonville Jaguars	627,381	494,000	590,725	1,712,106

Data: mid-November 2019

## PROPORTIONAL SHARE OF TOTAL SOCIAL MEDIA BY TEAM



## SNAPSHOTS OF ORIGINAL MISCELLANY

i: The seven most successful all-time NFL teams - those who have each won four or more Super Bowls - are all among the top nine in current global popularity: the Patriots, Steelers, Cowboys, Broncos, 49ers, Packers and Giants. The Seahawks and Eagles are the two punching above their weight.

ii: It requires as many as 10 teams combined in social media numbers to amass more than half the league's total popularity. This points to a spread of contenders, and competitive balance.

iii: The ratio between the highest payers in this league (Falcons) and the lowest payers (Dolphins) is 2.29 to 1, a relatively small figure and an indication of competitive balance.

iv: The top 10% of NFL earners make 47.6% of all basic pay. This indicates a 'star system' where a few huge earners make much of the money in squads where most earn below average salaries.

# NHL ANALYSIS

NATIONAL HOCKEY LEAGUE



TEAMS  
**31**

PLAYERS  
**770**

**2019-  
2020**

TOTAL SALARIES:  
**£1,655,914,607**  
**\$2,069,893,259**

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:  
**£2,150,538** (UP BY 1.7% YEAR-ON-YEAR)  
**\$2,688,173**

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:  
**No6 LEAGUE**

MEDIAN SALARY:  
**£1,500,000**  
**\$1,875,000**

## THE STATE OF PLAY

The 2019-20 season is the 102nd in NHL playing history and involves 31 teams competing in an 82-game regular season between 2 October 2019 and 4 April 2020. The Stanley Cup finals will be held from late May 2020. For sports trivia fans, the cup is named after Frederick Stanley, aka Lord Stanley of Preston, a 19th-century London-born British Conservative Party politician. His work for the empire included being the sixth Governor General of Canada between 1888 and 1893.

While there his sons fell in love with ice hockey. The trophy, which is now absolutely massive (as a quick Google images search will show you) was originally commissioned by Stanley in 1892 as the Dominion Hockey Challenge Cup, and cost 10 guineas from a London trophy-maker. The original was just a bowl. The modern-day version, the Presentation Cup, is a replica of the bowl and sits atop a giant cylinder. Three babies have been baptised in the current cup: Colorado Avalanche defender Sylvain Lefebvre's daughter; the daughter of the cousin of the Detroit Red Wings winger Tomas Holmström; and the son of the Pittsburgh Penguins forward Josh Archibald.

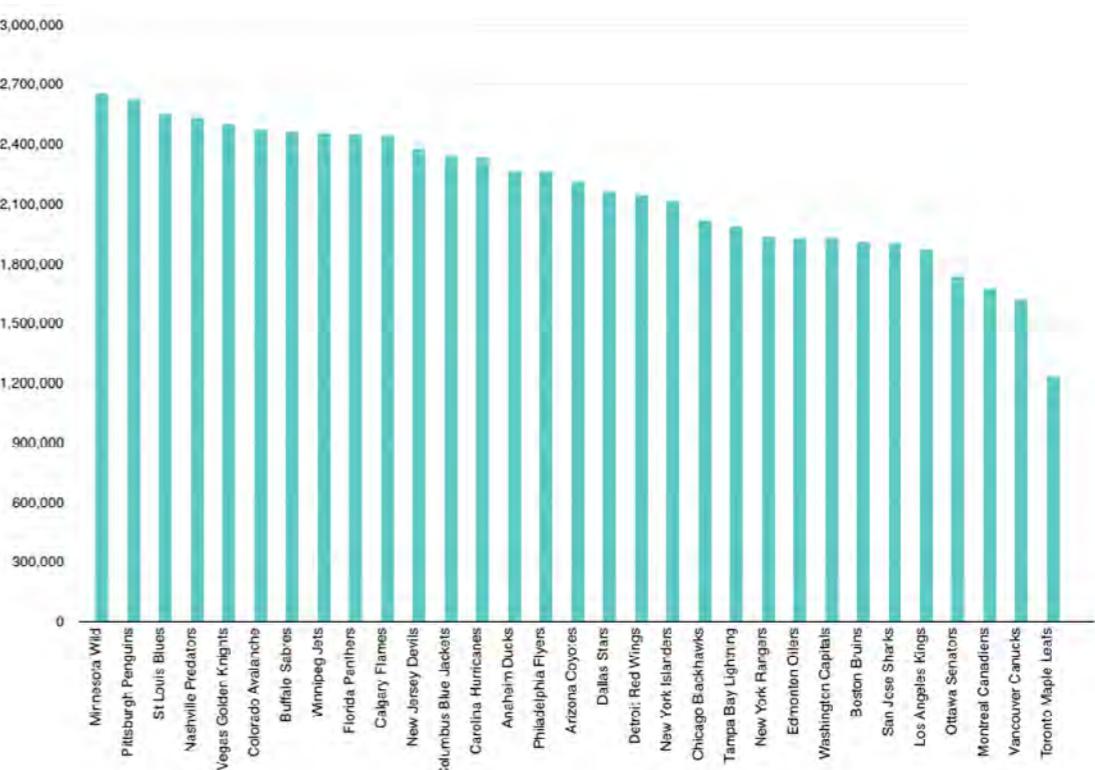
In June this year the National Hockey League Players' Association announced the 2019-20 salary cap at \$81.5m per team for 2019-20 and we continue to be grateful for them for the official salary data used to compile the NHL numbers for this report. In the USA, only in football (soccer, via the MLS Players' Union) and in ice hockey are detailed salary numbers for each player formally and officially declared.

## THE MONEY TALK

If the money talks, then we might expect Minnesota Wild, Pittsburgh Penguins, St Louis Blues and Nashville Predators to be major contenders. At the other extreme, we might expect a quartet of Canadian teams to struggle: Ottawa Senators, Montreal Canadiens, Vancouver Canucks and Toronto Maple Leafs. By mid-December those forecasts were looking like a mixed bag.

## AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, NHL, 2019-20 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	Avg Annual Per Player, £	Avg Annual Per Player, \$
1	Minnesota Wild	£2,654,000	\$3,317,500
2	Pittsburgh Penguins	£2,622,742	\$3,278,428
3	St Louis Blues	£2,550,080	\$3,187,600
4	Nashville Predators	£2,530,273	\$3,162,841
5	Vegas Golden Knights	£2,497,385	\$3,121,731
6	Colorado Avalanche	£2,474,417	\$3,093,021
7	Buffalo Sabres	£2,454,000	\$3,067,500
8	Winnipeg Jets	£2,450,278	\$3,062,847
9	Florida Panthers	£2,444,741	\$3,055,926
10	Calgary Flames	£2,438,609	\$3,048,261
11	New Jersey Devils	£2,372,417	\$2,965,521
12	Columbus Blue Jackets	£2,335,256	\$2,919,070
13	Carolina Hurricanes	£2,328,727	\$2,910,909
14	Anaheim Ducks	£2,260,385	\$2,825,481
15	Philadelphia Flyers	£2,257,913	\$2,822,391
16	Arizona Coyotes	£2,206,600	\$2,758,250
17	Dallas Stars	£2,167,000	\$2,708,750
18	Detroit Red Wings	£2,139,680	\$2,674,600
19	New York Islanders	£2,113,778	\$2,642,222
20	Chicago Blackhawks	£2,015,414	\$2,519,268
21	Tampa Bay Lightning	£1,979,417	\$2,474,271
22	New York Rangers	£1,935,273	\$2,419,091
23	Edmonton Oilers	£1,924,214	\$2,405,268
24	Washington Capitals	£1,922,538	\$2,403,173
25	Boston Bruins	£1,906,385	\$2,382,981
26	San Jose Sharks	£1,899,667	\$2,374,583
27	Los Angeles Kings	£1,864,160	\$2,330,200
28	Ottawa Senators	£1,728,815	\$2,161,019
29	Montreal Canadiens	£1,671,037	\$2,088,796
30	Vancouver Canucks	£1,617,417	\$2,021,771
31	Toronto Maple Leafs	£1,230,069	\$1,537,586



# NHL ANALYSIS

NATIONAL HOCKEY LEAGUE

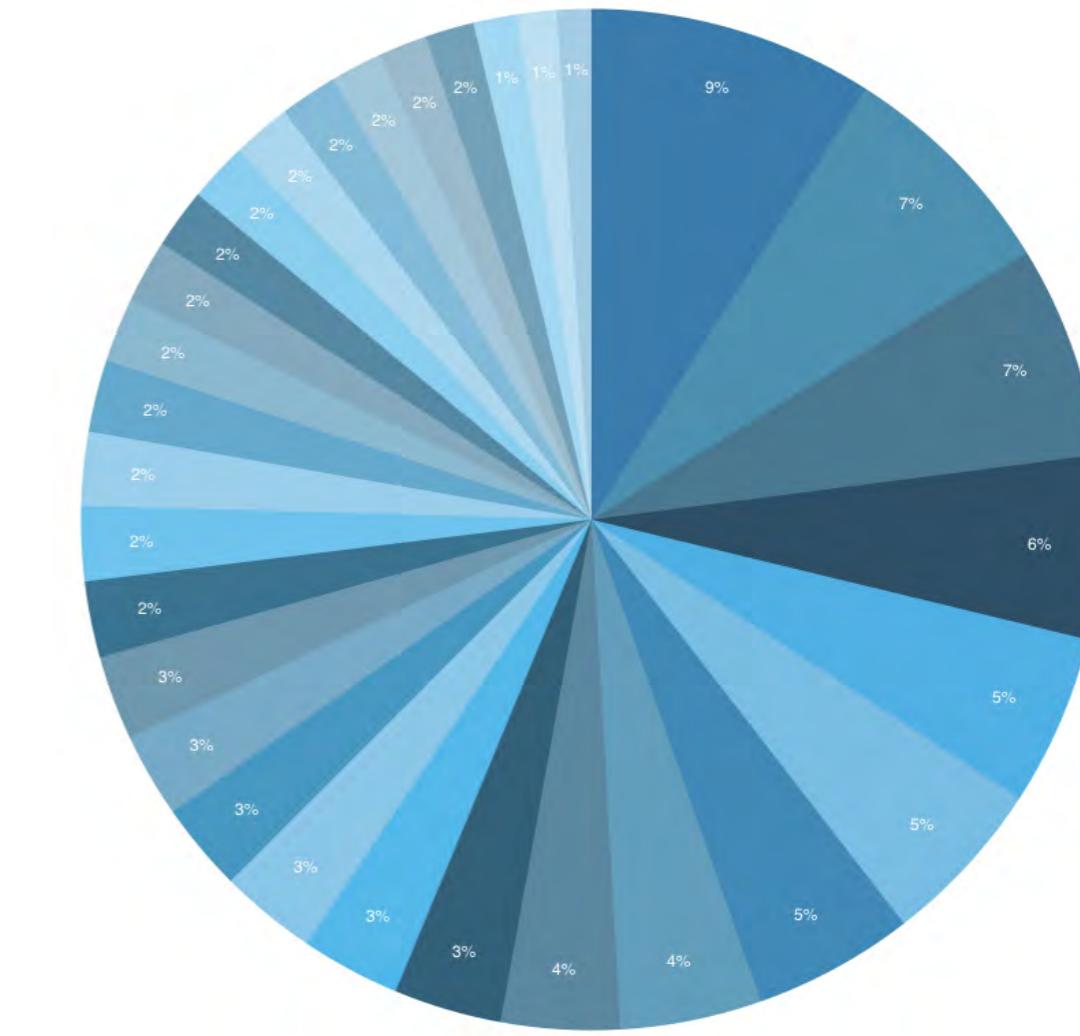


SUCCESS LEADS TO POPULARITY? SOCIAL MEDIA SAYS...

TEAM	TWITTER	INSTAGRAM	FACEBOOK	TOTAL
Chicago Blackhawks	2,485,818	1,340,044	2,845,714	6,671,576
Pittsburgh Penguins	1,852,564	1,451,717	2,049,346	5,353,627
Boston Bruins	1,512,223	1,262,593	2,201,619	4,976,435
Toronto Maple Leafs	1,902,050	1,016,940	1,376,645	4,295,635
Detroit Red Wings	1,244,656	743,214	2,016,431	4,004,301
New York Rangers	1,454,472	966,649	1,528,077	3,949,198
Montreal Canadiens	1,490,790	644,678	1,636,008	3,771,476
Philadelphia Flyers	1,577,081	568,620	1,172,991	3,318,692
Los Angeles Kings	1,206,001	612,175	961,889	2,780,065
Vancouver Canucks	1,055,214	442,991	1,027,781	2,525,986
Washington Capitals	765,535	757,477	802,376	2,325,388
San Jose Sharks	821,810	509,178	949,599	2,280,587
St Louis Blues	736,038	579,629	764,179	2,079,846
Edmonton Oilers	817,828	586,234	581,609	1,985,671
Dallas Stars	1,072,134	418,449	483,116	1,973,699
Tampa Bay Lightning	702,648	518,380	563,611	1,784,639
Minnesota Wild	691,602	412,598	650,371	1,754,571
Buffalo Sabres	862,137	360,891	502,937	1,725,965
Colorado Avalanche	507,100	417,683	762,277	1,687,060
New Jersey Devils	737,509	311,256	477,909	1,526,674
Vegas Golden Knights	456,633	657,938	354,188	1,468,759
Nashville Predators	608,056	386,927	409,614	1,404,597
Calgary Flames	623,279	380,188	384,071	1,387,538
Anaheim Ducks	603,219	356,786	421,486	1,381,491
Winnipeg Jets	551,397	403,824	394,997	1,350,218
Ottawa Senators	582,122	286,780	333,906	1,202,808
New York Islanders	530,866	322,641	303,526	1,157,033
Columbus Blue Jackets	477,329	346,860	317,506	1,141,695
Carolina Hurricanes	425,391	309,296	287,949	1,022,636
Arizona Coyotes	364,959	257,477	300,573	923,009
Florida Panthers	375,893	232,053	198,041	805,987

Data: mid-November 2019

## PROPORTIONAL SHARE OF TOTAL SOCIAL MEDIA BY TEAM



## SNAPSHOTS OF ORIGINAL MISCELLANY

i: Seven of the eight most successful all-time Stanley Cup teams are the top seven in current global NHL popularity: the Canadiens, Maple Leafs, Red Wings, Bruins, Blackhawks, Penguins and Rangers. Only five-times winners Edmonton Oilers (14th of 31 in the social table) are missing.

ii: It requires as many as nine teams combined in social media numbers to amass more than half the league's total popularity. This points to a spread of contenders and competitive balance.

iii: The ratio between the highest payers in this league (Minnesota) and the lowest payers (Toronto) is 2.16 to 1, a relatively low figure. Only five leagues in this report are more balanced and 'fairer'.

iv: The top 10% of NHL earners make 26.9% of all basic pay. Only the WNBA has a lower figure in this regard, pointing to a relatively fair distribution of salaries.

# LA LIGA ANALYSIS

SPANISH TOP-DIVISION FOOTBALL



**TOTAL SALARIES:**  
**£1,002,523,049**  
**\$1,253,153,811**

**AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:**  
**£2,037,648 (DOWN BY 7.4% YEAR-ON-YEAR)**  
**\$2,547,061**

**AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:**  
**No7 LEAGUE**

**MEDIAN SALARY:**  
**£786,964**  
**\$983,705**

## THE STATE OF PLAY

Javier Tebas, the president of La Liga, insists he is not obsessed with the English Premier League but as the 2019-20 season unfolded he made no secret (yet again) of his ambition to make La Liga the most popular football league in the world. In doing so, he effectively acknowledged the Premier League currently holds that title. At the heart of the PL's popularity is a global TV allure and the riches that brings, as outlined earlier in this report. A feature of this La Liga season already has been a battle between Tebas and the Spanish FA (the RFEF) over how many different days games should be spread across each week. Tebas wants more days and more time movement to reach foreign audiences. RFEF want less.

"Of the two clásicos there are in a season, one should always be so people in Asia can watch without being asleep and the other should always be so people in the US can watch without being asleep," he told The Guardian in November.

"It is important to recognise that the followers of Spanish football are not just people who live in Spain. We must also respect the fans who are in Asia and the Americas – they are also contributing because they pay for their TV subscriptions, which in turn allows the clubs to pay big stars and helps turns La Liga into a global product."

He forecast that audience numbers will be of less relevance in the near future than 'users' and the minutes of content they are consuming, whether live or clips or highlights, on TV, mobiles or other devices. "We are working towards having more users. I'm convinced in 10 years nobody will be taking about audience figures – instead we'll be taking about users."

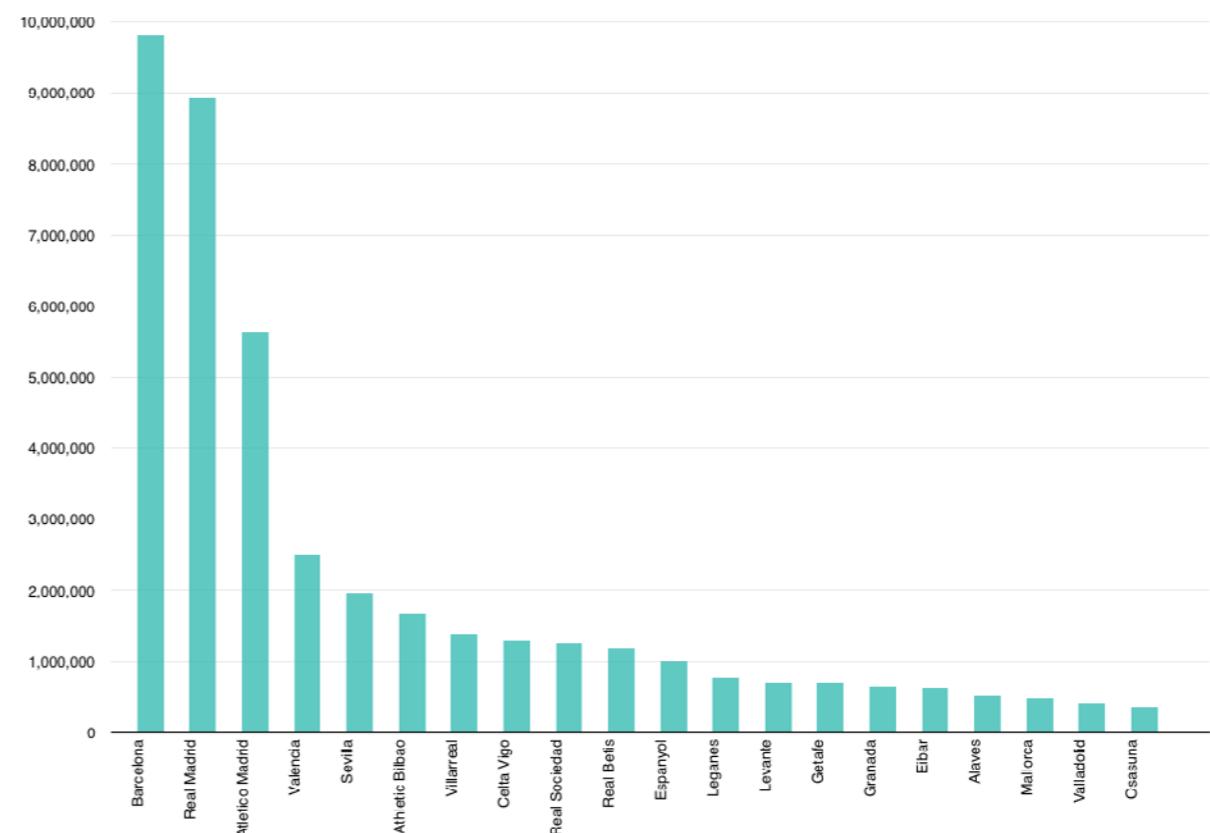
On the pitch, the early season talk was of the stuttering of Barcelona and Real Madrid, and the initial charge of little Granada. And then of Lionel Messi, as his goals started to flow and he picked up yet another Ballon D'Or.

