



GLOBAL SPORTS SALARIES SURVEY 2016

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

333 TEAMS
17 LEAGUES
13 COUNTRIES
7 SPORTS
9,776 SPORTSMEN
\$18.625 BILLION IN WAGES
1 AIM



*LeBron James's Cavaliers
will earn almost \$9m
each on average this season ...*

INTRODUCTION

BREXIT and a huge new TV deal in the NBA have combined to take a wrecking ball to the established order of the world's best paid sports teams.

This is the seventh edition of Sportingintelligence's Global Sports Salaries Survey. The unique metric of the GSSS is 'average first-team pay', or in other words, the average annual salary of the first-team squad players, effectively but not always the 'active roster'. Squad make-up rules vary across sports and leagues.

This metric allows us to compare salaries in hugely contrasting leagues in multiple sports around the world. The upper echelons of previous lists have been dominated by Europe's powerhouse clubs in the world's most popular sport, football. (That's soccer). No more. There is a new richest team in global sport, and for the first time that accolade belongs to a basketball team, the NBA's Cleveland Cavaliers.

Their stars, led by talisman LeBron James, will earn almost \$9m on average each this season, or more than £6.5m, or more than £125,000 per week.

At No2 is a previous table-topping team, although not for six years, in the form of baseball's New York Yankees, followed by a third American team and second team from the NBA, the LA Clippers. Of the top 20 places, 14 are now filled by NBA teams. Manchester United, for the first time, emerge as the best paid football team in the world, at No4 on the overall list. A summer

of mammoth spending and big-name, big-wage acquisitions including Paul Pogba and Zlatan Ibrahimovic have put United ahead of even star-studded Barcelona.

The full rundown of teams plus league-by-league analysis is included in this report.

Last year, the GSSS 2015 featured eight football teams in the top 10, including all of the top four, headed by Paris St Germain of France's Ligue 1. PSG were ahead of Real Madrid of Spain's La Liga in second, Manchester City of England's Premier League in third and Barcelona in fourth before the first non-football team. Baseball's LA Dodgers of North America's MLB were in the No5 spot. The shake-up has been substantial at the top end and elsewhere.

THE OLD ORDER? BREXIT WRECKS IT

Two events in 2016 have combined to inspire the charge of the NBA teams up the wages rich list. In June, 52 per cent of voters in a UK referendum on the issue of whether to leave or remain in the European Union voted in favour of an exit - or Brexit as it has become known. The pound crashed against the dollar and weakened against the Euro. We need not get bogged down in the minutiae of exchange rate swings. But the Brexit vote has been an event seismic enough to significantly shift the pound-dollar relationship, not just swing it for a few days, weeks or months. To put

this in context, at points during the lifetime of this survey's existence a pound has been worth as much as \$1.70, or considered another way, £10m has been worth as much as \$17m, while \$10m has been worth as little as £5.88m. In recent months a pound has been worth as little as \$1.22, or alternatively, £10m has been worth as little as just over \$12m as \$10m has been worth as much as £8.2m.

CURRENCY NOTES (AND A TV BONANZA)

The GSSS typically takes a currency conversion rate for each edition at mid-year for all currencies. This year, given the impact of Brexit, we have used exchange rates applicable on the Monday after the vote, the last Monday in June, when £1 was trading at \$1.32 and \$1 was 75.76 pence. For the record and for completeness, the pound-euro conversion rates used are £1 = €1.22, or €1 = 82p. The applicable Chinese yuan and Japanese yen rates for 27 June have been used for the relevant featured leagues from those nations, while both the Australian dollar and Canadian dollar rates used are \$1 of each of those dollars to US\$0.75. (The Australian dollar and Canadian dollar have been tip-toeing around each other at approximate parity within a cent or two each way). With that headache-inducing but essential digression out of the way, the upshot for sports salaries is this: the high-earning US sports stars are this year much richer, comparatively,

than they have been in recent times. The second event that has propelled the NBA teams up the charts almost en masse is no less significant. The NBA's new nine-year \$24 billion TV deal has come on stream for the 2016-17 season, worth \$2.6bn a year, or 180 per cent more than the last deal, per year, and a big chunk of that is flowing into the players' pockets. The bottom line is that the NBA's players are, on average, earning the thick end of \$2m more this season, each, than last season. Clearly, a \$2m annual pay hike is no small beer by itself. Combined with a Brexit effect that has given many US-based teams a lift up the list, it is rocket fuel.

