8 Culture

Football



SALARIES PER YEAR IN THE UK	
Top footballers	£15 million
Prime Minister	£150,000
Doctor	£78,000
Teacher	£37,000

AVERAGE FOOTBALLER SALARIES IN EUROPE (PER WEEK)	
Premier League (UK)	£43,700
Bundesliga (Germany)	£28,000
Serie A (Italy)	£25,300
La Liga (Spain)	£23,300

1 **SPEAKING** Work in pairs or small groups. Look at the information in the tables above. What do you find most surprising? Why?

2 Read the opinions below. Who thinks footballers are paid too much?

4.28

Do footballers earn too much?



First of all, footballers' careers are short. They can play for fifteen years, if they're lucky, but the average career lasts for only eight years – and a career can end suddenly at any time with a bad injury. Also, only a few footballers earn really big salaries. Most footballers play in the lower leagues. They earn a good salary while they are playing, but when they stop, they need to find another job – they certainly won't have enough money to last for the rest of their lives. Yes, some footballers earn extraordinary amounts of money. But that is true for other jobs too. The best actors, the best singers and the best lawyers all earn millions. Why shouldn't the best footballers?

PHILIP JAMESON **FOOTBALL JOURNALIST**



In one month, a top footballer can earn about the same as the Prime Minister earns in one year! Is that right? I don't think so – but I don't blame the players, I blame the clubs. They want success on the pitch, but it is also big business. The best footballers make money for their clubs even when they aren't playing football. Real Madrid paid £80 million for Cristiano Ronaldo. In the next nine months fans paid £100 million for kits with Ronaldo's name on the back. Football is not about sport any more – not at the highest level. It's about money.

KAREN FLORY **FOOTBALL FAN**

3 **VOCABULARY** Match the highlighted words in the text with the definitions below. Write the singular forms. (Some words are plural in the text.)

1 _____: a group of teams who play sport against each other
2 _____: an organisation that includes a sports team and all the people who work with them.
3 _____: someone who loves football.
4 _____: the shorts, shirt and socks that members of a sports team wear.
5 _____: the area of grass where football matches take place.
6 _____: money you earn each year for doing your job

4 Read the opinions in exercise 2 again. Who do you agree with most?

5 4.29 Listen to an interview with Nick Wheeler, a football journalist. Which sentence is true?



1 Women's football was very popular at the start of the 20th century. ___
2 The England women's football team is probably the best in the world. ___

6 4.29 Listen again. Complete the sentences with the dates below. There are two extra dates.

1895 1920 1921 1969 1972 1991

1 The first women's football match was in _____
2 The first women's football World Cup was in _____
3 Women footballers stopped using men's pitches in _____
4 The English Women's Football Association started in _____

7 **SPEAKING** Read the statements below. Give each statement a mark from 1–5, where 1 = *I completely agree* and 5 = *I completely disagree*. Then discuss your answers in pairs or small groups.

1 Female footballers should get the same money as male footballers. ___
2 Football is boring compared to many other sports. ___
3 There is too much football on television. ___

8 **INTERNET RESEARCH** Find out about one of the women's football teams in your country or abroad.

- What are the players' salaries?
- How many people go to watch the matches?
- How much do the tickets cost?
- How successful are they?

LIVEWORKSHEETS