## THE MONEY TALK

If the money talks, then Barcelona and Real Madrid will be vying for the title as Atletico Madrid, Valencia and Sevilla are among those chasing Champions League slots for next season. At the other end of the table, the money, or lack of it, would point to a season of struggle for Osasuna, Valladolid, Alaves and Eibar especially.

## AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, LA LIGA, 2019-20 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	Avg Annual Per Player, £	Avg Annual Per Player, \$
1	Barcelona	£9,827,644	\$12,284,555
2	Real Madrid	£8,923,754	\$11,154,693
3	Atletico Madrid	£5,631,364	\$7,039,205
4	Valencia	£2,499,098	\$3,123,873
5	Sevilla	£1,973,490	\$2,466,863
6	Athletic Bilbao	£1,674,220	\$2,092,775
7	Villarreal	£1,383,633	\$1,729,541
8	Celta Vigo	£1,287,325	\$1,609,156
9	Real Sociedad	£1,253,606	\$1,567,008
10	Real Betis	£1,181,752	\$1,477,190
11	Espanyol	£1,004,186	\$1,255,233
12	Leganes	£757,602	\$947,003
13	Levante	£700,637	\$875,796
14	Getafe	£696,906	\$871,133
15	Granada	£645,598	\$806,998
16	Eibar	£634,282	\$792,853
17	Alaves	£510,792	\$638,490
18	Mallorca	£484,370	\$605,463
19	Valladolid	£406,563	\$508,204
20	Osasuna	£362,245	\$452,806



# LA LIGA ANALYSIS

SPANISH TOP-DIVISION FOOTBALL

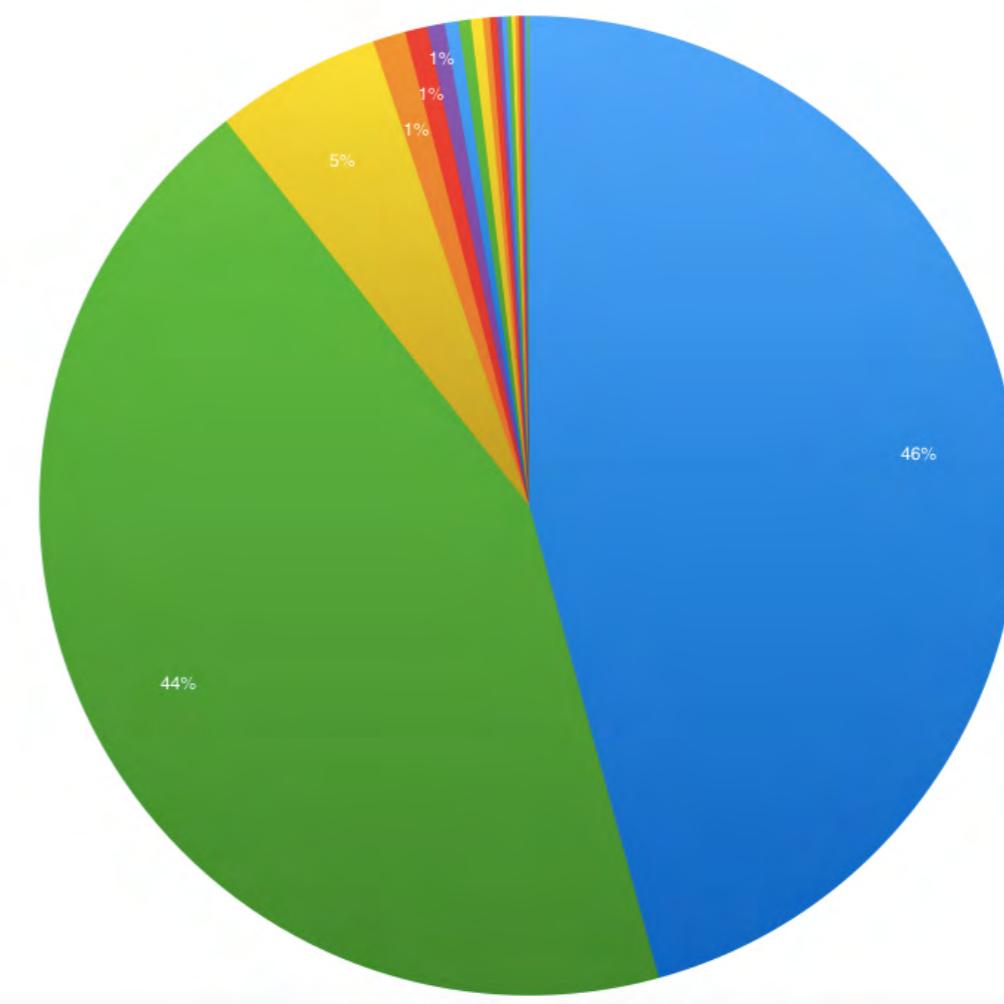


SUCCESS LEADS TO POPULARITY? SOCIAL MEDIA SAYS...

TEAM	TWITTER	INSTAGRAM	FACEBOOK	TOTAL
Real Madrid	33,203,419	80,135,349	110,549,665	223,888,433
Barcelona	31,189,869	79,304,321	103,119,974	213,614,164
Atlético Madrid	4,511,617	8,505,569	13,742,697	26,759,883
Valencia	1,228,600	726,335	3,364,554	5,319,489
Sevilla	954,425	795,809	1,814,110	3,564,344
Real Betis	742,633	870,507	1,236,598	2,849,738
Athletic Bilbao	853,206	312,009	1,042,767	2,207,982
Real Sociedad	606,366	177,936	1,181,397	1,965,699
Villarreal	468,660	538,123	913,574	1,920,357
Celta Vigo	441,597	194,006	526,945	1,162,548
Espanyol	440,908	203,131	448,602	1,092,641
Granada	366,181	96,769	362,257	825,207
Levante	407,433	144,525	246,300	798,258
Valladolid	337,251	158,260	236,100	731,611
Mallorca	300,193	79,744	237,196	617,133
Osasuna	232,615	72,111	254,117	558,843
Leganes	250,913	135,915	93,697	480,525
Eibar	217,668	112,407	103,765	433,840
Alavés	207,633	71,852	134,972	414,457
Getafe	97,229	101,409	133,199	331,837

Data: mid-November 2019

## PROPORTIONAL SHARE OF TOTAL SOCIAL MEDIA BY TEAM



## SNAPSHOTS OF ORIGINAL MISCELLANY

i: The three most successful all-time La Liga teams are Real Madrid (33 championship wins), Barcelona (26) and Atletico Madrid (10), the only other team in double figures. They are first, second and third in La Liga global popularity.

ii: It requires just two teams combined in social media numbers to amass more than half the league's total popularity. In fact Real and Barca share 90 per cent and Atletico five per cent more. The other 17 clubs combined have about as many followers as Atletico. This is not a league with competitive depth.

iii: The ratio between the highest payers in this league (Barcelona) and the lowest payers (Osasuna) is 27.13 to 1, a huge figure that illustrates zero genuine competitive balance from top to bottom.

iv: The top 10% of La Liga earners make 54.5% of all basic pay. Those players are concentrated at Barcelona, Real Madrid and Atletico. The only league with a more skewed pay allocation is China's CSL.

# SERIE A ANALYSIS

ITALIAN TOP-DIVISION FOOTBALL



TEAMS  
**20**

PLAYERS  
**547**



TOTAL SALARIES:

**£976,666,680**

\$1,220,833,350

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:

**£1,785,497** (UP BY 17.5% YEAR-ON-YEAR)

\$2,231,871

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:

**No8 LEAGUE**

MEDIAN SALARY:

**£1,041,667**

\$1,302,084

## THE STATE OF PLAY

Juventus landed a record-extending eighth consecutive Serie A title in 2018-19 to take their all-time tally of titles to 35 and stretch their lead as Italy's most frequent champions over Milan and Inter (both on 18). Whether they will make it to nine straight remains to be seen but after 15 games played by mid-December they were two points off the top with 36 points, behind Internazionale (38). At that stage Lazio were in third (33 points) with Cagliari in fourth (29), Roma fifth (29), and Atalanta sixth (28). Four of those six clubs (not Cagliari and Atalanta) are also the six best-paid in Serie A by average basic salary by this GSSS's calculations.

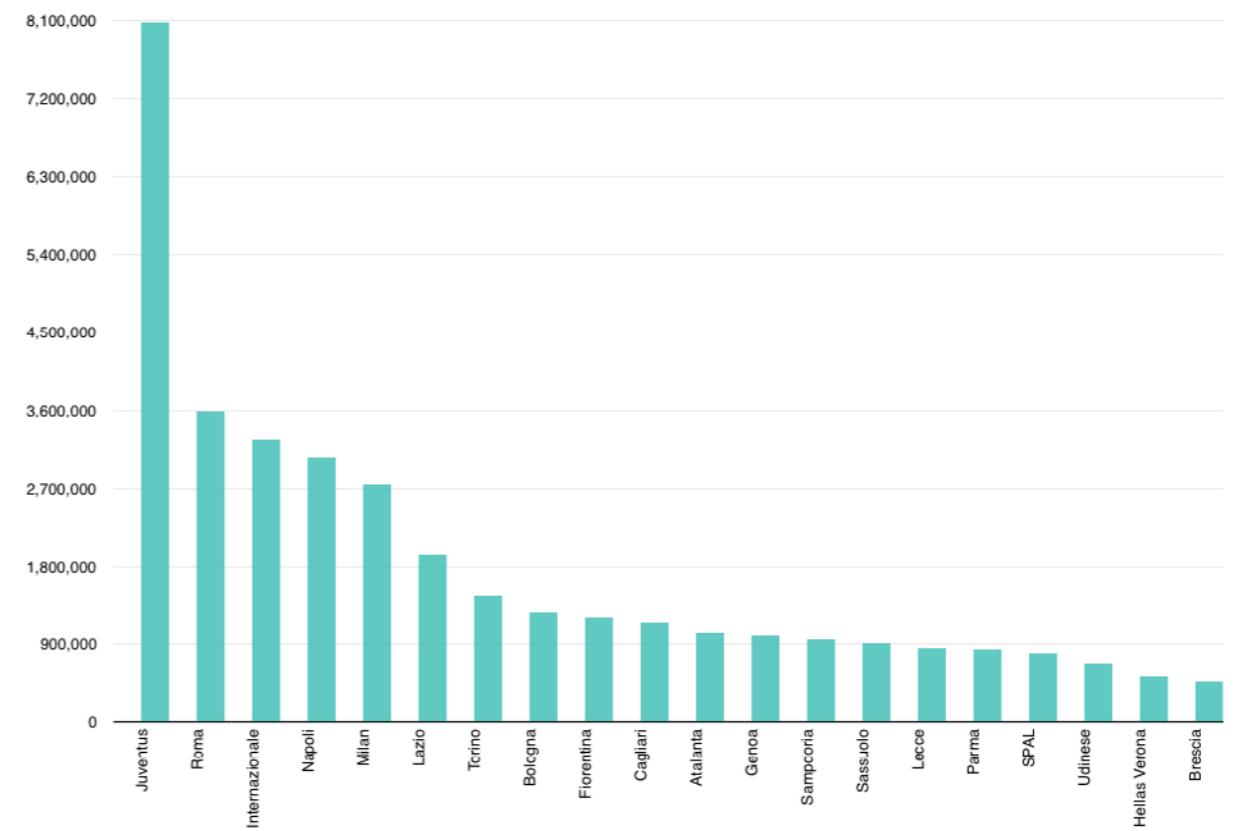
If you are interested in significant financial developments in this season's Serie's A and haven't yet read the introductory essay of this report, it might be of interest. A tax break for workers from various employment sectors - including footballers - is coming into force in Italy in 2020. Its precise effect remains to be seen (see introductory essay) but in a nutshell, clubs are highly likely to benefit because they won't have to pay so much tax on behalf of certain new players. Year-on-year wage inflation has been driven strongly by this factor at particular clubs, including Juventus. "The working" for this is detailed in the essay. Juventus's wage bill is now more than double the next best paid team, presumably with an eye on Champions League glory as much as another Serie A title.

## THE MONEY TALK

If the money talks, Juventus will make it nine in a row with Roma, Inter, Napoli, Milan and Lazio competing for Champions League berths. At the other end, the relegation contenders would be among the eight teams with average basic pay lower than £1m per player: Brescia, Hellas Verona, Udinese, SPAL, Parma, Lecce, Sassuolo, Sampdoria and Genoa. After 15 games in 2019-20, seven of those nine were the bottom seven in the table.

## AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, SERIE A, 2019-20 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	Avg Annual Per Player, £	Avg Annual Per Player, \$
1	Juventus	£8,085,317	\$10,106,646
2	Roma	£3,594,322	\$4,492,903
3	Internazionale	£3,260,031	\$4,075,039
4	Napoli	£3,058,862	\$3,823,578
5	Milan	£2,752,976	\$3,441,220
6	Lazio	£1,931,662	\$2,414,578
7	Torino	£1,458,333	\$1,822,916
8	Bologna	£1,258,929	\$1,573,661
9	Fiorentina	£1,204,427	\$1,505,534
10	Cagliari	£1,150,452	\$1,438,065
11	Atalanta	£1,025,492	\$1,281,865
12	Genoa	£999,504	\$1,249,380
13	Sampdoria	£959,325	\$1,199,156
14	Sassuolo	£915,751	\$1,144,689
15	Lecce	£852,055	\$1,065,069
16	Parma	£832,738	\$1,040,923
17	SPAL	£791,667	\$989,584
18	Udinese	£675,843	\$844,804
19	Hellas Verona	£514,593	\$643,241
20	Brescia	£464,744	\$580,930



# SERIE A ANALYSIS

ITALIAN TOP-DIVISION FOOTBALL

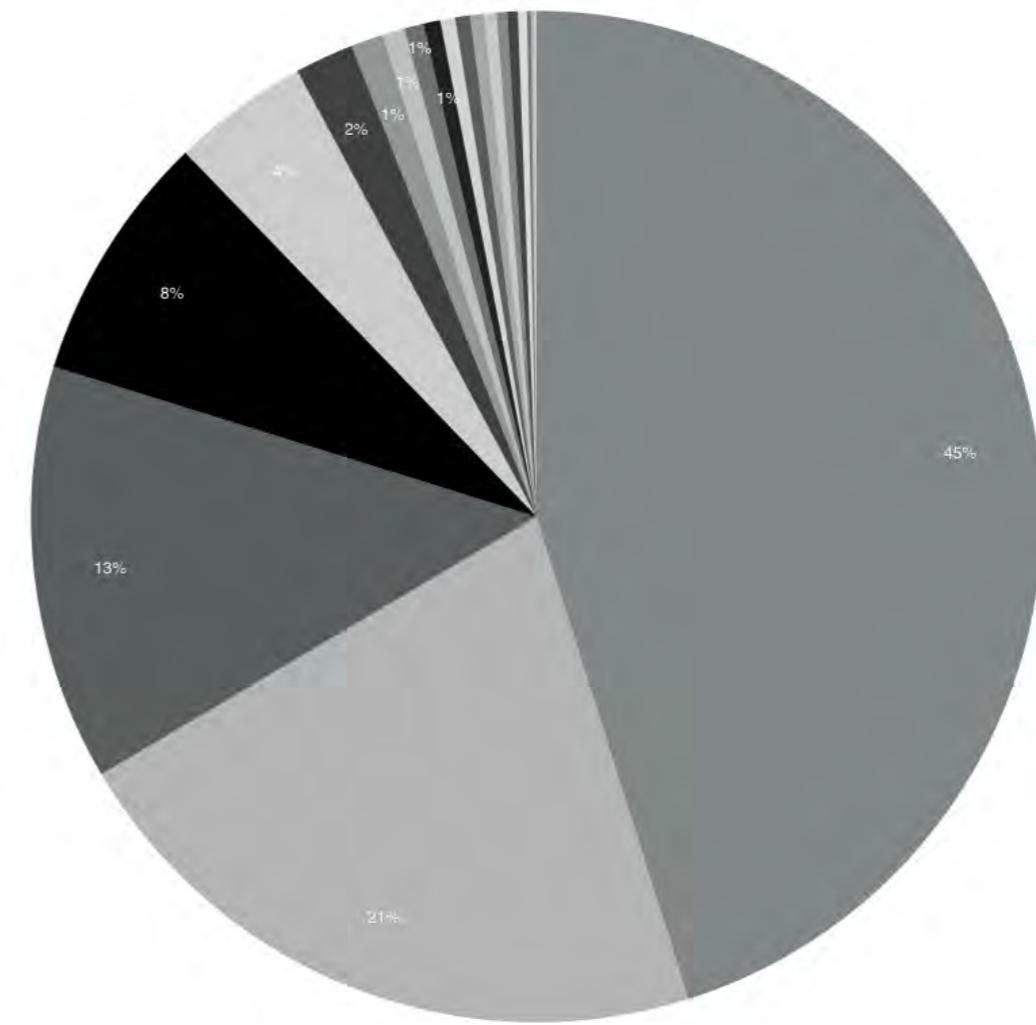


SUCCESS LEADS TO POPULARITY? SOCIAL MEDIA SAYS...

TEAM	TWITTER	INSTAGRAM	FACEBOOK	TOTAL
Juventus	7,491,840	33,544,560	39,921,717	80,958,117
Milan	7,136,255	6,555,587	24,636,842	38,328,684
Internazionale	1,956,126	3,919,982	17,998,713	23,874,821
Roma	1,837,186	2,985,461	9,485,192	14,307,839
Napoli	1,549,670	1,878,810	4,435,884	7,864,364
Fiorentina	659,691	610,208	2,083,480	3,353,379
Lazio	525,101	477,731	838,547	1,841,379
Bologna	162,231	125,316	1,030,122	1,317,669
Torino	405,127	239,031	476,191	1,120,349
Cagliari	355,137	227,710	364,440	947,287
Sampdoria	346,939	163,968	346,903	857,810
Genoa	322,550	167,144	346,874	836,568
Atalanta	306,874	213,528	269,736	790,138
Sassuolo	267,697	209,832	258,484	736,013
Hellas Verona	258,958	84,462	274,334	617,754
Parma	29,245	257,615	295,238	582,098
Udinese	290,026	114,512	115,421	519,959
Brescia	29,173	103,410	85,496	218,079
SPAL	20,797	92,079	61,793	174,669
Lecce	2,308	79,903	65,528	147,739

Data: mid-November 2019

## PROPORTIONAL SHARE OF TOTAL SOCIAL MEDIA BY TEAM



## SNAPSHOTS OF ORIGINAL MISCELLANY

i: The three most successful all-time Serie A teams (Juventus, Milan, Inter) are the top three in current global popularity in that order, with Roma (seventh most successful but who have a brilliant social media team) in fourth.

ii: It requires as few as two teams combined - Juve and Inter - in social media numbers to amass more than half the league's total popularity. With only two other teams having more than four per cent of the league's share, this is not a competition with multiple serious challengers.

iii: The ratio between the highest payers in this league (Juventus) and the lowest payers (Brescia) is 17.4 to 1, a huge figure and indicative of a polarised league where small teams have no chance.

iv: The top 10% of earners make 40.4% of all basic pay. Only two other football leagues in this GSSS are less 'top heavy' in this regard (EPL, Bundesliga), while the other six are more so.