GEOPOLITICS AND SPORT: SHIFTING SANDS

Last year's survey highlighted the influence of petrodollars in elite global sport, especially from the Middle East but also from Russia, both as a source of funding for team ownership and underpinning huge sponsorship deals, especially in football.

Paris St Germain had won the French title just twice in their history before being bought by Qatari interests in 2012. Since, they have become one of the world's richest teams, have annexed Ligue 1, won the title in 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016, and while they are not, at the time of writing, steamrolling a fifth successive season, they are still odds-on favourites to be up there.

A recent study by the CIES Football Observatory in Switzerland found PSG had spent €691m (\$760m at early November 2016 rates, or £615m) on transfer fees alone from 2010 to 2016, the vast majority of that in the Qatar-owned years. Only Manchester City (€1.024 bn), Chelsea (€871m) and Manchester

United (€841m) in world football had spent more. City have been owned by Sheikh Mansour of Abu Dhabi since 2008, and funded by his oil fortune and by several U.A.E-based sponsors, including airline Etihad. Another U.A.E airline, Emirates, sponsors PSG, Real Madrid and Arsenal while another of Real Madrid's major sponsors is Abu Dhabi's International Petroleum Investment Company (IPIC). The Middle East investment in sport is widely seen by economic and political commentators as part of a post-oil economic diversification strategy, allied with the exercising of soft power. This is as applicable to the examples above as it is to Qatar funding Barcelona via sponsorship or spending many tens of billions on staging the 2022 World Cup.

GEOPOLITICS AND SPORT: CHINA'S RISE

Another future World Cup - the 2030 edition looks likely - appears to be a motivating factor in the latest hugely significant geopolitical move in global football, this one by China. In little more than a year, China has become the source of a wave of financial and political backing for football on a scale rarely seen before. And the strategy is being implemented from the top - on the orders of the leader of the world's most populous nation. President Xi Jinping made global headlines on a trip to the UK in October 2015 when his stops included Manchester City - and a selfie with star striker Sergio Aguero. Little more than a month later, it was announced that a state-backed Chinese enterprise, CMC, had bought a 13% stake in City's parent company, City Football Group, for \$400m (then £265m). To say this was China as a nation buying a big football club would

be overstating things but it was certainly a state-backed enterprise getting a stake in multiple clubs in one go - in England, the USA and elsewhere - via CFG. (City's parent company owns City, NYCFC in MLS, and clubs and football businesses in Australia, Japan and elsewhere).

Next, in early 2016, the clubs of the Chinese Super League (CSL) collectively embarked on the biggest transfer spending spree that Chinese domestic football has known. They spent hundreds of millions of dollars on new players in the first two months of the year. For the first time, Chinese clubs were outbidding big European rivals in races for some of the same players. China's two richest men, Wang Jianlin and Jack Ma, both estimated to be worth around \$30bn in summer 2016, have owned or part-owned football clubs for some time. Wang's Wanda Group has owned 20 per cent of Atletico Madrid in Spain since 2015, the year it also bought the Infront sports marketing firm that distributes broadcasting rights to the World Cup. In March 2016 Wanda became a leading commercial partner of football's world governing body FIFA. While Jack Ma's main football interest has been ownership of Evergrande in the CSL, he has also been party to talks with FIFA about his Alibaba Group becoming a FIFA partner. An increasing number of other rich Chinese businessmen have, like Ma and Wang, invested in overseas clubs.

West Bromwich Albion of the Premier League have been bought by Guochuan Lai, a landscape and urban development entrepreneur. Two other clubs from England's Midlands, Aston Villa and Wolves, were also bought in 2016 respectively by China's Tony

Chinese clubs were outbidding big European rivals in races for some of the same players...





Xia and Fosun International. Back in Spain, toy industry billionaire Chen Yansheng bought Espanyol and compatriot Jiang Lizhang bought Granada. Chinese firms in recent times have bought Slavia Prague in the Czech Republic, Sochaux in France and Den Haag in the Netherlands. Retail giants Suning bought Italian three-times European Champions Internazionale. And the list has been growing by the week. This is happening against a backdrop of a Chinese government announcement in May this year that China wants to be a 'world football superpower' by 2050, with 20,000 dedicated training centres in China by 2020. President Xi says he wants China to win the World Cup within 15 years and there is every expectation they will stage it within a similar timeframe, namely by 2030.

