

## Football Fans Finances Hit Fever Pitch

*With the domestic league taking a break, a significant number of football fans are to turn their attention towards getting behind the three lions, a new study shows.*

October 13, 2008 (FPRC) -- Research carried out by Virgin Money shows that with England playing Kazakhstan last Saturday (October 11th), about a sixth (16 per cent) of soccer supporters travelled to Wembley this weekend. Such a figure comes, the financial services provider points out, in spite of the national teams previous poor run of form, which ended with their last game - a convincing 4-1 away victory against Croatia. However, despite manager Fabio Capello bringing a sense of confidence to England, the firm reveals that their fans could become increasingly worried about managing their money.

In Virgin Moneys football fans price index, it was revealed that the total cost of going to live games has surged by some 36.25 per cent since the beginning of 2006. At present, the cost of purchasing game tickets, replica shirts, food, transport and other matchday expenses comes to 106 pounds and 21 pence. In January 2006, however, such expenditure came to 77 pounds and 95 pence.

And with such increasing costs, it may be possible that football fanatics find that their love of the beautiful game constrains their ability to manage other areas of their spending. Such commitments could well include secured loans, credit and store cards, utility bills and mortgage repayments.

Despite the problems their own club are facing, it was revealed that fans of Tottenham Hotspur are the most willing to go and watch England this Saturday, with about a quarter (24 per cent) of supporters from the north London club due to descend on Wembley. It was also shown that followers of Liverpool, Fulham, West Ham and Stoke City are also set to come out in force to get behind the national side.

Commenting on the report, Scott Mowbray, head of public relations for Virgin Money, said: "The Croatia result restored faith in the national team following the European Championship qualification failure and some pretty depressing results in the early days of Fabio Capellos reign. Despite the rising costs of supporting football, it appears the national team still is a big draw and to some extent transcends club loyalties. Nobody needs reminding that the cost of living is soaring. Fans have to live in the real world and the past year has seen severe pressure on peoples finances from rising mortgage costs, fuel prices and food bills."

Whether an ardent supporter of England or Ebbsfleet United, those football fanatics wishing to show off their pride for their team might wish to consider getting a personal loan. By taking out this kind of loan, borrowers may be able to find that they can meet the cost of expenses such as season tickets and replica shirts quickly and effectively. The financial assistance offered by cheap loans may also mean that football fans will be able to travel to away grounds to watch their team play in competitions ranging from the Champions League to the Carling Cup. Getting a personal loan could also help those wanting to go on holiday after a recent Abbey study showed that 34 per cent of Brits are looking to go on a winter sun break.

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