# BUNDESLIGA ANALYSIS

## GERMAN TOP-DIVISION FOOTBALL



**TEAMS  
18**

**PLAYERS  
493**

**TOTAL SALARIES:  
£780,769,070  
\$975,961,338**

**AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:  
£1,583,710 (UP BY 13.4% YEAR-ON-YEAR)  
\$1,979,638**

**AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:  
No9 LEAGUE**

**MEDIAN SALARY:  
£897,182  
\$1,121,478**

### THE STATE OF PLAY

Bayern, Bayern, Bayern, Bayern, Bayern, Bayern, Bayern. Seven league titles in a row. Eight in the last 10 years. Fourteen in the last 20. Twenty-eight titles from 56 completed Bundesliga seasons in the league's current format. Half the honours annexed by one team. Bayern Munich have been the biggest, richest and strongest club by far in Germany for more than half a century, with double the resources (at least) of their nearest challengers. And yet there could be something like a title race afoot in Germany's top division, at the time of writing, after most teams had played 15 games.

At that stage, RB Leipzig were top on 33 points, then Monchengladbach (31 points), Dortmund (29), Bayern (27), and Schalke, Freiburg and Bayer Leverkusen (all 25).

A year ago, around this time (November / December) it also looked as if a genuine title race might be unfolding although in the end, Bayern beat Dortmund by two points, beat third-place Leipzig by 12 points and beat fourth-placed Bayer Leverkusen by 20 points.

Bayern's summer transfer dealings under manager Niko Kovač included the loan signings of big-money players including Philippe Coutinho from Barcelona and Ivan Perišić from Internazionale, as well as the permanent signing, among others, of Lucas Hernandez from Atletico Madrid for £80m (£71m). Significant departures in the same window were Franck Ribery (to Fiorentina, free), Arjen Robben (retired), James Rodriguez (returning to parent club Real Madrid after a loan) and Mats Hummels (sold to Dortmund).

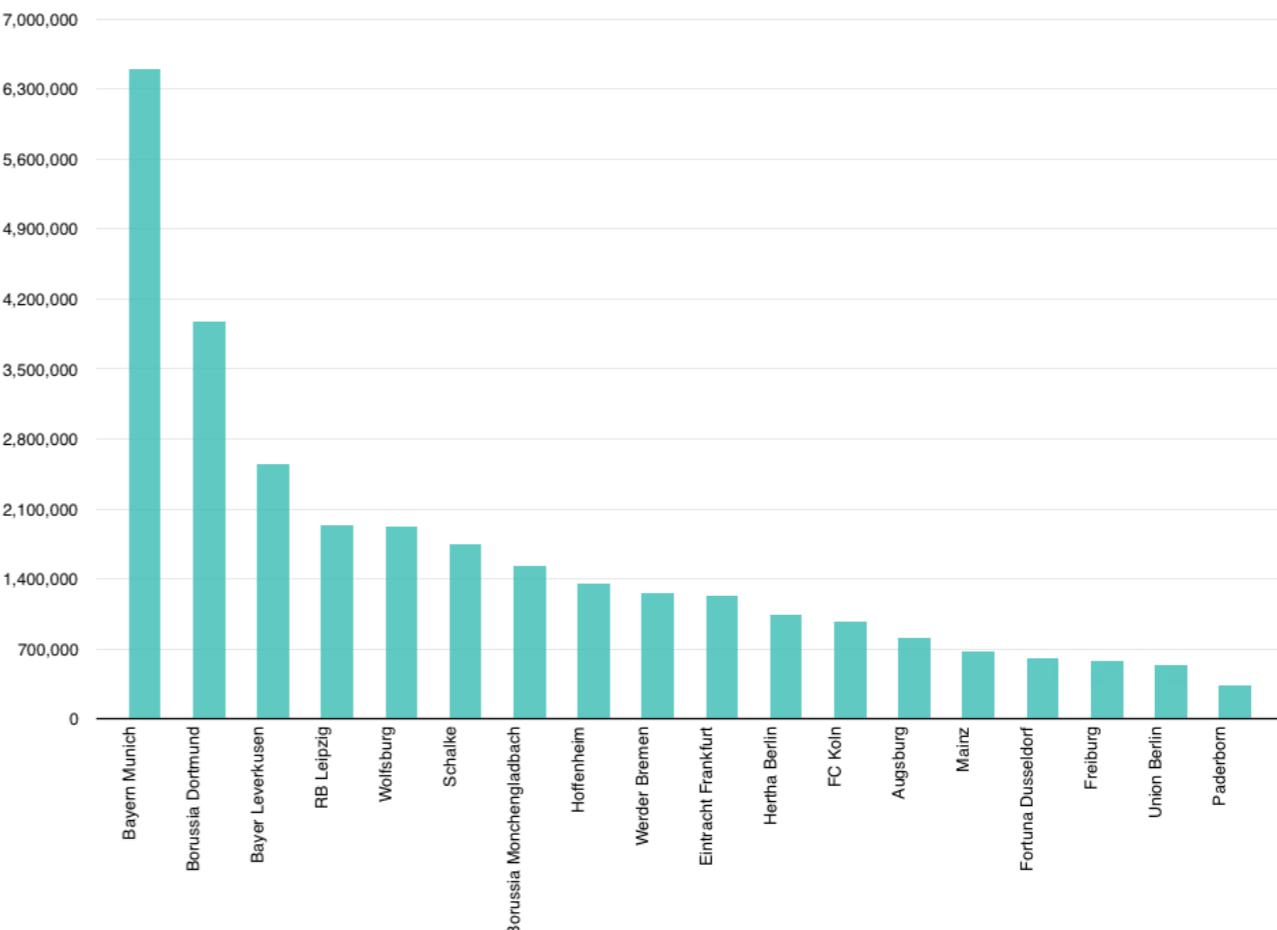
Kovač was sacked in early November and at the time of writing Bayern continue to ponder a permanent replacement with every major name in the game reportedly under consideration.

### THE MONEY TALK

If the money talks, Bayern Munich will rally to win the title ahead of Dortmund, Leverkusen, Leipzig, Wolfsburg and Schalke while Freiburg, Union Berlin and Paderborn will go down. Poor (general) management as always will contribute to scuppering expectations at some rich clubs while excellent management will help some of the poorer clubs to punch above their weight.

### AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, BUNDESLIGA, 2019-20 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, £	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, \$
1	Bayern Munich	£6,495,917	\$8,119,896
2	Borussia Dortmund	£3,977,086	\$4,971,358
3	Bayer Leverkusen	£2,549,201	\$3,186,501
4	RB Leipzig	£1,933,091	\$2,416,364
5	Wolfsburg	£1,928,316	\$2,410,395
6	Schalke	£1,748,145	\$2,185,181
7	Borussia Monchengladbach	£1,535,462	\$1,919,327
8	Hoffenheim	£1,359,973	\$1,699,966
9	Werder Bremen	£1,252,983	\$1,566,229
10	Eintracht Frankfurt	£1,230,655	\$1,538,319
11	Hertha Berlin	£1,036,288	\$1,295,360
12	FC Köln	£979,537	\$1,224,422
13	Augsburg	£813,708	\$1,017,136
14	Mainz	£681,484	\$851,855
15	Fortuna Dusseldorf	£604,020	\$755,025
16	Freiburg	£582,394	\$727,992
17	Union Berlin	£541,123	\$676,404
18	Paderborn	£334,998	\$418,748



# BUNDESLIGA ANALYSIS

GERMAN TOP-DIVISION FOOTBALL

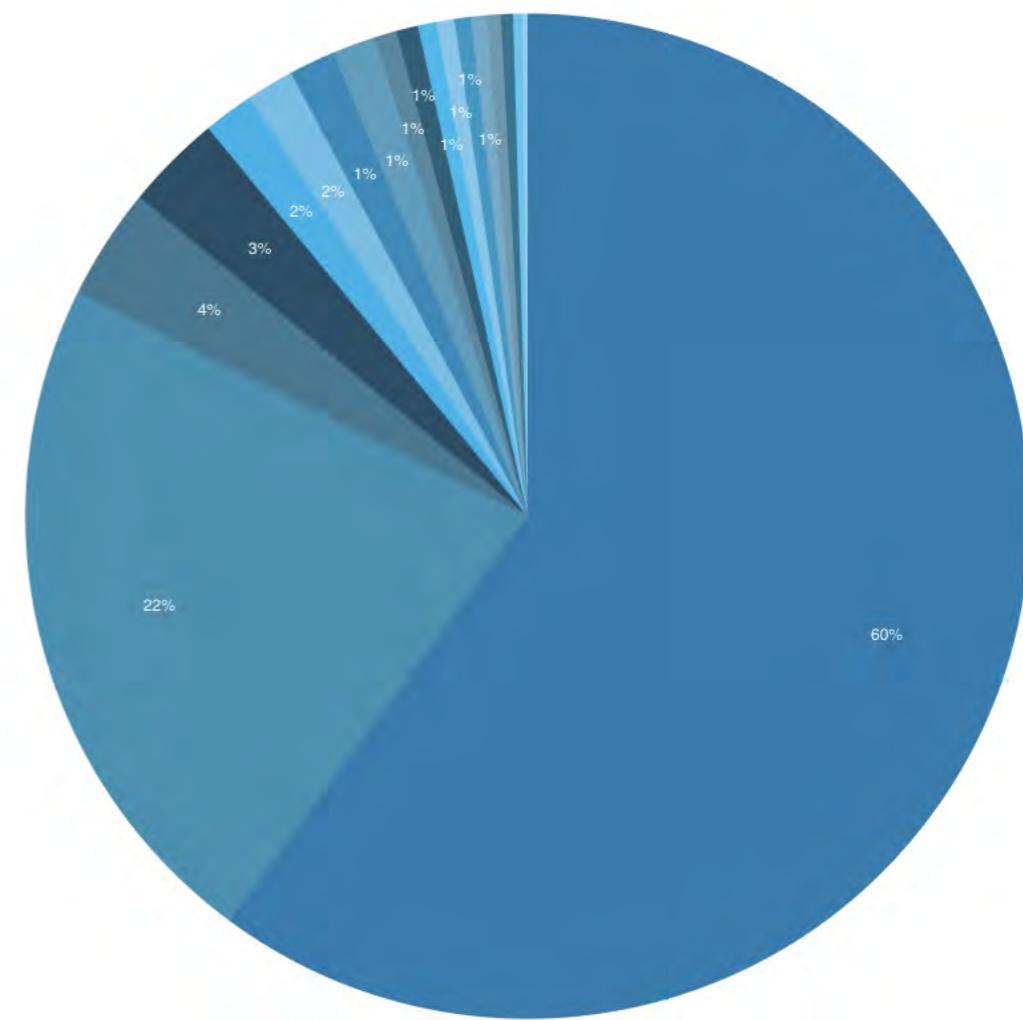


SUCCESS LEADS TO POPULARITY? SOCIAL MEDIA SAYS...

TEAM	TWITTER	INSTAGRAM	FACEBOOK	TOTAL
Bayern Munich	4,741,432	18,873,641	49,689,094	73,304,167
Borussia Dortmund	3,412,884	8,583,754	15,119,982	27,116,620
Schalke 04	733,717	760,427	2,884,606	4,378,750
Bayer Leverkusen	415,492	658,773	2,684,819	3,759,084
Borussia Monchengladbach	493,745	412,116	1,064,907	1,970,768
Wolfsburg	283,203	380,605	1,219,112	1,882,920
Werder Bremen	503,984	294,244	1,014,022	1,812,250
FC Köln	645,231	285,954	764,757	1,695,942
RB Leipzig	171,643	313,775	397,925	883,343
Hertha Berlin	345,526	143,478	362,598	851,602
Mainz	187,287	100,420	433,709	721,416
Hoffenheim	202,214	213,175	297,837	713,226
Eintracht Frankfurt	486,446	60,500	95,886	642,832
Freiburg	271,320	97,038	244,858	613,216
Augsburg	197,523	106,783	249,899	554,205
Fortuna Düsseldorf	163,033	92,282	217,302	472,617
Union Berlin	143,488	79,514	145,874	368,876
Paderborn	65,435	30,266	99,916	195,617

Data: mid-November 2019

## PROPORTIONAL SHARE OF TOTAL SOCIAL MEDIA BY TEAM



## SNAPSHOTS OF ORIGINAL MISCELLANY

i: The three most successful all-time Bundesliga teams are the top three in current global popularity: Bayern Munich, Dortmund and Schalke. Bayer Leverkusen in fourth place in popularity terms are punching about their weight (as the 11th most successful club) while Moenchenglabach (in fourth place among current BL teams in terms of success) are fifth in global popularity.

ii: It requires as few as one team in social media numbers to amass more than half the league's total popularity (Bayern, 60 per cent). This points to domination by one Goliath to the extent the league has a credibility problem, in genuinely competitive terms.

iii: The ratio between the highest payers (Bayern Munich) and the lowest payers (Paderborn) is 19.39 to 1, a huge figure illustrating the gulf in resources and why Bayern have been so dominant.

iv: The top 10% of Bundesliga earners this season make 38.9% of all basic pay. Only five other leagues in this GSSS are less 'top heavy' in this regard, and only one football league, the EPL.

# LIGUE 1 ANALYSIS

FRENCH TOP-DIVISION FOOTBALL



**TOTAL SALARIES:**  
**£551,581,121**  
**\$1,038,759**

**AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:**  
**£689,476,401 (UP BY 4.9% YEAR-ON-YEAR)**  
**\$1,298,449**

**AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:**  
**No 10 LEAGUE**

**MEDIAN SALARY:**  
**£455,118**  
**\$568,898**

## THE STATE OF PLAY

We calculate PSG's payroll this season will amount to around 34 per cent all salaries paid by Ligue 1's 20 clubs combined, followed by Monaco (around 11 per cent), Lyon and Marseille (around 8 per cent each) then Lille (approaching five per cent) while the smallest wage bills at clubs from Nikes to Brest, Reims and Amiens won't reach even two per cent each.

Two years ago, in the GSSS published in November 2017, we calculated that the top Ligue 1 payers, in order, would be PSG (with 26 per cent of all salaries), then Monaco (10 per cent), Marseille (10 per cent), Lyon (nine per cent), Nice and Bordeaux (both around five per cent) and Lille (just over four per cent). When official data for the 2017-18 season was published more than a year later, by the DNCG, that was precisely how the numbers had panned out. The DNCG is the Direction Nationale du Contrôle de Gestion, the organisation responsible for monitoring and overseeing the accounts of professional association football clubs in France. So we have a high degree of confidence that PSG are, if anything, increasing their stranglehold.

Ligue 1 hasn't been a meaningful competition for a number of years even though Monaco managed to win a recent title, in 2017, before falling apart. PSG then obliterated the transfer world record by paying €222m for Neymar from Barcelona and romped to the next two Ligue 1 titles.

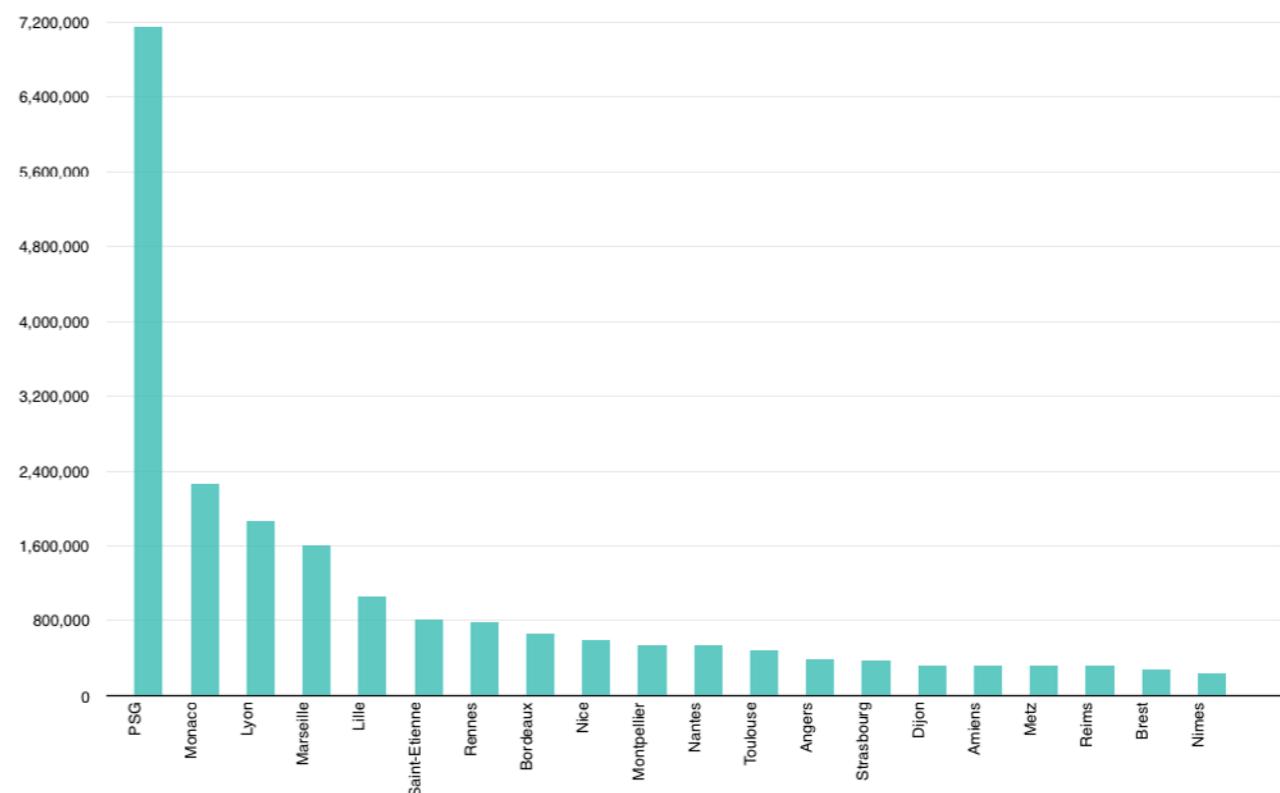
When you're spending massive sums on players and wages and are able to strip your closest domestic rivals - then Monaco - of their best players (exhibit A being Kylian Mbappé, who moved permanently to PSG in summer 2018 for €145m and add-ons), you're likely going to keep crushing the pack. And this season PSG have again extended their lead, pay-wise, over the next richest club. In 2018-19, their basic average pay was just under three times as much as the next biggest payers, Marseille, while this year is it more than three times as much as the next biggest payers, Monaco.

## THE MONEY TALK

If the money talks, then PSG will win the title, with Monaco, Lyon and Marseille leading the race for second; and nine clubs with average salaries below £500,000 per year will be scrapping in a relegation fight: Toulouse, Angers, Strasbourg, Dijon, Amiens, Metz, Reims, Brest and Nimes.

## AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, LIGUE 1, 2019-20 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	Avg Annual Per Player, £	Avg Annual Per Player, \$
1	PSG	£7,147,376	\$8,934,220
2	Monaco	£2,269,960	\$2,837,450
3	Lyon	£1,865,322	\$2,331,653
4	Marseille	£1,609,766	\$2,012,208
5	Lille	£1,062,131	\$1,327,664
6	Saint-Etienne	£806,746	\$1,008,433
7	Rennes	£780,481	\$975,601
8	Bordeaux	£657,031	\$821,289
9	Nice	£593,511	\$741,889
10	Montpellier	£544,706	\$680,883
11	Nantes	£543,609	\$679,511
12	Toulouse	£487,059	\$608,824
13	Angers	£392,968	\$491,210
14	Strasbourg	£372,095	\$465,119
15	Dijon	£327,186	\$408,983
16	Amiens	£325,263	\$406,579
17	Metz	£320,590	\$400,738
18	Reims	£320,097	\$400,121
19	Brest	£283,354	\$354,193
20	Nimes	£238,817	\$298,521



# LIGUE 1 ANALYSIS

FRENCH TOP-DIVISION FOOTBALL

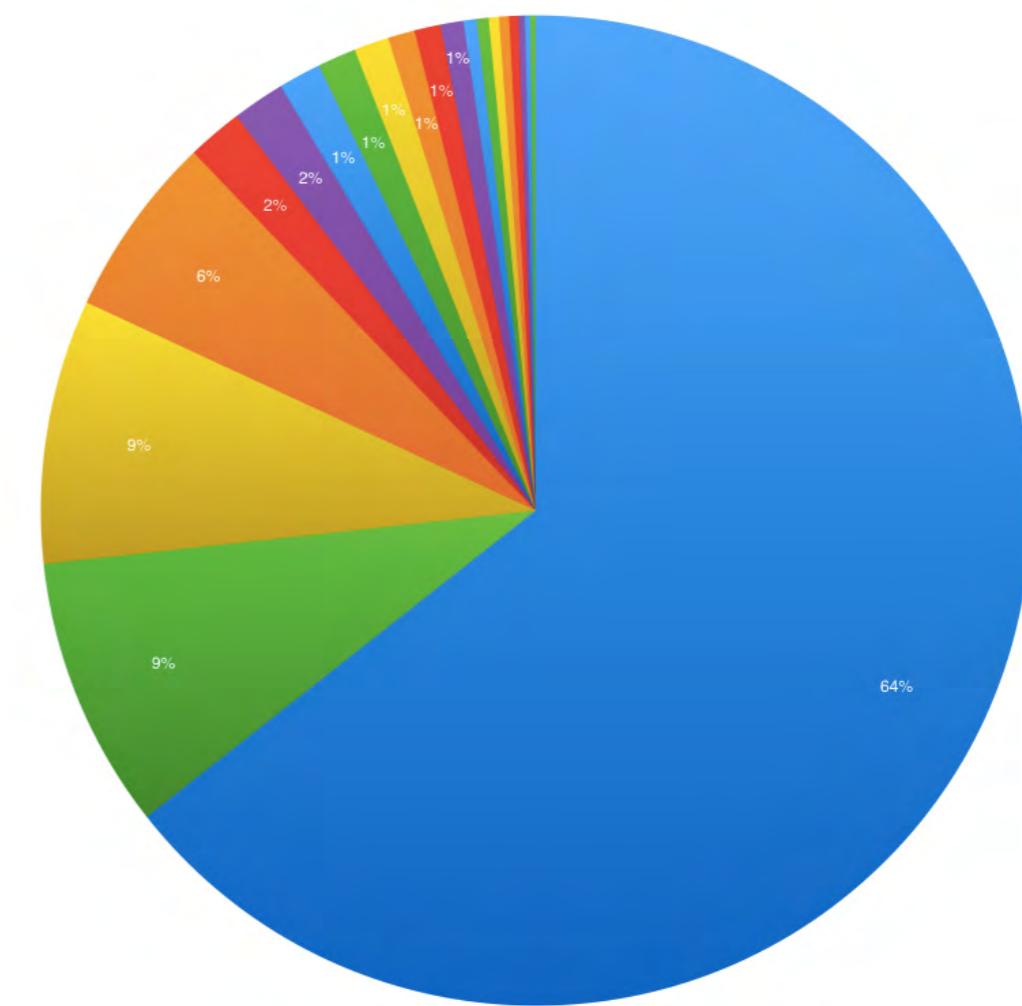


SUCCESS LEADS TO POPULARITY? SOCIAL MEDIA SAYS...

TEAM	TWITTER	INSTAGRAM	FACEBOOK	TOTAL
PSG	7,395,583	25,545,235	38,090,176	71,030,994
Marseille	3,227,006	1,300,798	5,275,497	9,803,301
Monaco	2,145,600	1,506,518	5,867,286	9,519,404
Lyon	1,718,983	1,281,415	3,575,477	6,575,875
Lille	725,168	276,869	994,093	1,996,130
Saint-Etienne	804,014	238,747	850,338	1,893,099
Bordeaux	386,636	131,333	1,017,174	1,535,143
Nantes	557,834	341,682	490,765	1,390,281
Nice	455,369	303,131	502,024	1,260,524
Rennes	331,705	150,384	486,564	968,653
Toulouse	471,797	103,019	367,989	942,805
Montpellier	360,342	145,799	319,523	825,664
Reims	213,198	39,927	216,859	469,984
Metz	154,455	66,982	210,169	431,606
Strasbourg	136,494	91,860	140,726	369,080
Angers	116,705	57,146	188,891	362,742
Dijon	108,160	61,063	159,159	328,382
Brest	67,998	36,810	128,785	233,593
Nimes	78,352	36,605	77,470	192,427
Amiens	58,136	42,760	89,191	190,087

Data: mid-November 2019

## PROPORTIONAL SHARE OF TOTAL SOCIAL MEDIA BY TEAM



## SNAPSHOTS OF ORIGINAL MISCELLANY

i: The four most popular Ligue 1 teams are among the top six all-time most successful Ligue 1 teams: PSG, Marseille, Monaco and Lyon. The other two from the most successful six clubs, Saint-Etienne and Nantes, haven't won titles for 38 years and 18 years respectively, well before the social media age.

ii: It requires solely PSG to amass more than half the league's total popularity. If PSG paying 34 per cent of all wages is a message of inequality then 64 per cent of global followers belows something is amiss.

iii: The ratio between the highest payers in this league (PSG) and the lowest payers (Nimes) is 29.93 to 1, the highest ratio of any GSSS league. This isn't a competition, it's a parade. Again.

iv: The top 10% of Ligue earners make 53.4% of all basic pay. Only La Liga and China's CSL are more 'top heavy' in this regard, and therefore less balanced or 'less fair'.

# CSL ANALYSIS

## CHINESE SUPER LEAGUE FOOTBALL



**TOTAL SALARIES:**  
**£469,370,665**  
**\$586,713,331**

**AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:**  
**£965,783** (UP BY 20.8% YEAR-ON-YEAR)  
**\$1,207,229**

**AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:**  
**No11 LEAGUE**

**MEDIAN SALARY:**  
**£293,091**  
**\$366,364**

### THE STATE OF PLAY

The CSL continues to operate as a financial madhouse with the country's most successful club of recent times, Guangzhou Evergrande, hemorrhaging money at an accelerating rate, while big losses are common elsewhere too. In the financial year of 2017, Guangzhou made a loss on \$156m. And when the annual report for 2018 was published in May this year, that had rocketed up to \$267m - for a company with income of just \$90m but operating costs of \$361m. New financial regulations put in place by the Chinese FA and supposedly coming into effect for 2019 state that operating costs for CSL clubs should be capped at \$174m and losses must be capped at no more than \$46m. Whether this happens remains to be seen, but Guangzhou's average basic first-team pay has actually grown year-on-year from £1.66m to just over £1.82m. Average salaries across the league have grown a whopping 20 per cent, and we are only measuring player pay, not the massive money being spent on foreign managers. Rafa Benitez has been earning a reported £12m basic per year at Dalian Yifang, a similar sum to Fabio Cannavaro at Guangzhou, while Vitor Pereira reportedly earns even more at Shanghai SIPG.

There remains no evidence that current revenues from tickets, TV or commercial deals can pay the massive wage bills of the CSL's biggest spenders. And quantifying the exact state of the league's finances is impossible when there is close to no transparency from most clubs.

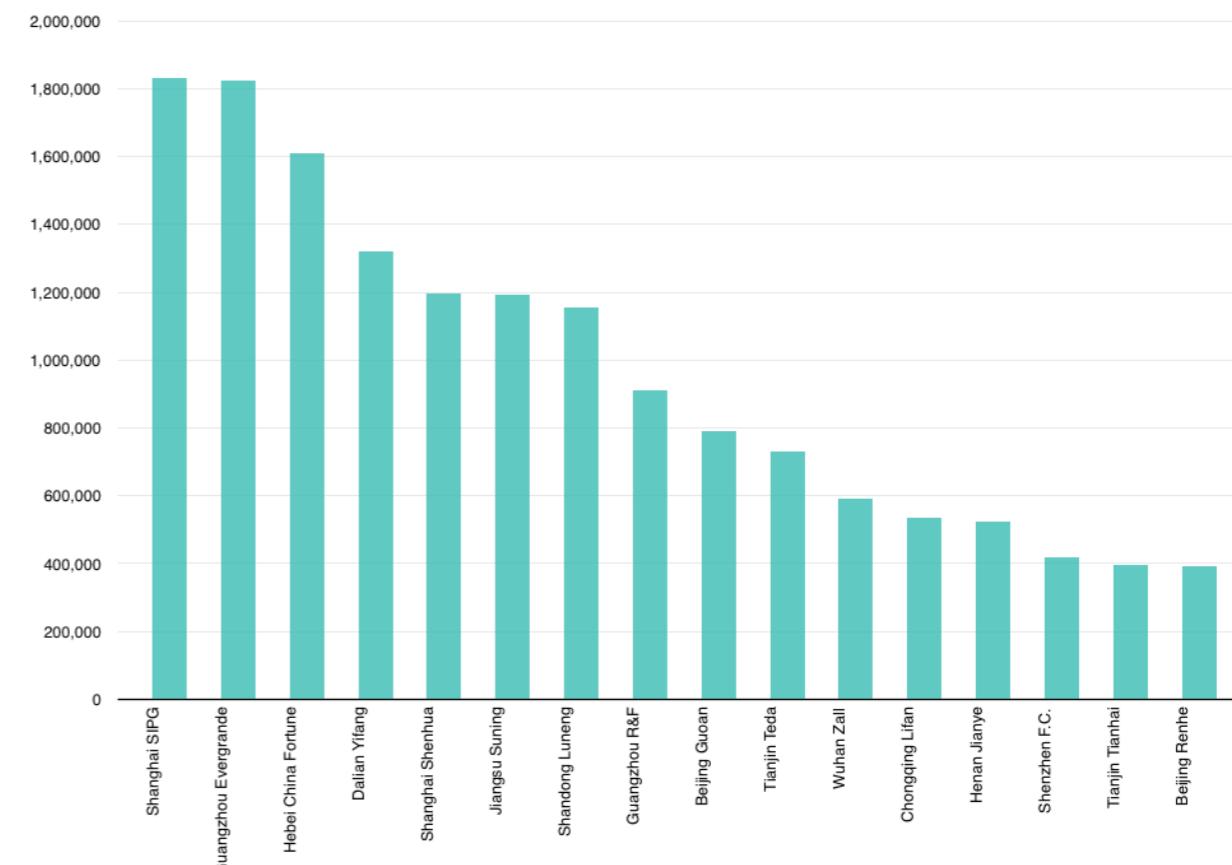
The problem with a salary cap is it won't be fully supported by all the clubs. Some of them can afford to have a popular asset losing large sums, at least in the medium term, because against their owners' wider riches, the losses are small. Caps may also start to impinge on ability to attract good foreign talent at a time when the CSL wants to keep hiring top players.

### THE MONEY TALK

If the money alone had talked, then the 2019 CSL title race would have been between Shanghai SIPG and Guangzhou Evergrande with Hebei China Fortune and Dalian Yifang in the shake-up, and Shenzhen F.C, Tianjin Tianhai and Beijing Renhe in trouble at the bottom. As it transpired, Shanghai SIPG won from Beijing Guoan second and Guangzhou Evergrande third. Shenzhen F.C, and Beijing Renhe were relegated.

### AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, CSL, 2019 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, £	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, \$
1	Shanghai SIPG	£1,832,419	\$2,290,524
2	Guangzhou Evergrande	£1,823,054	\$2,278,818
3	Hebei China Fortune	£1,610,425	\$2,013,031
4	Dalian Yifang	£1,320,105	\$1,650,131
5	Shanghai Shenhua	£1,197,164	\$1,496,455
6	Jiangsu Suning	£1,194,117	\$1,492,647
7	Shandong Luneng	£1,156,687	\$1,445,859
8	Guangzhou R&F	£910,051	\$1,137,564
9	Beijing Guoan	£789,867	\$987,333
10	Tianjin Teda	£731,633	\$914,541
11	Wuhan Zall	£590,038	\$737,548
12	Chongqing Lifan	£533,646	\$667,058
13	Henan Jianye	£523,754	\$654,693
14	Shenzhen F.C.	£418,528	\$523,160
15	Tianjin Tianhai	£396,004	\$495,005
16	Beijing Renhe	£394,013	\$492,516



# CSL ANALYSIS

## CHINESE SUPER LEAGUE FOOTBALL

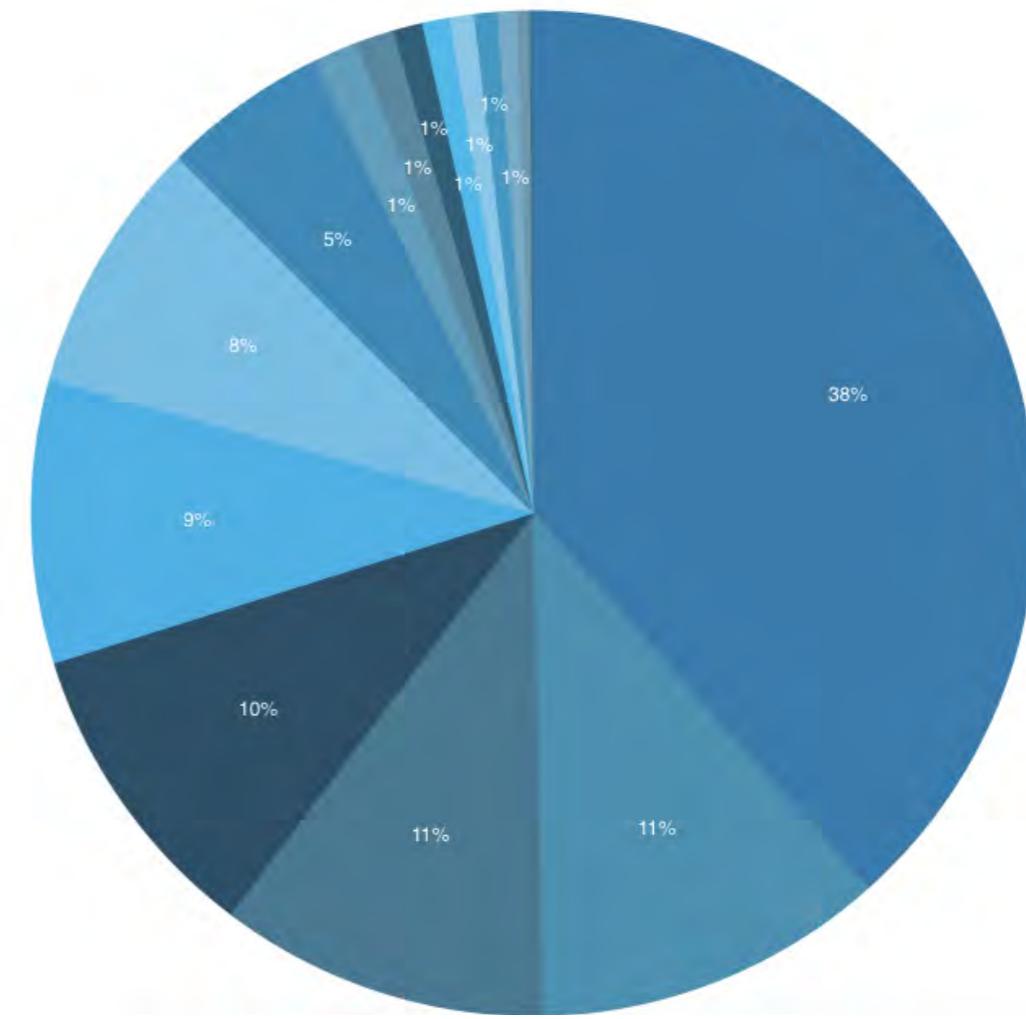


SUCCESS LEADS TO POPULARITY? SOCIAL MEDIA SAYS...

TEAM	TWITTER	INSTAGRAM	FACEBOOK	TOTAL
Guangzhou Evergrande	17,945	55,464	35,732	109,141
Beijing Guoan	11,152	18,715	2,407	32,274
Shandong Luneng	n/a	24,884	5,261	30,145
Shanghai SIPG	1,629	15,375	11,082	28,086
Jiangsu Suning	2,942	20,889	2,100	25,931
Shanghai Shenhua	44	19,827	3,527	23,398
Dalian Yifang	1,074	13,023	928	15,025
Guangzhou R&F	1,423	2,471	339	4,233
Tianjin Teda	448	2,759	238	3,445
Hebei China Fortune	81	1,793	844	2,718
Wuhan Zall	n/a	2,262	215	2,477
Chongqing Lifan	n/a	1,743	515	2,258
Henan Jianye	136	1,917	62	2,115
Tianjin Tianhai	n/a	n/a	1,772	1,772
Shenzhen FC	325	348	467	1,140
Beijing Renhe	n/a	378	n/a	378

Data: mid-November 2019

### PROPORTIONAL SHARE OF TOTAL SOCIAL MEDIA BY TEAM



### SNAPSHOTS OF ORIGINAL MISCELLANY

i: Guangzhou Evergrande have won seven of the past nine CSL titles and are clearly the most popular on the three 'western' social media platforms measured here. So they give international followers, not domestic. These numbers clearly don't reflect the massive Chinese platforms such as WeChat, Sina Weibo and Tencent.

ii: It requires as few as three CSL teams combined in social media numbers to amass more than half the league's total popularity. The recent dominant Guangzhou and a club from the capital dominate.

iii: The ratio between the highest payers in this league (Shanghai SIPG) and the lowest payers (Beijing Renhe) is 4.65 to 1, a smaller figure than any other football league in this GSSS, bar MLS

iv: The top 10% of CSL earners make an eye-watering 69.9% of all basic pay. No other league in this study is anywhere close to being this 'top heavy', with the 49 best-paid players splitting just over £328m between them.

# NPB ANALYSIS

## NIPPON PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL



**TEAMS  
12**

**PLAYERS  
360**



TOTAL SALARIES:  
**£252,048,904**  
**\$315,061,130**

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:  
**£700,136** (UP BY 4.1% YEAR-ON-YEAR)  
**\$875,170**

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:  
**No 12 LEAGUE**

MEDIAN SALARY:  
**£437,956**  
**\$547,445**

### THE STATE OF PLAY

It was déjà vu in Japan's elite baseball league in 2019. The Japan Series was won, again, by the Fukuoka SoftBank Hawks, for a fifth time in six years. They beat the Yomiuri Giants for the title. The Hawks were the best paid team in the NPB, again, with average salaries almost £41,000 per man bigger than their closest financial rivals - the Giants. Average pay across the league rose by just over four per cent, a similar rise to the previous year.

After 143 games of the regular season, the Hawks were only second in the Pacific League behind the Saitama Seibu Lions, exactly as they had been in 2018. Their opponents in the Japan Series, the Giants, finished top of the Central League, as their opponents in the 2018 Japan Series had (Hiroshima).