CSL'S GREAT MARCH TO WEALTH

So the enormous sums being spent within the CSL are part and parcel of a new national goal, endorsed by the state. The upshot is a league in which the best paid team, according to GSSS 2016, is Shangdong Luneng, with average

first-team pay of £1.47m a year. That is a higher figure than paid by 14 of the 18 teams in Germany's Bundesliga. It is higher than 15 of the 20 teams in Spain's La Liga and higher than 18 of the 20 teams in France's Ligue 1. It is higher than several teams in England's Premier League - the richest league in the world.

The average CSL salary in 2016 is, at £587,000, more than twice the average in MLS (£237,000) and more than three times the average in Japan's J.League (£161,000). Perhaps the most single mind-boggling aspect of the new money washing across Chinese football is that three of the world's best paid 10 footballers in 2016 are plying their trade in the CSL and five of the top 14, at the time of writing. Brazilian forward-cum-winger Hulk has a salary of almost £17m a year with Shanghai SIPG, demonstrating the spending power of that club, who hired Andre Villas-Boas as manager in November 2016 on a salary reported at £11m a year. Graziano Pelle (Shangdong Luneng), Ezequiel Lavezzi (Hebei China Fortune), Ramires (Jiangsu Suning) and Jackson Martinez (Guangzhou Evergrande) all earn

more than £10m per year in basic salary in the CSL. They also all earn more, incidentally, than Barcelona striker Luis Suarez, who won Europe's Golden Shoe in 2015-16 for being the most prolific footballer in world football's richest continent. Hulk's four goals for SIPG in 2016 arrived at an average cost of £4m apiece in wages. Suarez's 40 goals for Barca last season cost around £250,000 each. The contrast between the two is one of the quirkier statistical nuggets that highlight the trend of CSL spending.

GSSS 2016 - A SURVEY FOR TODAY

Sporting Intelligence's global sports salaries survey was conceived in 2009 with several aims, one of them being to produce a substantial piece of original research to help promote the full launch of 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. As and when reliable numbers can be sourced for new or growing leagues, including Australia's Big Bash cricket league and Mexico's Liga MX, we'll be happy to include them, and welcome any assistance in obtaining such data.

One important note needs to be made on methodology. The first six editions of this report were released in Spring, usually April, and included salaries for the 'active' or most recently completed season for each league at the time of publication. For the European football leagues until now, completed seasons were used. But seven years of the GSSS have brought more experience, a wider knowledge base, more established access to more data and hence greater confidence in sourcing. So all the European football league numbers in this report pertain to the current 2016-17 season. As ever, they can only be a snapshot, of the situation applicable to the squads as set between the end of the summer 2016 transfer window and the opening of the January 2017 window. But nonetheless we believe they are the most accurate snapshot available anywhere. The only other methodological note to make as a result of this change is that some clubs' salaries - the successful clubs - will be a good few percentage points higher than the stated figures when performance-related bonuses are paid. We cannot know at the time of writing which those clubs will be! All figures (across all leagues) are sourced directly or indirectly from one or more of unions, player associations, agents, leagues, clubs and other reliable administrative bodies.

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 are 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. Of great interest most immediately are women's professional sports leagues. We would relish the opportunity to include one or more women's leagues in this survey. See the NBA pages of this report for a quite frankly shocking comparison between what the best paid teams in men's and women's sport earn, globally.

Sportingintelligence is currently undertaking a major piece of research into gender imbalance in global sport. As this continues we would welcome communication and dialogue about the relevant data and related issues with any women's professional sports league (or teams) in the world. There aren't many.

GSSS - HOW IT WORKS

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 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 - and for the ice hockey league, the NHL. In NBA basketball,

the salaries of the 14 or 15 players on each roster on the opening day of the 2016-17 season are considered. In Canadian and Australian football the wages of some 40-plus players are counted per team and in the NFL it is more than 50 per team. By 'average', we mean 'arithmetic mean'. All the salaries are added up (and by salaries, we include money for playing sport for that team, not for 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.

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 earn just over \$2.4m a year each on average, or almost \$4m less per man than NBA basketball players this season. The 'median' earnings in the NFL, where you consider the middle person in a list of all players ranked from best-paid to worst-paid, remains under a million dollars a year.

The best paid NFL team in this

year's survey, the Green Bay Packers, do not appear on the overall list until 99th place, with the average player there earning £2.16m a year (\$2.86m). 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. Well, not a single NFL team gets into the top 10 list of total payroll size.