The Hawks employed three of the top 10 earners in the NPB in 2019, down from seven in 2018, but again including Cuban all-star Alfredo Despaigne, nicknamed 'El Caballo de los Caballos' or 'The Stallion of the Stallions'. He was on around £2.9m while team-mate Yuki Yanagita was on £4.2m. The other Hawks player in the top 10 was an American pitcher, Dennis Surface, on £3.65m.

The Hawks have been owned since 2005 by the SoftBank Corporation, part of the SoftBank multi-national holding conglomerate that owns stakes in giants including Yahoo Japan and Uber among many more.

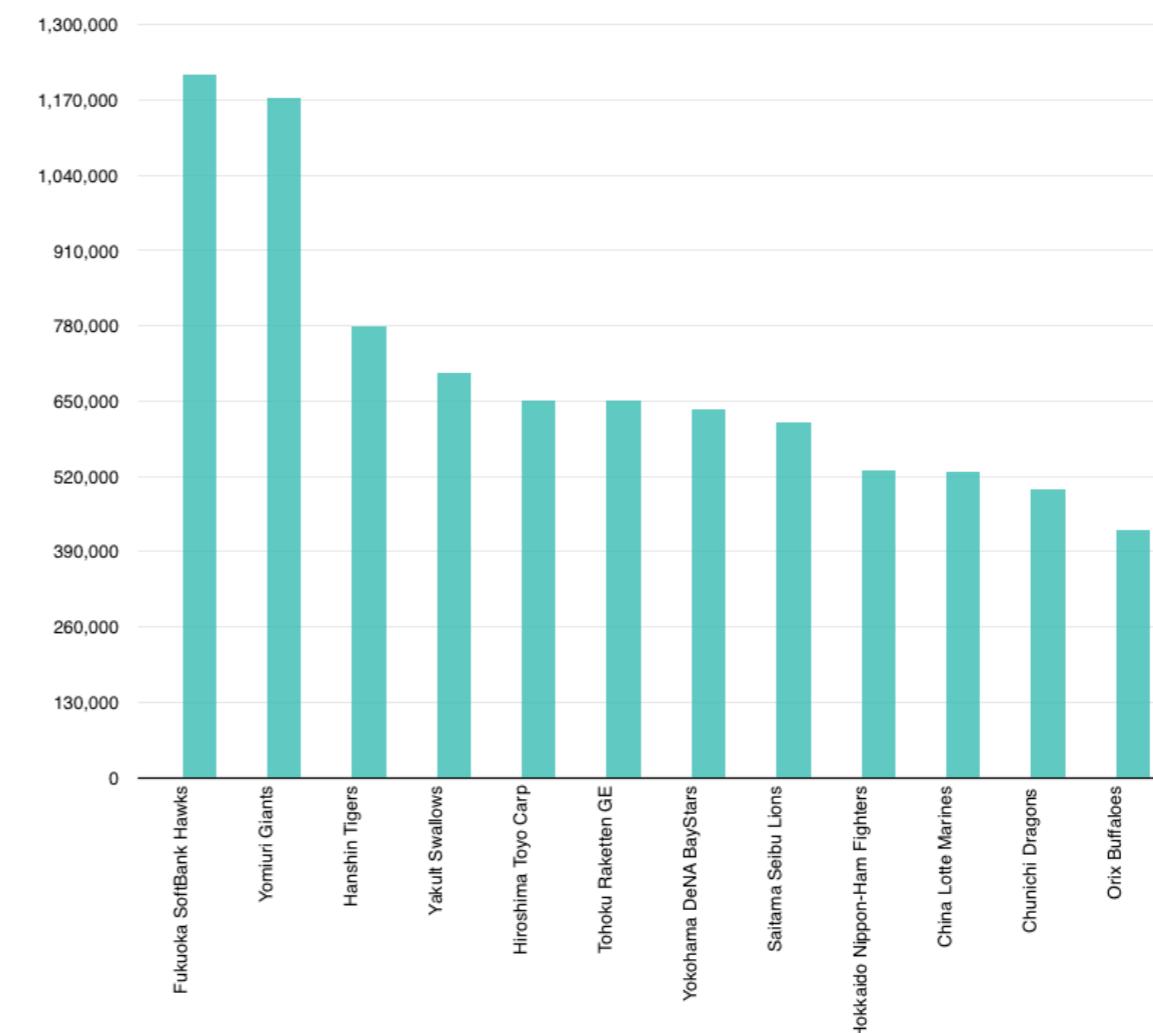
SoftBank were part of a consortium of investors who last year (2018) were reported to be offering almost £20billion to create new and expanded international football tournaments with the world governing body, FIFA. The consortium also includes money from Saudi Arabia, the USA and China. One of the proposed events would be a revamped club World Cup.

### THE MONEY TALK

If the money talked then we would have expected the Hawks to beat the Giants in the Japan Series, and that is what happened. The Hanshin Tigers, third best paid, finished effectively in third. The two lowest paid teams, the Dragons and Buffaloes, had two of the four worst records in the regular season.

### AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, NPB, 2019 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	Avg Annual Per Player, £	Avg Annual Per Player, \$
1	Fukuoka SoftBank Hawks	£1,214,599	\$1,518,248
2	Yomiuri Giants	£1,173,710	\$1,467,138
3	Hanshin Tigers	£780,389	\$975,487
4	Yakult Swallows	£699,757	\$874,696
5	Hiroshima Toyo Carp	£651,034	\$813,793
6	Tohoku Rakuten GE	£650,243	\$812,804
7	Yokohama DeNA BayStars	£636,910	\$796,137
8	Saitama Seibu Lions	£613,260	\$766,575
9	Hokkaido Nippon-Ham Fighters	£529,562	\$661,953
10	China Lotte Marines	£528,078	\$660,097
11	Chunichi Dragons	£497,567	\$621,959
12	Orix Buffaloes	£426,521	\$533,151



# NPB ANALYSIS

## NIPPON PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL



SUCCESS LEADS TO POPULARITY? SOCIAL MEDIA SAYS...

TEAM	TWITTER	INSTAGRAM	FACEBOOK	TOTAL
Hanshin Tigers	1,404,464	238,769	346,760	1,989,993
Hokkaido Nippon Ham Fighters	937,412	214,553	289,691	1,441,656
Fukuoka SoftBank Hawks	946,690	204,565	150,343	1,301,598
Yomiuri Giants	442,598	291,800	303,511	1,037,909
Chunichi Dragons	828,395	23,302	139,733	991,430
Chiba Lotte Marines	764,543	112,359	85,341	962,243
Tohoku Rakuten Golden Eagles	664,221	103,101	177,507	944,829
Tokyo Yakult Swallows	620,650	n/a	77,633	698,283
Saitama Seibu Lions	416,984	n/a	76,241	493,225
Orix Buffaloes	332,571	83,979	57,410	473,960
Yokohama DeNA Bay Stars	152,800	112,480	159,037	424,317
Hiroshima Toyo Carp	n/a	97,796	n/a	97,796

Data: mid-November 2019

### PROPORTIONAL SHARE OF TOTAL SOCIAL MEDIA BY TEAM



### SNAPSHOTS OF ORIGINAL MISCELLANY

i: The most successful all-time NPB teams are the Giants (22 Japan Series wins), the Saitama Seibu Lions (13) and the Hawks (10, the only other team in double figures), but the Hawks and Giants only ranked third and fourth in social media popularity.

ii: It requires as many as five NPB teams combined in social media numbers to amass more than half the league's total popularity. This points to a spread of contenders over time.

iii: The ratio between the highest payers in this league (Hawks) and the lowest payers (Buffaloes) is 2.85 to 1, a figure much lower than the only other baseball league in this GSSS.

iv: The top 10% of NPB earners make 39.1% of all basic pay. Six other leagues in this GSSS are less 'top heavy' in this regard, while 11 concentrate their pay even more intensely among the best paid.

# MLS ANALYSIS

## MAJOR LEAGUE SOCCER



**TOTAL SALARIES:**  
**£230,665,742**  
**\$288,332,177**

**AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:**  
**£328,584** (UP BY 15.2% YEAR-ON-YEAR)  
**\$410,730**

**AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:**  
**No 13 LEAGUE**

**MEDIAN SALARY:**  
**£143,998**  
**\$179,998**

### THE STATE OF PLAY

The 2019 MLS season was the 24th season of Major League Soccer, a season in which the league expanded to 24 franchises with FC Cincinnati's arrival. They had a disappointing debut campaign, finishing bottom in the Eastern Conference with just six wins and with 10 points few than the next worst team, Vancouver.

The 24 teams are split into two conferences, with the regular season comprising 34 games for each, 17 at home and 17 away. The season ended on 10 November with the MLS Cup, contested after a new format of single-match rounds.

Two players with mighty international reputations played another MLS season, Zlatan Ibrahimović at LA Galaxy and Wayne Rooney for DC United. Neither could be sufficiently influential to take their teams deep into the post-season.

Cincinnati, despite their poor on-field performances, had the third highest average attendances (at 27,336 per game), bettered only by Atlanta United (52,510 average) and Seattle Sounders (40,247).

The Sounders won the MLS Cup having finished the regular season fourth in the overall table (on 58 points), where Atlanta were third (58 points), New York City second (64) and Los Angeles FC clear at the top on 72 points.

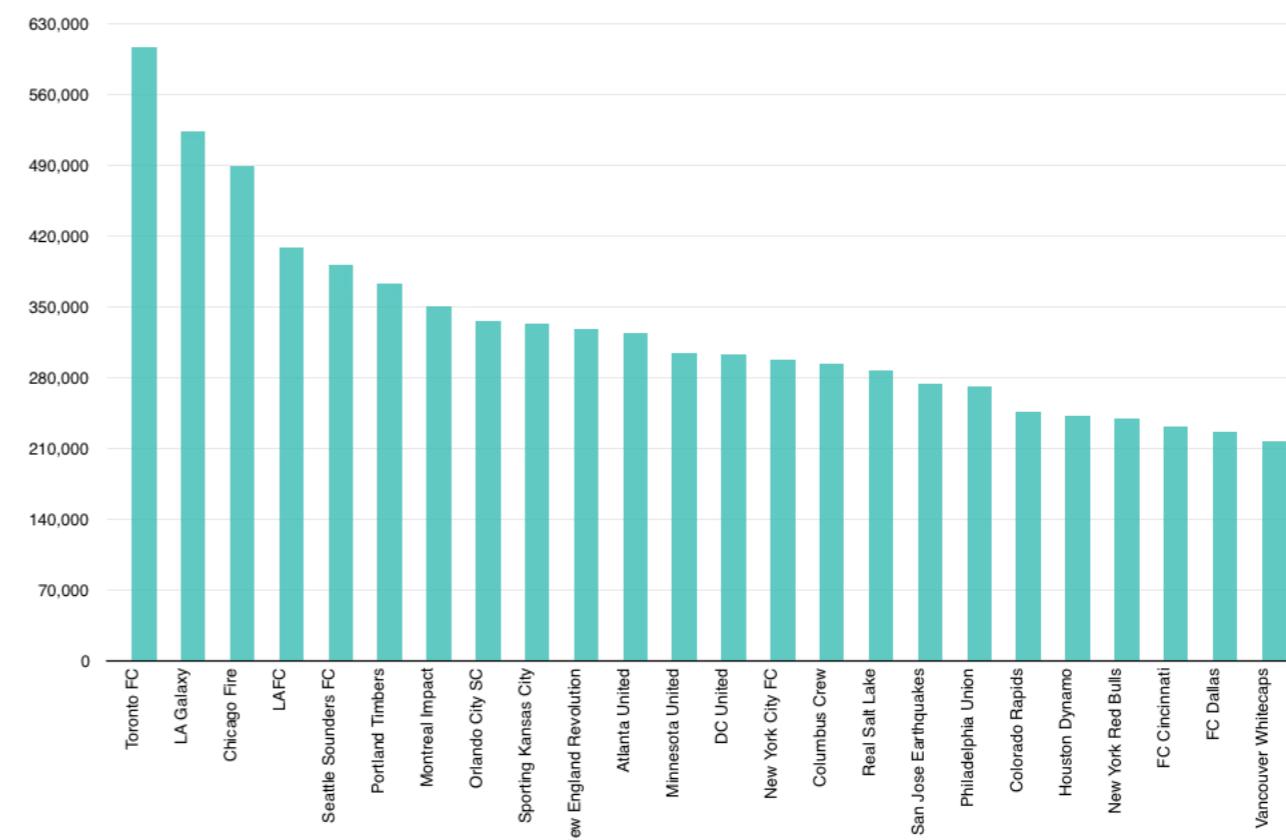
Attacking players are valued in MLS, literally, and thus highly paid. Defenders - not so much. Of the 40 best paid players in 2019, just one was a defender: Vancouver wing-back Ali Adnan in 37th place. The top 36 were comprised of forwards and midfielders with the exception a solitary goalkeeper, Tim Howard, in 13th place.

### THE MONEY TALK

If the money alone had talked then good things should have been expected from the top five payers: Toronto FC, LA Galaxy, Chicago Fire, LAFC and the Seattle Sounders. LAFC won the Supporters Shield for topping the table while Seattle won the MLS Cup against Toronto. The worst two teams after the regular season (Cincinnati and Vancouver) were two of the three lowest paid teams.

### AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, MLS, 2019 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	Avg Annual Per Player, £	Avg Annual Per Player, \$
1	Toronto FC	£606,677	\$758,346
2	LA Galaxy	£523,303	\$654,129
3	Chicago Fire	£488,999	\$611,249
4	LAFC	£407,999	\$509,998
5	Seattle Sounders FC	£390,812	\$488,515
6	Portland Timbers	£371,968	\$464,960
7	Montreal Impact	£350,727	\$438,409
8	Orlando City SC	£335,086	\$418,858
9	Sporting Kansas City	£332,984	\$416,230
10	New England Revolution	£327,945	\$409,932
11	Atlanta United	£323,928	\$404,910
12	Minnesota United	£303,785	\$379,732
13	DC United	£302,082	\$377,603
14	New York City FC	£297,588	\$371,985
15	Columbus Crew	£292,817	\$366,021
16	Real Salt Lake	£286,911	\$358,638
17	San Jose Earthquakes	£273,935	\$342,419
18	Philadelphia Union	£271,110	\$338,887
19	Colorado Rapids	£245,714	\$307,143
20	Houston Dynamo	£241,237	\$301,547
21	New York Red Bulls	£239,143	\$298,929
22	FC Cincinnati	£231,877	\$289,846
23	FC Dallas	£226,340	\$282,925
24	Vancouver Whitecaps	£217,390	\$271,738



# MLS ANALYSIS

MAJOR LEAGUE SOCCER



SUCCESS LEADS TO POPULARITY? SOCIAL MEDIA SAYS...

TEAM	TWITTER	INSTAGRAM	FACEBOOK	TOTAL
LA Galaxy	512,122	1,227,683	2,287,869	4,027,674
New York City FC	391,294	628,159	2,246,678	3,266,131
Atlanta United	996,328	429,113	289,437	1,714,878
Seattle Sounders	563,586	298,980	742,994	1,605,560
Orlando City	486,920	305,715	615,115	1,407,750
New York Red Bulls	214,317	166,158	990,656	1,371,131
LAFC	246,047	385,174	438,073	1,069,294
Toronto FC	412,150	211,898	352,218	976,266
Sporting Kansas City	391,466	146,907	335,839	874,212
Houston Dynamo	424,648	127,963	320,905	873,516
Portland Timbers	352,487	141,339	310,743	804,569
Montreal Impact	337,933	105,676	337,759	781,368
Vancouver Whitecaps	334,776	128,707	263,961	727,444
FC Dallas	166,904	93,365	376,580	636,849
Chicago Fire	168,531	111,730	335,414	615,675
DC United	160,987	141,345	283,073	585,405
San Jose Earthquakes	268,507	81,375	190,935	540,817
Columbus Crew	176,275	94,902	213,196	484,373
Philadelphia Union	141,009	87,053	192,858	420,920
Real Salt Lake	158,145	258,718	page down	416,863
New England Revolution	113,193	81,106	211,549	405,848
Minnesota United	140,914	74,957	178,601	394,472
Colorado Rapids	110,913	56,653	218,767	386,333
FC Cincinnati	103,934	93,266	94,287	291,487

Data: mid-November 2019

## PROPORTIONAL SHARE OF TOTAL SOCIAL MEDIA BY TEAM



## SNAPSHOTS OF ORIGINAL MISCELLANY

i: The most successful all-time MLS team (LA Galaxy) team is also the top MLS team in current global popularity. Four of the other five most popular teams joined MLS only relatively recently: New York City FC (2015), Atlanta United (2017), Seattle Sounders (2009) and Orlando City (2015)

ii: It requires as many as six teams combined in social media numbers to amass more than half the league's total popularity. This points to a spread of contenders.

iii: The ratio between the highest payers (Toronto) and the lowest payers (Vancouver) is 2.79 to 1, a lower figure than any other football league in this GSSS, an indication of competitive balance.

iv: The top 10% of MLS earners this season make 46.6% of all basic pay. Three other GSSS football leagues are 'fairer' (EPL, Bundesliga Serie A), while five are more "top heavy" in this regard.

# J-LEAGUE ANALYSIS

JAPANESE TOP-DIVISION FOOTBALL



TOTAL SALARIES:

**£137,010,947**

\$171,263,684

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:

**£261,471** (UP BY 9.2% YEAR-ON-YEAR)

\$326,839

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:

**No 14 LEAGUE**

MEDIAN SALARY:

**£109,489**

\$136,861

## THE STATE OF PLAY

Starting from the 2019 season, there were no longer any restrictions on the number of foreign players that a single team could sign, although there remains a limit of five foreign players per match-day squad. Players from J-League "partner nations" - Thailand, Vietnam, Myanmar, Malaysia, Cambodia, Singapore, Indonesia and Qatar - are exempt from these restrictions.

Vissel Kobe have embraced the change to continue signing big-name, big-contract imported players, with Thomas Vermaelen arriving in the second half of the year to join former Barcelona teammates Andrés Iniesta, David Villa and Sergi Samper, and former Arsenal team-mate Lukas Podolski. When Kobe's two Brazilians are added (Wellington and Dankler), and Korea's Kim Seung-gyu, the club's eight highest paid players in 2019 were those eight imports. Their salaries pushed Vissel's average basic pay to almost £1.3m per man for the first-team squad as a whole, approaching four times as much as the next best paid team, Urawa Red Diamonds.

The star strategy is ultimately driven by Kobe-born billionaire Hiroshi Mikitani, worth nearly \$6bn and the founder of e-commerce and internet firm Rakuten, as well as Vissel Kobe's chairman. Rakuten own and sponsor the club, and are also the shirt sponsors of Barcelona, hence the pre-existing connection to the former Barca players. For all the glitz of the squad, Kobe could finish no higher than eighth in 2019.

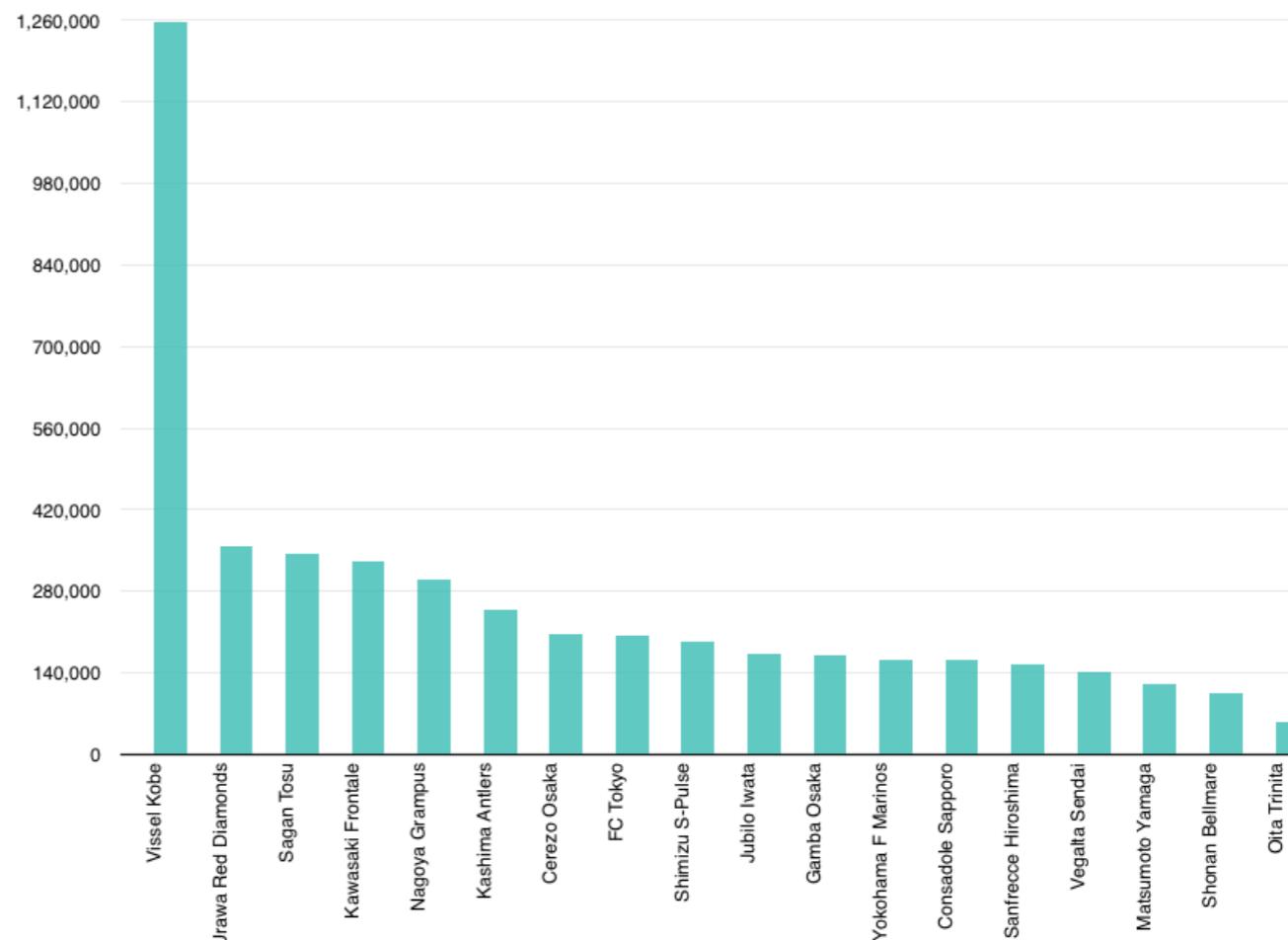
The overwhelming foreign nationality of choice for most J-League clubs remains Brazilian players. Only one of the 18 clubs did not have at least one Brazilian in 2019 while each of the other 17 clubs had an average of more than three each. Yokohama F.Marinos, 20 per cent owned by Manchester City's partner company, the City Football Group, had five Brazilians.

## THE MONEY TALK

If the money talked, then Vissel Kobe would be champions of 2019 with Urawa Red Diamonds in second. Yokohama F.Marinos won the title. Matsumoto Yamaga, Shonan Bellmare and Oita Trinita would have been relegated. The first two were.

## AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, J-LEAGUE, 2019 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	Avg Annual Per Player, £	Avg Annual Per Player, \$
1	Vissel Kobe	£1,257,790	\$1,572,238
2	Urawa Red Diamonds	£357,947	\$447,433
3	Sagan Tosu	£344,838	\$431,048
4	Kawasaki Frontale	£330,852	\$413,564
5	Nagoya Grampus	£300,753	\$375,942
6	Kashima Antlers	£248,710	\$310,888
7	Cerezo Osaka	£205,994	\$257,493
8	FC Tokyo	£203,249	\$254,062
9	Shimizu S-Pulse	£194,512	\$243,140
10	Jubilo Iwata	£171,582	\$214,477
11	Gamba Osaka	£169,526	\$211,907
12	Yokohama F Marinos	£161,665	\$202,082
13	Consadole Sapporo	£161,226	\$201,533
14	Sanfrecce Hiroshima	£155,157	\$193,946
15	Vegalta Sendai	£141,774	\$177,218
16	Matsumoto Yamaga	£120,209	\$150,261
17	Shonan Bellmare	£105,931	\$132,413
18	Oita Trinita	£56,465	\$70,581



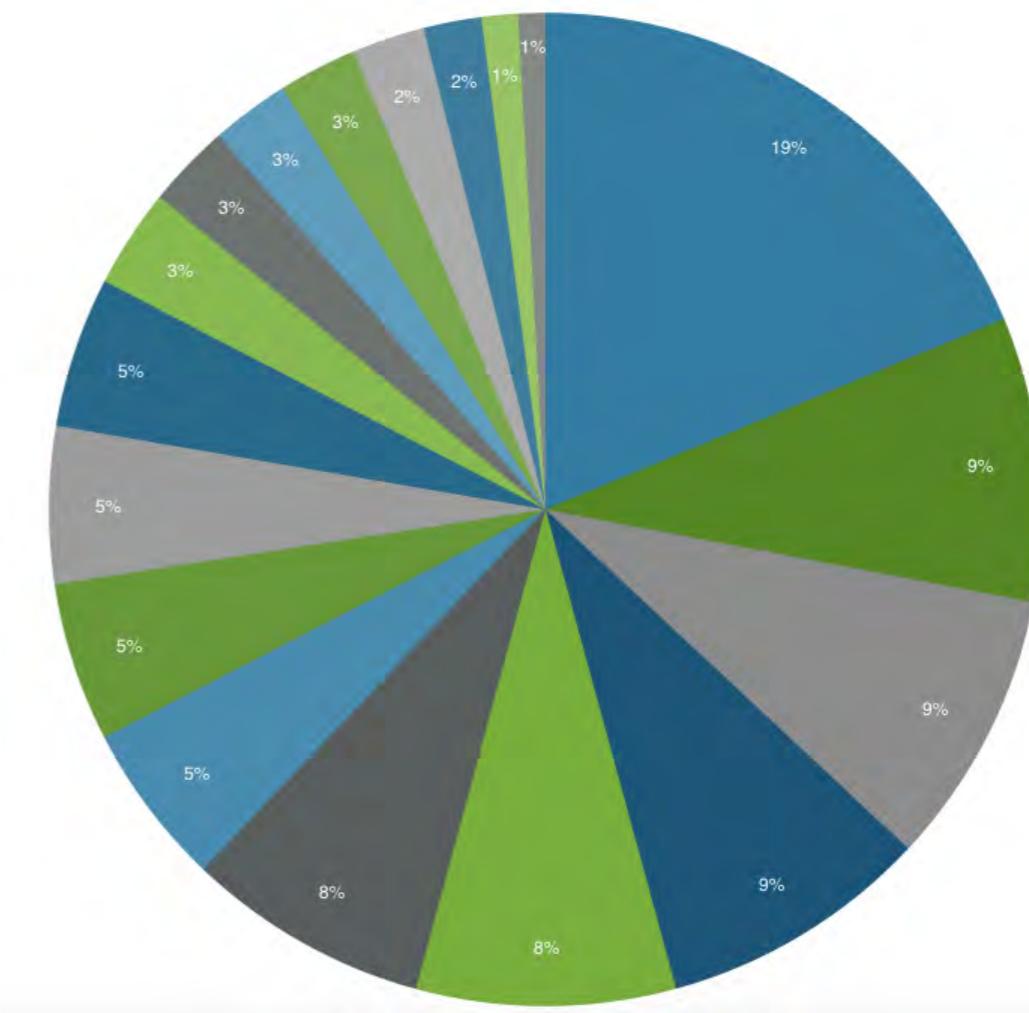
# J-LEAGUE ANALYSIS

JAPANESE TOP-DIVISION FOOTBALL



## SUCCESS LEADS TO POPULARITY? SOCIAL MEDIA SAYS...

TEAM	TWITTER	INSTAGRAM	FACEBOOK	TOTAL
Cerezo Osaka	165,622	48,414	1,008,628	1,222,664
Kashima Antlers	415,101	125,597	63,580	604,278
Yokohama F Marinos	459,385	57,988	68,410	585,783
Urawa Red Diamonds	415,272	88,783	70,192	574,247
Kawasaki Frontale	369,688	68,069	113,721	551,478
Nagoya Grampus	413,359	45,342	56,361	515,062
Vissel Kobe	111,626	177,123	58,150	346,899
Gamba Osaka	177,285	59,598	101,189	338,072
Sanfrecce Hiroshima	214,155	37,407	82,187	333,749
FC Tokyo	217,221	44,662	57,658	319,541
Consadole Sapporo	92,612	48,249	70,357	211,218
Shonan Bellmare	141,947	16,770	19,077	177,794
Jubilo Iwata	114,524	20,677	31,955	167,156
Shimizu S-Pulse	114,590	21,469	30,546	166,605
Sagan Tosu	82,707	45,140	27,466	155,313
Matsumoto Yamaga	81,789	16,368	24,592	122,749
Oita Trinita	29,871	18,501	29,048	77,420
Vegalta Sendai	24,245	19,460	14,008	57,713



## SNAPSHOTS OF ORIGINAL MISCELLANY

Data: mid-November 2019

i: The four most popular J-League teams in social media popularity are all among the six most successful J-League teams.

ii: It requires five teams combined in social media numbers to amass more than half the league's total popularity, but 10 of 18 teams each have between nine and 19 per cent. This points to a spread of contenders.

iii: The ratio between the highest payers (Vissel Kobe) and the lowest payers (Oita Trinita) is 22.28 to 1, a huge figure that highlights how one club are gambling big money on ageing superstars.

iv: The top 10% of earners this season make 52.1% of all basic pay. Only four other leagues in this GSSS are more 'top heavy' in this regard, all football leagues, in Scotland, France, Spain and China.

# SCOT PREM ANALYSIS

SCOTTISH TOP-DIVISION FOOTBALL



**TEAMS  
12**

**PLAYERS  
306**

TOTAL SALARIES:  
**£62,095,607**  
**\$77,619,509**

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:  
**£202,927**  
**\$253,659**

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:  
**No 15 LEAGUE**

MEDIAN SALARY:  
**£191,192**  
**\$238,990**

## THE STATE OF PLAY

Rangers are closing the gap on Celtic. That's what the off-pitch salary numbers are telling us about the on-pitch situation in the race for the Scottish title. In last year's GSSS, published in November, we calculated the average basic first-team pay at Ibrox to be £466,556, against a figure of £865,614 at Celtic. That meant Rangers were spending around 54 per cent of the Celtic figure. But that was on a squad after the 2018 summer transfer window. By the time the season was over, with ins and outs in the January transfer window, not least Jermain Defe and Steven Davis arriving at Ibrox, we reckoned the differential was something closer to 60 per cent, and perhaps a bit more.

Now we have the official financial statements for both clubs for the 2018-19 season, it seems that was pretty much right. Rangers' club wage bill of £34.5m was 61.5 per cent of Celtic's wage bill of £59m.

So to this season, where we calculate Rangers wages have climbed a significant 39 per cent from September last season to September this season, up to £649,771 average first-team basic. Celtic's have grown but not by much to £895,564 average first-team basic. We reckon the ratio of Rangers' salaries to Celtic's is now above 70 per cent, and depending what happens in the winter window, might yet be higher. Rangers are closing the gap on Celtic.

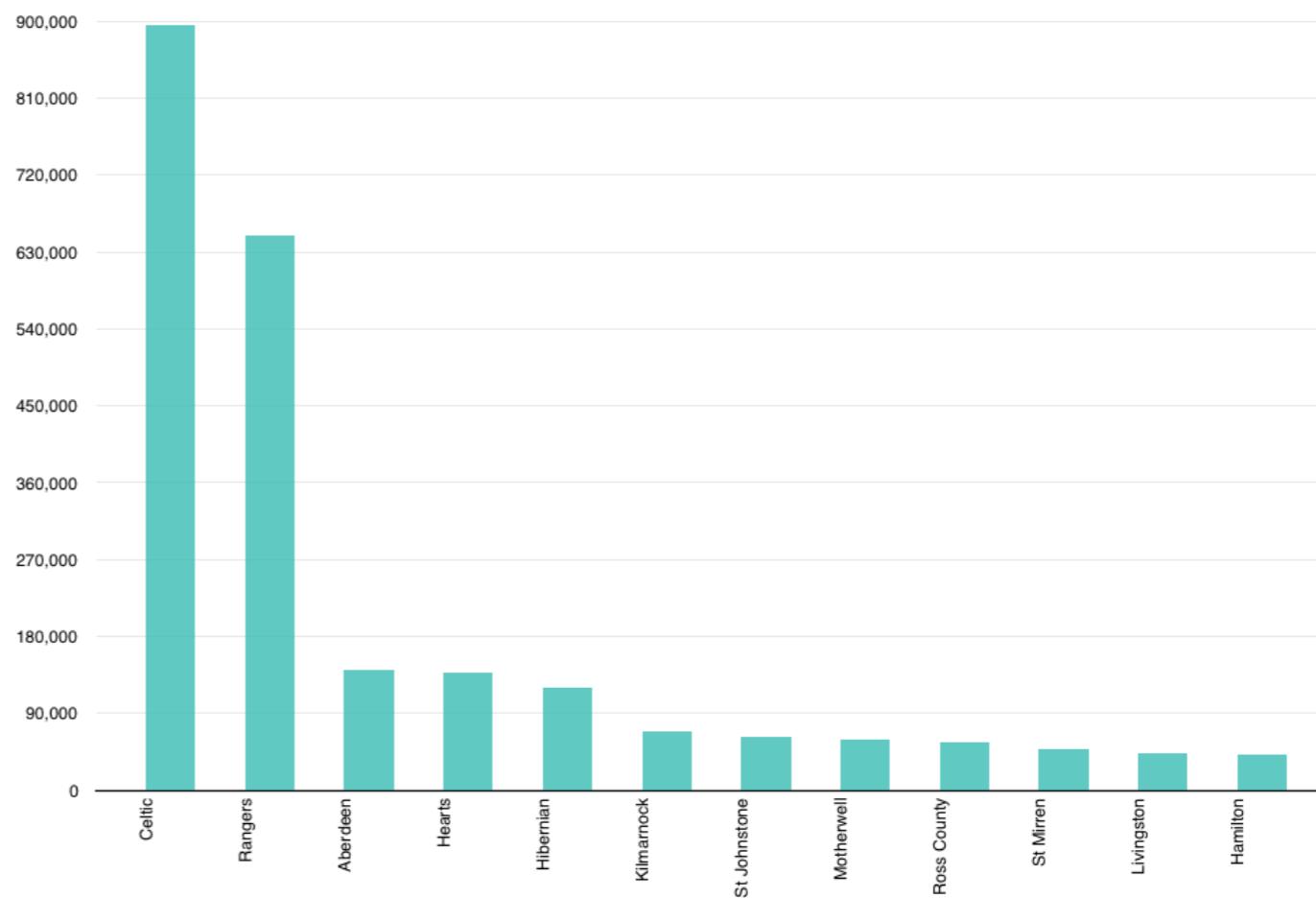
Aberdeen, Hearts and Hibs are a long way behind the big two in pay, each having average basic pay between £140,000 and £120,000 per year. The full range of salaries in the Scottish top division is just remarkable. Celtic pay more per man, basic, than Sheffield United of the English Premier League, while the seven lowest Scottish Premiership spenders pay less than quite a few teams in the fifth tier of English football.

## THE MONEY TALK

If the money talks, then it's Celtic, Rangers and Aberdeen in the top three with Hamilton, Livingston and St Mirren going down. Good or bad management can out- or under-perform those expectations.

## AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, SCOTTISH PREMIERSHIP, 2019-20 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	Avg Annual Per Player, £	Avg Annual Per Player, \$
1	Celtic	£895,564	\$1,119,455
2	Rangers	£649,771	\$812,213
3	Aberdeen	£140,461	\$175,576
4	Hearts	£137,942	\$172,428
5	Hibernian	£119,700	\$149,625
6	Kilmarnock	£68,412	\$85,514
7	St Johnstone	£62,691	\$78,364
8	Motherwell	£59,304	\$74,130
9	Ross County	£55,574	\$69,467
10	St Mirren	£48,621	\$60,776
11	Livingston	£43,105	\$53,881
12	Hamilton	£41,154	\$51,443



# SCOT PREM ANALYSIS

## SCOTTISH TOP-DIVISION FOOTBALL

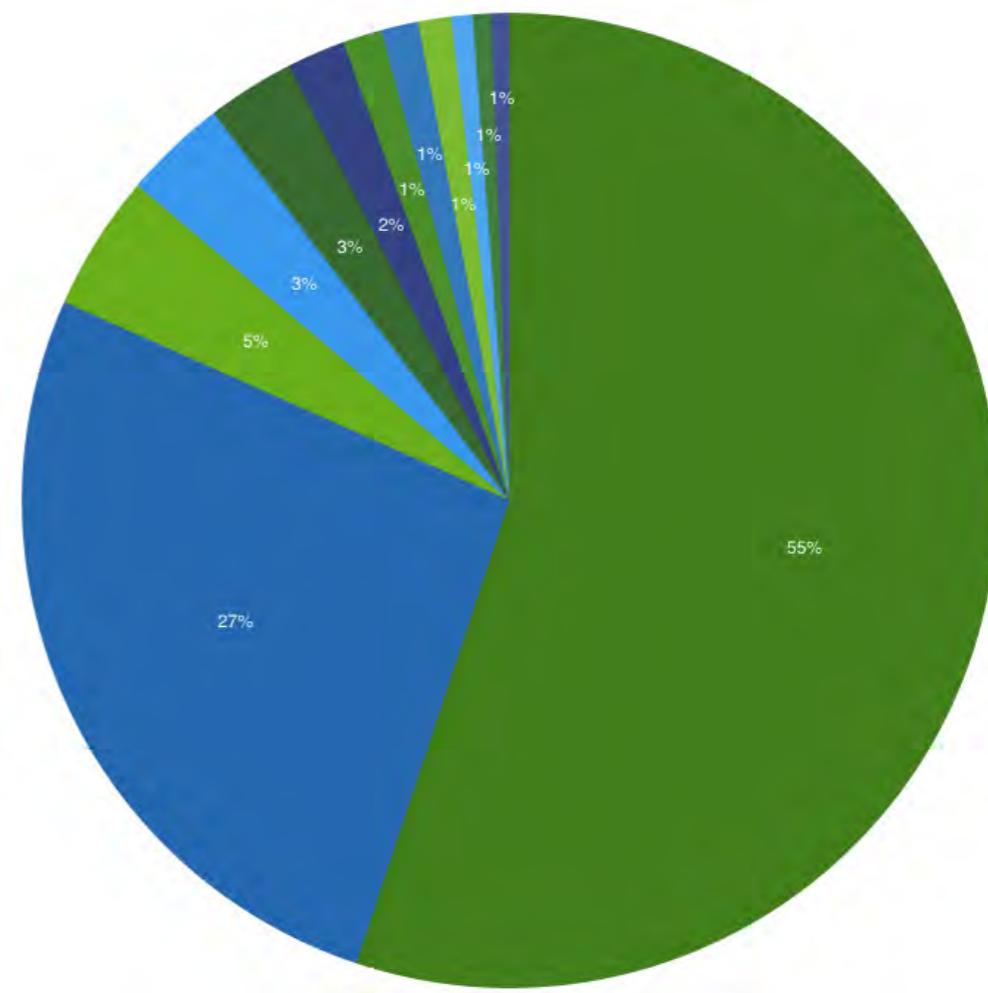


SUCCESS LEADS TO POPULARITY? SOCIAL MEDIA SAYS...