NBA STRETCH LEAD AS RICHEST LEAGUE

The NBA remains comfortably the top paying league as a whole in world sport, by average salary. The 449 players considered for this report across the 30 NBA teams in 2016-17 will earn almost \$2.9 billion between them at an average of almost \$6.4m. 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 Premier League is the highest paying football league in the world, at £2.4m per player per season. That is about twice as much as the next highest paying football league - Spain's La Liga. 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 17 leagues and 333 teams from seven sports across 13 countries that we consider in this report 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 from Australia, CFL football (gridiron) from Canada, NPB baseball from Japan and IPL from India. Those 13 leagues have led the way in attracting the biggest crowds in world sport over the past decade, as measured by average attendance within domestic professional sports leagues.

Our final four leagues are the Scottish Premiership from Scotland, MLS from North America, China's CSL and Japan's J-League as examples of smaller-scale leagues from the world's most popular sport, football. For the NBA, the NHL and the NFL, the numbers in this report pertain to the 2016-17 seasons. For the Premier League, Bundesliga, La Liga, Serie A, Ligue 1 and Scottish Premiership, the salaries are for the squads at the end of the 2016 transfer window as the 2016-17 season began. For MLB, MLS, IPL, NPB, CSL and J-League the numbers are for 2016, and for the AFL and CFL they come from the end of the 2015 seasons.

TRANSPARENCY? BRING IT ON (BUT DON'T HOLD YOUR BREATH)

Details about our past work and background studies into sports salaries can be found at www.sportingintelligence.com. Different unions, leagues and indeed different clubs operate with wholly different levels of transparency in regard to pay. Some publish bits and pieces for public consumption, and most don't. The major sports leagues of North America are widely perceived as transparent in this area but it may surprise some people to count the total number of NFL, NBA, MLB, NHL and MLS teams that openly publish individual player salaries. It's zero. NFL, NBA and MLB salaries reach the public domain via private disclosure but this data is never published officially by clubs,

while it is unions and not leagues or clubs that make NHL and MLS salaries public, and even they don't include all payments made to players. There is only one major sports team in North America that readily provides detailed information about their wider finances (and not individual salaries) and that is the Packers of the NFL. That is because they are publicly owned and run for the benefit of their community. They are not only (uniquely) transparent and profitable but also self-sufficient. It is through the publication of their annual financial statements, for example, that we know that their total revenue was \$408.7m in 2015, of which \$222.6m was 'national revenue', or in effect their 1/32nd share of 'central income' from the NFL. This in turn told us that the NFL shared a pot of central funds of \$7.1 billion between its 32 teams that year. The Packers made a profit of \$48.9m that season. Perhaps one day such transparency will be more widespread but nobody should hold their breath. 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 about previous years' GSSS reports can be found via www.globalsportssalaries.com. Last year's GSSS contained special features about social media, how wages are affected by the 'origins' of players by education or nationality and 'superclubs.' Similar analysis based on this year's findings will appear on www.sportingintelligence.com.

Thank you for reading.
Nick Harris
Editor
Sporting Intelligence
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GLOBAL SPORTS SALARIES SURVEY 2016: TOP 12

RANK & TEAM (LAST YEAR)	LEAGUE	AVG ANNUAL PAY £ (AVG WEEKLY PAY)	AVG ANNUAL PAY \$ (AVG WEEKLY PAY)
  1 (23) Cleveland Cavaliers	NBA	£6,545,934 (£125,883)	\$8,652,920 (\$166,402)
  2 (9) New York Yankees	MLB	£5,817,167 (£111,869)	\$7,689,579 (\$147,877)
  3 (18) LA Clippers	NBA	£5,789,976 (£111,346)	\$7,653,636 (\$147,185)
  4 (6) Man Utd	EPL	£5,770,000 (£110,962)	\$7,616,400 (\$146,469)
  5 (4) Barcelona	La Liga	£5,649,091 (£108,636)	\$7,456,800 (\$143,400)
  6 (38) Portland Trail Blazers	NBA	£5,590,003 (£107,500)	\$7,389,296 (\$142,102)
  7 (22) Memphis Grizzlies	NBA	£5,513,376 (£106,026)	\$7,288,005 (\$140,154)
  8 (39) Dallas Mavericks	NBA	£5,500,474 (£105,778)	\$7,270,951 (\$139,826)
  9 (3) Man City	EPL	£5,423,077 (£104,290)	\$7,158,462 (\$137,663)
  10 (96) Orlando Magic	NBA	£5,385,535 (£103,568)	\$7,119,015 (\$136,904)
  11 (21) Toronto Raptors	NBA	£5,372,233 (£103,312)	\$7,101,431 (\$136,566)
  12 (40) San Antonio Spurs	NBA	£5,298,738 (£101,899)	\$7,004,280 (\$134,698)

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RANK (LAST YEAR)	TEAM	LEAGUE	AVG ANNUAL PAY £ (AVG WEEKLY PAY)	AVG ANNUAL PAY \$ (AVG WEEKLY PAY)
13 (13)	San Francisco Giants	MLB	£5,212,399 (£100,238)	\$6,890,151 (\$132,503)
14 (29)	Chicago Bulls	NBA	£5,198,221 (£99,966)	\$6,871,409 (\$132,142)
15 (26)	Washington Wizards	NBA	£5,158,154 (£99,195)	\$6,818,445 (\$131,124)
16 (15)	New York Knicks	NBA	£5,115,284 (£98,371)	\$6,761,776 (\$130,034)
17 (63)	Detroit Pistons	NBA	£5,097,100 (£98,021)	\$6,737,739 (\$129,572)
18 (28)	Miami Heat	NBA	£5,082,595 (£97,742)	\$6,718,566 (\$129,203)
19 (2)	Real Madrid	La Liga	£5,051,875 (£97,151)	\$6,668,475 (\$128,240)
20 (25)	Golden State Warriors	NBA	£5,036,233 (£96,851)	\$6,657,281 (\$128,025)
21 (51)	Charlotte Hornets	NBA	£5,024,914 (£96,633)	\$6,642,318 (\$127,737)
22 (64)	Atlanta Hawks	NBA	£4,954,348 (£95,276)	\$6,549,039 (\$125,943)
23 (67)	Milwaukee Bucks	NBA	£4,943,505 (£95,067)	\$6,534,705 (\$125,667)
24 (17)	Boston Red Sox	MLB	£4,918,444 (£94,585)	\$6,501,578 (\$125,030)
25 (37)	New Orleans Pelicans	NBA	£4,911,201 (£94,446)	\$6,492,004 (\$124,846)
26 (5)	LA Dodgers	MLB	£4,782,990 (£91,981)	\$6,322,525 (\$121,587)
27 (19)	Sacramento Kings	NBA	£4,765,968 (£91,653)	\$6,300,024 (\$121,154)
28 (12)	Detroit Tigers	MLB	£4,755,615 (£91,454)	\$6,286,338 (\$120,891)
29 (46)	Houston Rockets	NBA	£4,699,093 (£90,367)	\$6,211,624 (\$119,454)
30 (50)	Texas Rangers	MLB	£4,691,276 (£90,217)	\$6,201,291 (\$119,256)
31 (31)	Los Angeles Lakers	NBA	£4,690,283 (£90,198)	\$6,199,978 (\$119,230)
32 (32)	Boston Celtics	NBA	£4,613,890 (£88,729)	\$6,098,995 (\$117,288)
33 (34)	Oklahoma City Thunder	NBA	£4,540,518 (£87,318)	\$6,002,007 (\$115,423)
34 (8)	Chelsea	EPL	£4,513,600 (£86,800)	\$5,957,952 (\$114,576)
35 (1)	PSG	Ligue 1	£4,476,835 (£86,093)	\$5,909,422 (\$113,643)
36 (33)	Indiana Pacers	NBA	£4,448,154 (£85,541)	\$5,879,913 (\$113,075)
37 (7)	Bayern Munich	Bundesliga	£4,165,600 (£80,108)	\$5,498,592 (\$105,742)
38 (16)	Washington Nationals	MLB	£4,121,547 (£79,261)	\$5,448,179 (\$104,773)
39 (57)	Utah Jazz	NBA	£4,045,923 (£77,806)	\$5,348,213 (\$102,850)
40 (49)	LA Angels	MLB	£3,993,486 (£76,798)	\$5,278,897 (\$101,517)
41 (24)	Juventus	Serie A	£3,977,569 (£76,492)	\$5,250,392 (\$100,969)
42 (65)	Phoenix Suns	NBA	£3,962,678 (£76,205)	\$5,238,173 (\$100,734)
43 (70)	Baltimore Orioles	MLB	£3,932,011 (£75,616)	\$5,197,635 (\$99,955)
44 (68)	Chicago Cubs	MLB	£3,897,870 (£74,959)	\$5,152,506 (\$99,087)
45 (77)	New York Mets	MLB	£3,751,375 (£72,142)	\$4,958,857 (\$95,363)
46 (20)	Denver Nuggets	NBA	£3,731,530 (£71,760)	\$4,932,624 (\$94,858)
47 (10)	Arsenal	EPL	£3,707,407 (£71,296)	\$4,893,778 (\$94,111)
48 (52)	Seattle Mariners	MLB	£3,695,981 (£71,077)	\$4,885,632 (\$93,954)
49 (44)	Minnesota Timberwolves	NBA	£3,644,392 (£70,084)	\$4,817,438 (\$92,643)
50 (35)	Toronto Blue Jays	MLB	£3,618,201 (£69,581)	\$4,782,817 (\$91,977)
51 (41)	Royal Challengers Bangalore	IPL	£3,555,757 (£68,380)	\$4,700,274 (\$90,390)
52 (55)	St Louis Cardinals	MLB	£3,490,967 (£67,134)	\$4,614,629 (\$88,743)
53 (11)	Brooklyn Nets	NBA	£3,480,900 (£66,940)	\$4,601,323 (\$88,487)
54 (60)	Kansas City Royals	MLB	£3,430,000 (£65,962)	\$4,534,039 (\$87,193)
55 (56)	Chicago White Sox	MLB	£3,419,340 (£65,757)	\$4,519,947 (\$86,922)
56 (43)	Mumbai Indians	IPL	£3,263,649 (£62,762)	\$4,314,143 (\$82,964)