TEAM	TWITTER	INSTAGRAM	FACEBOOK	TOTAL
Celtic	652,723	435,778	2,022,901	3,111,402
Rangers	509,880	328,306	663,613	1,501,799
Aberdeen	101,400	46,744	106,606	254,750
Hibernian	82,202	36,360	75,380	193,942
Hearts	86,816	33,011	44,867	164,694
Motherwell	43,246	19,416	46,165	108,827
St Johnstone	36,075	9,083	27,850	73,008
Kilmarnock	37,734	13,184	18,798	69,716
St Mirren	32,155	8,419	20,645	61,219
Ross County	15,378	6,557	18,123	40,058
Hamilton	26,187	5,751	2,551	34,489
Livingston	20,263	4,629	9,210	34,102

Data: mid-November 2019

### PROPORTIONAL SHARE OF TOTAL SOCIAL MEDIA BY TEAM



### SNAPSHOTS OF ORIGINAL MISCELLANY

i: The five most successful all-time Scottish top-division teams are also the top five in current global popularity. Celtic and Rangers are way ahead in titles and popularity, by many miles, followed by Aberdeen, Hearts and Hibs.

ii: It requires just one team (Celtic) in social media numbers to amass more than half the league's total popularity and two (adding Rangers) to reach 83 per cent. This points to the duopoly that the Od Firm have had on Scottish since any other team last won the title (Aberdeen, 1985); and Celtic being ahead in social media popularity because of the recency bias of the last eight consecutive titles falling in the social media age.

iii: The ratio between the highest earners (Celtic) and the lowest earners (Livingston) is 21.76 to 1, an enormous figure that shows the league, despite having just 12 teams, has clubs with budgets ranging from low EPL level to England's sixth tier - all in the same 'competition'.

iv: The top 10% of earners this season make 53% of all basic pay and they're mostly Celtic and Rangers players. Only three other leagues in this study are more 'top heavy' in this regard: Ligue 1, La Liga and the CSL.

# AFL ANALYSIS

## AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE, AUSSIE RULES



TOTAL SALARIES:  
**£142,230,928**  
**\$177,788,660**

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:  
**£202,320**  
**\$252,900**

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:  
**No 16 LEAGUE**

MEDIAN SALARY:  
**£192,002**  
**\$107,521**

### THE STATE OF PLAY

As ever, we highly recommend the AFL's annual report for the granular detail on many aspects of the way the competition is run - including salary expenditure - and the latest editions are available here: <http://www.afl.com.au/afl-hq/annual-reports>.

One reason we include the 2018 AFL season in this report (and not the recently finished 2019 season) is the annual report provides an excellent corroboratory source for the survey material we gather; the other reason is related and more prosaic - some team information takes longer to piece together than others.

What isn't in doubt is that, officially, the 18 team rosters included 703 players collectively earning AUS\$253.9m which equates to £142,230,928 at the prevailing exchange rate, and thus average pay last year of £202,320.

The AFL remains outstanding in one key aspect - the 'fairness' as measured by the difference between the club with the highest average first-team pay and the lowest. A salary floor and ceiling for player payments helps with this.

Clubs with the biggest overall spending (the extra, in effect, being on more or better coaches, facilities and other auxiliary spending) tend to win more. That's too complex an issue for these few paragraphs and further reading on the AFL's Competitive Balance Policy is recommended.

But the cap model overall has been a demonstrable success since its introduction in 1987. The traditionally three richest and most successful clubs from Carlton, Collingwood and Essendon had appeared in 75 Grand Finals of 90 up to then (83 per cent) and won 41 of them (46 per cent of all titles). In the 33 Grand Finals since 1987, the 'big three' have appeared in 11 (or 33 per cent) and won six (18 per cent).

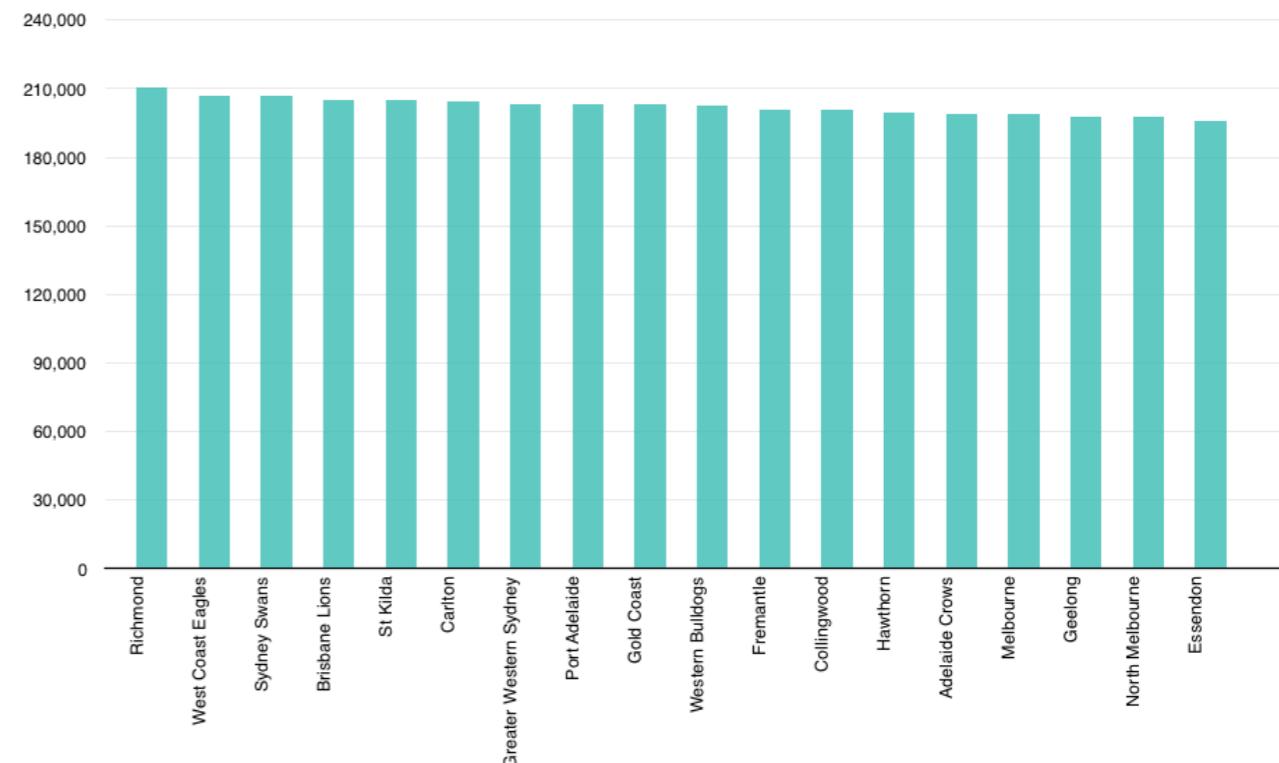
This isn't to say the AFL is perfect; far from it. But a league that so consistently pushes itself to consider competitive balance issues is a 'fairer' league than most.

### THE MONEY TALK

If the money talked then Richmond, West Coast, Sydney and Brisbane would have thrived in 2018; in fact West Coast won the Grand Final, Richmond reached the preliminary finals and Sydney were also in the finals series. But salary levels are so close across the board, this is as likely to have been (almost) random as opposed to swayed by pay.

### AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, AFL, 2018 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	Avg Annual Per Player, £	Avg Annual Per Player, \$
1	Richmond	£210,503	\$263,128
2	West Coast Eagles	£206,662	\$258,328
3	Sydney Swans	£206,630	\$258,287
4	Brisbane Lions	£204,806	\$256,008
5	St Kilda	£204,806	\$256,008
6	Carlton	£204,796	\$255,995
7	Greater Western Sydney	£203,381	\$254,226
8	Port Adelaide	£203,366	\$254,208
9	Gold Coast	£203,352	\$254,190
10	Western Bulldogs	£202,375	\$252,969
11	Fremantle	£200,925	\$251,156
12	Collingwood	£200,915	\$251,143
13	Hawthorn	£199,475	\$249,344
14	Adelaide Crows	£199,044	\$248,805
15	Melbourne	£199,044	\$248,805
16	Geelong	£197,996	\$247,495
17	North Melbourne	£197,594	\$246,992
18	Essendon	£196,201	\$245,251



# AFL ANALYSIS

AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE, AUSSIE RULES

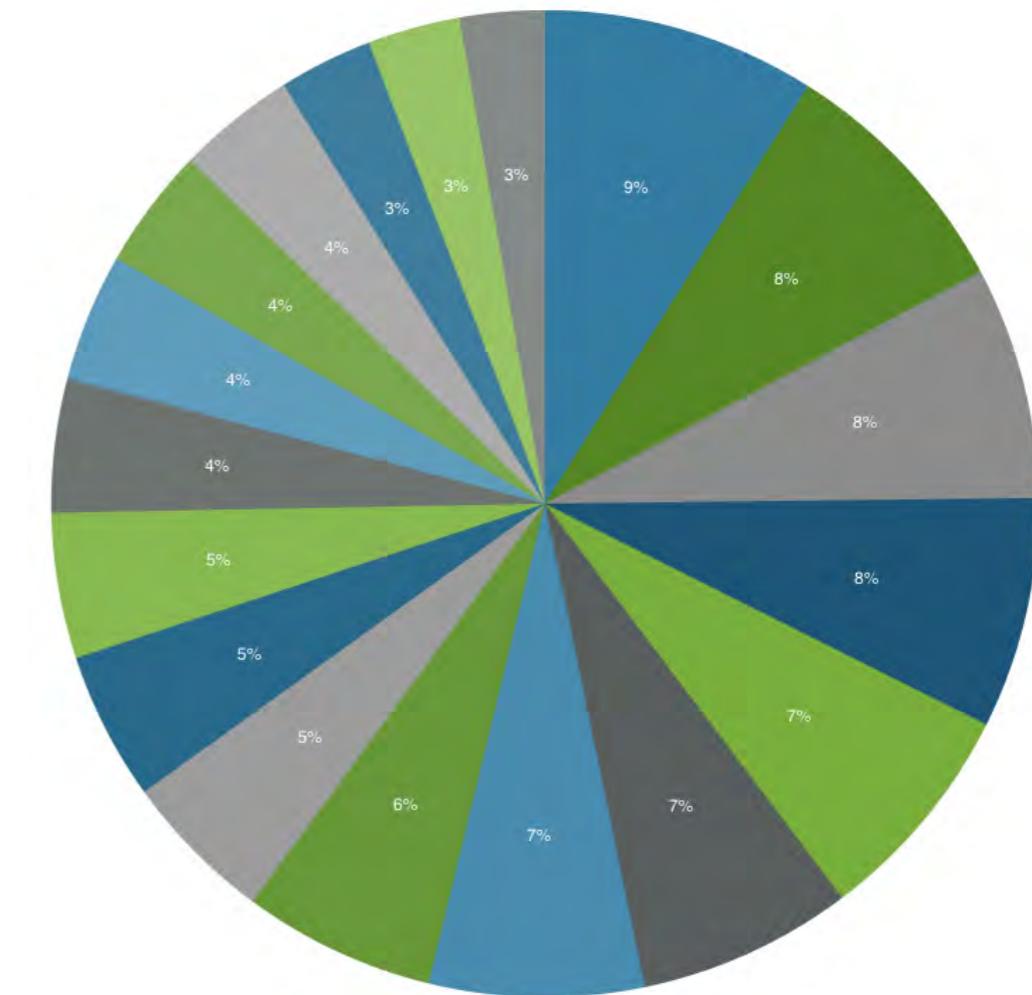


SUCCESS LEADS TO POPULARITY? SOCIAL MEDIA SAYS...

TEAM	TWITTER	INSTAGRAM	FACEBOOK	TOTAL
Collingwood	131,485	231,709	362,001	725,195
Essendon	131,530	187,223	350,215	668,968
Richmond	96,088	238,686	282,666	617,440
Hawthorn	95,981	182,098	335,342	613,421
West Coast Eagles	84,186	190,678	319,589	594,453
Carlton	111,467	184,414	274,598	570,479
Adelaide Crows	150,800	135,918	283,734	570,452
Sydney Swans	98,982	133,577	277,417	509,976
Fremantle	75,850	115,346	213,679	404,875
Port Adelaide	104,012	100,444	188,965	393,421
Geelong	18,438	164,732	203,982	387,152
Western Bulldogs	63,657	121,844	169,081	354,582
St Kilda	80,232	96,182	163,387	339,801
Brisbane Lions	84,105	93,707	144,221	322,033
North Melbourne	68,780	94,222	151,214	314,216
Melbourne	13,461	92,687	142,484	248,632
Greater Western Sydney	55,464	82,241	108,049	245,754
Gold Coast	56,610	67,616	101,017	225,243

Data: mid-November 2019

## PROPORTIONAL SHARE OF TOTAL SOCIAL MEDIA BY TEAM



## SNAPSHOTS OF ORIGINAL MISCELLANY

i: The three most successful all-time AFL teams are all among the top six in current global popularity: Collingwood at No1, Essendon at No2 and Carlton at No6. The fourth and fifth most successful teams, Hawthorn and Richmond, are No4 and No5 in popularity.

ii: It requires as many as seven teams combined in social media numbers to amass more than half the league's total popularity. This points to competitive balance.

iii: The ratio between the highest payers in this league (Richmond) and the lowest payers (Essendon) is 1.073 to 1, a really low figure only bettered by one other league in the GSSS 2019 in terms of intrinsic and "competitive balance" - the IPL.

iv: The top 10% of earners this season make 40.1% of all basic pay. Seven other leagues in this GSSS are less 'top heavy' in this regard, while 10 leagues are more skewed to fewer athletes.

# CFL ANALYSIS

CANADIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE, GRIDIRON



TOTAL SALARIES:  
**£28,102,767**  
\$35,128,459

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:  
**£70,966**  
\$88,708

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:  
**No17 LEAGUE**

MEDIAN SALARY:  
**£48,399**  
\$60,050

## THE STATE OF PLAY

As we note each year, the CFL has always been the toughest league from which to garner reliable numbers and that is down to the almost religious secrecy of everyone involved, not least the teams and team owners. No source that could be described as even vaguely public exists that tells us about player pay, and we can speculate why; certainly some players are unhappy with their lot. But pointers from agents and insiders do allow insight, even if acquiring that takes a bit of extra time, hence the 'lag' in seasons covered.

What's remarkable, in a sport where team incomes vary hugely (50 per cent or more) and one team's football operations budget can be 25 per cent bigger than the next, is the slender difference in pay from top to bottom. This season, 2018, was extended by a week from 20 to 21 weeks to provide extra recuperation time. The salary cap was set at \$5.2m (Canadian), with the floor at \$4.6m and individual minimum salaries at \$54,000.

## THE MONEY TALK

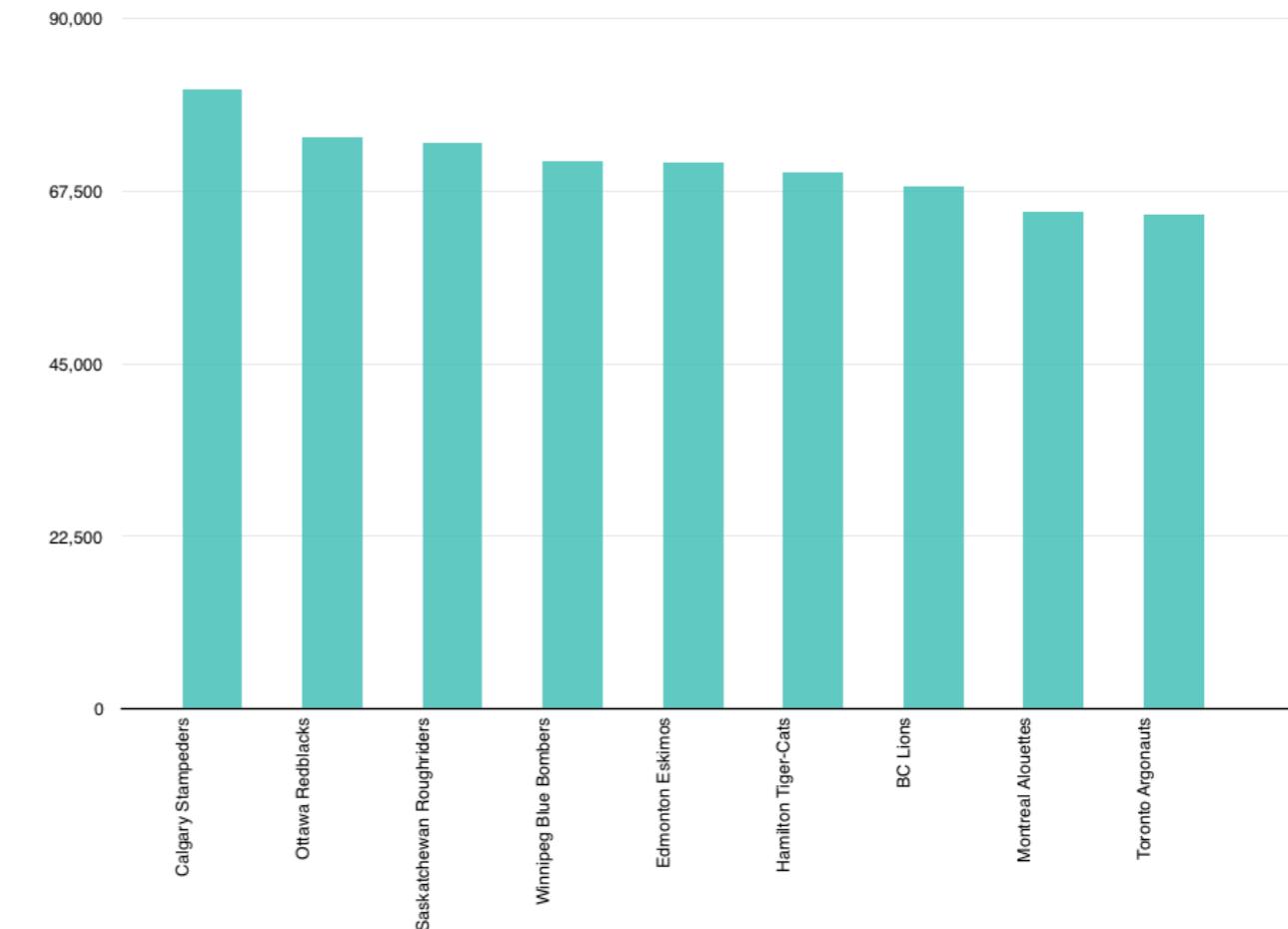
If the money talks, then we would expect the Stampeders to beat the Redblacks to win the Grey Cup (as happened) after seeing off the Blue Bombers and Roughriders in the Division finals. The Blue Bombers got to that stage; the Roughriders didn't. In such a small league with such narrow allowable bands, everyone should be in with a chance.

Seven different winners of the Grey Cup in 10 years points to a decent spread of honours. All nine current teams have either won or been runners-up at least once each in the past nine years.



## AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, CFL, 2018 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, £	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, \$
1	Calgary Stampeders	£80,735	\$100,919
2	Ottawa Redblacks	£74,468	\$93,085
3	Saskatchewan Roughriders	£73,686	\$92,107
4	Winnipeg Blue Bombers	£71,410	\$89,262
5	Edmonton Eskimos	£71,185	\$88,982
6	Hamilton Tiger-Cats	£69,855	\$87,319
7	BC Lions	£68,091	\$85,113
8	Montreal Alouettes	£64,806	\$81,008
9	Toronto Argonauts	£64,463	\$80,579



# CFL ANALYSIS

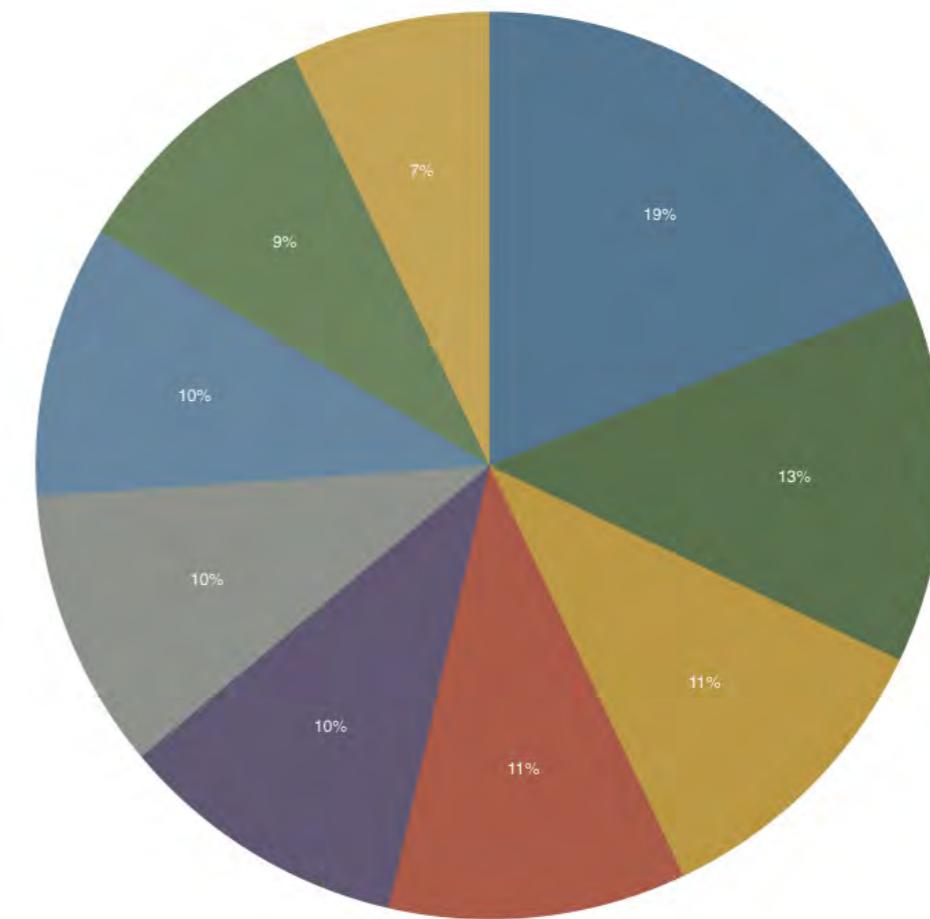
## CANADIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE, GRIDIRON



TEAM	TWITTER	INSTAGRAM	FACEBOOK	TOTAL
Saskatchewan Roughriders	227,325	83,679	279,540	590,544
Montreal Alouettes	139,793	50,217	218,916	408,926
Winnipeg Blue Bombers	168,326	62,023	110,181	340,530
BC Lions	125,812	43,384	161,331	330,527
Calgary Stampeders	147,761	61,168	113,670	322,599
Hamilton Tiger-Cats	145,807	57,146	108,940	311,893
Edmonton Eskimos	140,340	47,504	114,527	302,371
Toronto Argonauts	132,110	93,904	63,403	289,417
Ottawa Redblacks	122,621	45,593	53,200	221,414

Data: mid-November 2019

### PROPORTIONAL SHARE OF TOTAL SOCIAL MEDIA BY TEAM



### SNAPSHOTS OF ORIGINAL MISCELLANY

i: In a bizarrely perverse quirk, there is a strong inverse relationship between all-time success in the Grey Cup and global popularity. The most frequent winners Toronto have fewer followers than anyone bar the Redblacks (formed 2014), while the least successful team bar the Redblacks (the Roughriders) are most popular. Other teams are similarly effected.

ii: It requires as many as four of nine teams combined in social media numbers to amass more than half the league's total popularity. At a glance the social media wheel indicates balance.

iii: The ratio between the highest payers in this league (Calgary) and the lowest payers (Toronto) is 1.25 to 1, a low figure resulting from the narrow band between cap and floor. Balanced league.

iv: The top 10% of CFL earners this season make 42.2% of all basic pay. Eight other leagues in this study are less 'top heavy' in this regard, and therefore have more balanced or 'fairer' pay.

# WNBA ANALYSIS

WOMEN'S NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION



TOTAL SALARIES:  
**£8,660,798**  
**\$10,825,998**

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:  
**No 18 LEAGUE**

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:  
**£60,144**  
**\$75,181**

MEDIAN SALARY:  
**£47,774**  
**\$57,329**

## THE STATE OF PLAY

The WNBA became the first women's league in the world to be included in the main list in the GSSS in 2017 as part of an in-depth look into gender (in)equality in global sport. You can read that report here: <https://globalsportssalaries.com/GSSS%202017.pdf>

We explored not just the lack of opportunities for women to make a living (a living wage) in professional team sport but the massive disparities between earnings for men and women who have them. The WNBA is the best paid women's sports league (as a whole) in the world. Yet pay levels remain fractions of those of men. This season, for example, the average NBA salary of £6.66m for the men is 110 times as big as the average in the WNBA, where the figure is £60,144.

There are reasons for this, including not only the established structures and popularity that mean there is big money on offer for TV deals and sponsorships in men's sport, and much less for women's sport. But this isn't something that can't be changed and the GSSS 2017 explored the issues.

On the court in the WNBA in 2019, the Washington Mystics won their first ever finals, beating the Connecticut Suns 3-2 in seesaw best-of-five series after that pair of teams had finished the regular season with the best records, respectively 0.765 PCT and 0.676 PCT.

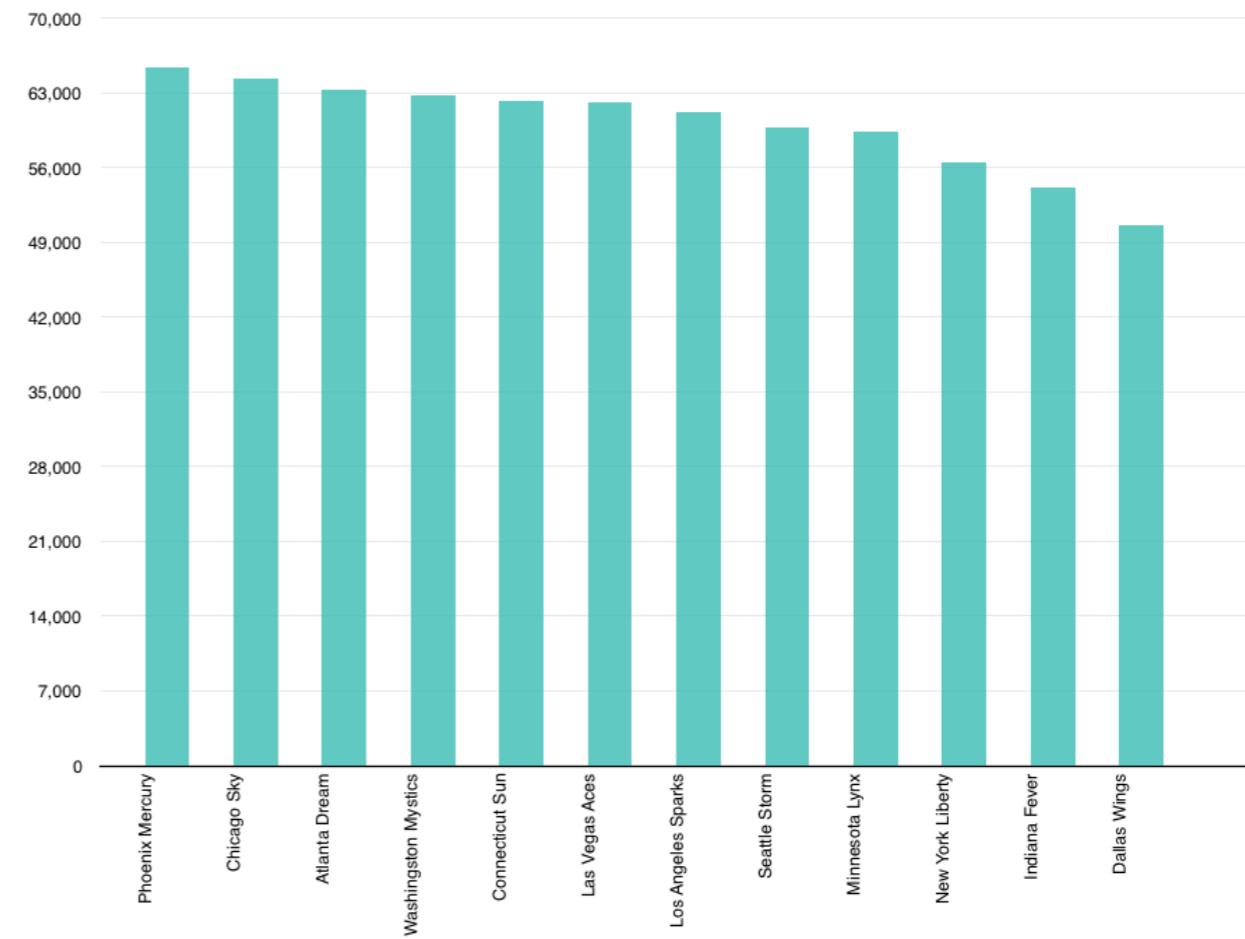
Stewart is one of more than 80 players who in recent years have finished the WNBA season and headed to an off-season assignment with a foreign team, in her case in Beijing. While the WNBA is the pinnacle of women's basketball in quality terms, considerable financial rewards are available elsewhere, especially at a few teams in Russia and Turkey. China, South Korea, Poland, Spain and Australia are among other destinations.

## THE MONEY TALK

If the money alone had talked, then Phoenix Mercury, Chicago Sky, Atlanta Dream and the Mystics would have been in the shake-up. They all made the post-season except the Dream, and the Mystics won the title. The three lowest payers - Dallas Wings, Indiana Fever and New York Liberty were three of the four worst performers, alongside the Dream, all with a PCT below 0.4.

## AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, WNBA, 2019 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	Avg Annual Per Player, £	Avg Annual Per Player, \$
1	Phoenix Mercury	£65,367	\$81,709
2	Chicago Sky	£64,337	\$80,421
3	Atlanta Dream	£63,278	\$79,098
4	Washington Mystics	£62,746	\$78,433
5	Connecticut Sun	£62,256	\$77,820
6	Las Vegas Aces	£62,100	\$77,624
7	Los Angeles Sparks	£61,182	\$76,477
8	Seattle Storm	£59,805	\$74,757
9	Minnesota Lynx	£59,374	\$74,217
10	New York Liberty	£56,576	\$70,720
11	Indiana Fever	£54,136	\$67,669
12	Dallas Wings	£50,577	\$63,221



# WNBA ANALYSIS

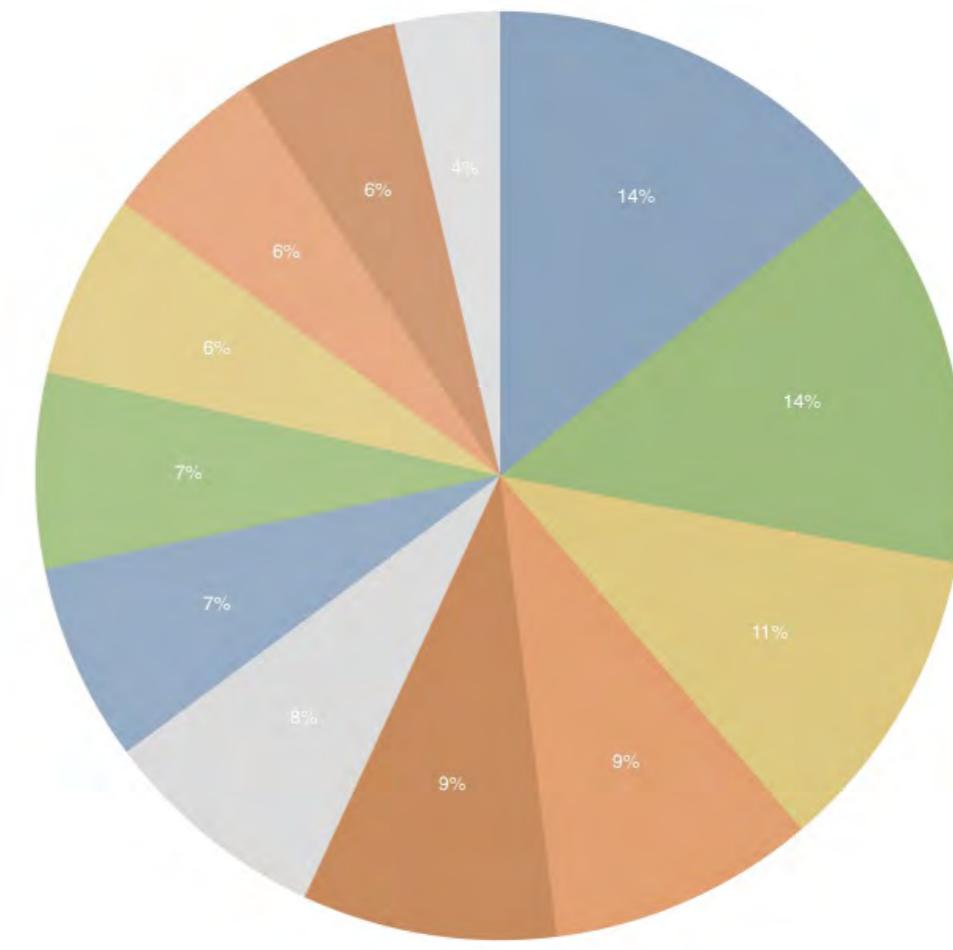
## WOMEN'S NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION



TEAM	TWITTER	INSTAGRAM	FACEBOOK	TOTAL
Minnesota Lynx	91,082	82,932	154,242	328,256
Los Angeles Sparks	75,463	103,138	136,100	314,701
Phoenix Mercury	50,982	71,749	123,972	246,703
Seattle Storm	54,326	72,051	87,071	213,448
Chicago Sky	49,686	75,618	78,143	203,447
New York Liberty	40,677	39,911	101,876	182,464
Indiana Fever	44,827	43,055	70,630	158,512
Atlanta Dream	42,315	30,187	83,913	156,415
Washington Mystics	43,317	61,517	42,255	147,089
Dallas Wings	22,829	51,339	59,255	133,423
Las Vegas Aces	31,271	75,067	20,881	127,219
Connecticut Sun	29,408	26,650	27,979	84,037

Data: mid-November 2019

### PROPORTIONAL SHARE OF TOTAL SOCIAL MEDIA BY TEAM



### SNAPSHOTS OF ORIGINAL MISCELLANY

- i: The four most successful all-time NBA who are still in existence are one, two, three and four in the top four in current WNBA global popularity.
- ii: It requires as many as five teams combined from in social media numbers to amass more than half the league's total popularity. Another six are not far behind. This points to balance.
- iii: The ratio between the highest payers in this league (Phoenix) and the lowest payers (Dallas) is 1.29 to 1, a low figure and an indication of similarly resourced teams, and competitive balance.
- iv: The top 10% of WNBA earners this season make 15.3% of all basic pay. No other league in this GSSS comes close to such pay parity across all the sportspeople involved.

# ABOUT SPORTING INTELLIGENCE

[www.sportingintelligence.com](http://www.sportingintelligence.com) is an award-winning website specialising in the business and finance of sport, particularly football. Independently owned and edited, the content is largely research-based and / or investigative in nature, produced by a coalition of writers, researchers, academics, and sports business professionals.

Sportingintelligence content is regularly cited in national and international media from the BBC to the Financial Times and Wall St Journal to Radio Four, NPR in the USA, CNN and hundreds of other TV and radio stations, newspapers, magazines, journals and online outlets.

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Further queries can be emailed to us at:  
[nick@sportingintelligence.com](mailto:nick@sportingintelligence.com)

The compilation of this report and its predecessors would not have been possible without the assistance of specialists across a number of sports and countries featured. Our thanks go to all of them, and those who helped in the wider production of this report, not least (in alphabetical order): Jonnie Baker, Matt Bourne, Katie Brazier, Omar Chaudhuri, Jasmine Collette, Alex Dandanis, Alex Delvenakiotis, Arijana Demirovic, John Didulica, Frank Dunne, Magnus Erlingmark, JP Francois, Victoria Fuller, David Gerty, Helen Harris, Ian Herbert, Sonja Hernandez, Terri Jackson, Simon Jones, Chyloe Kurdas, Shaun Martyn, Scott Mann, Jean-Luc Martin, George Milkov, Nick Pelekanos, Roger Pielke Jr, Becca Russo, Robin Scott-Elliott, Annette Seitz, Tina S, Clea Smith, Eriko Takahashi, H.T Torres, Blake Webster, Rich Whittall, Pete Wilson, Blake Wooster, John Yan, Zhang Yi, Dan Zelezinski. There are dozens of others who gave freely of their time and advice from inside clubs and leagues to help make this survey as accurate as possible but contributed.

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# SPORTING INTELLIGENCE CONSULTANCY

Sportingintelligence has undertaken journalistic and research projects on the business and finance of sport for bodies ranging from football leagues in the UK and overseas to major media companies including ESPN in the USA, as well as institutions including Lloyd's of London, and football clubs from second-tier nationally to those among the top 10 in the world.

Our work has included this for the Premier League ([https://issuu.com/markdavieslfc/docs/sportcal\\_premier\\_league\\_in\\_numbers](https://issuu.com/markdavieslfc/docs/sportcal_premier_league_in_numbers)) and this for La Liga (<https://www.laliga.es/en/news/sportcal>); and two projects for Lloyd's of London that correctly predicted the World Cup winners in 2014 and 2018, most recently here (<https://www.lloyds.com/news-and-risk-insight/press-releases/2018/06/dream-team>); and collaboration with JLT on their injury index (<https://www.jtspecialty.com/our-insights/thought-leadership/sport-media-and-entertainment/football-injury-analysis>); and research projects with organisations including America's Cup, ESPN The Magazine and the EFL among others; private clients include individuals and their legal firms seeking expertise for cases involving quantum claims for loss of earnings. By their nature these latter cases are often secret, never disclosed, even when settled. Sportingintelligence clients have settled individual quantum claims for more than £4m on multiple occasions.