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

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57 (-)	Rising Pune Supergiants	IPL	£3,199,608 (£61,531)	\$4,229,488 (\$81,336)
58 (54)	Minnesota Twins	MLB	£3,187,383 (£61,296)	\$4,213,328 (\$81,026)
59 (45)	Sunrisers Hyderabad	IPL	£3,119,175 (£59,984)	\$4,123,166 (\$79,292)
60 (14)	Liverpool	EPL	£3,012,414 (£57,931)	\$3,976,386 (\$76,469)
61 (48)	Delhi Daredevils	IPL	£2,988,283 (£57,467)	\$3,950,143 (\$75,964)
62 (66)	Roma	Serie A	£2,956,159 (£56,849)	\$3,902,130 (\$75,041)
63 (140)	Philadelphia 76ers	NBA	£2,908,957 (£55,941)	\$3,845,284 (\$73,948)
64 (83)	San Diego Padres	MLB	£2,841,773 (£54,649)	\$3,756,475 (\$72,240)
65 (88)	Pittsburgh Pirates	MLB	£2,803,882 (£53,921)	\$3,706,387 (\$71,277)
66 (30)	Tottenham	EPL	£2,679,500 (£51,529)	\$3,536,940 (\$68,018)
67 (81)	Los Angeles Kings	NHL	£2,588,710 (£49,783)	\$3,421,957 (\$65,807)
68 (85)	Atletico Madrid	La Liga	£2,583,391 (£49,681)	\$3,410,077 (\$65,578)
69 (71)	Colorado Rockies	MLB	£2,582,303 (£49,660)	\$3,413,487 (\$65,644)
70 (101)	Washington Capitals	NHL	£2,566,168 (£49,349)	\$3,392,159 (\$65,234)
71 (123)	Houston Astros	MLB	£2,563,824 (£49,304)	\$3,389,061 (\$65,174)
72 (47)	Kolkata Knight Riders	IPL	£2,561,770 (£49,265)	\$3,386,345 (\$65,122)
73 (75)	Pittsburgh Penguins	NHL	£2,551,224 (£49,062)	\$3,372,404 (\$64,854)
74 (118)	Montreal Canadiens	NHL	£2,504,882 (£48,171)	\$3,311,146 (\$63,676)
75 (93)	Arizona Diamondbacks	MLB	£2,501,047 (£48,097)	\$3,306,076 (\$63,578)
76 (112)	San Jose Sharks	NHL	£2,490,866 (£47,901)	\$3,292,619 (\$63,320)
77 (69)	Internazionale	Serie A	£2,474,609 (£47,589)	\$3,266,484 (\$62,817)
78 (76)	Chicago Blackhawks	NHL	£2,462,329 (£47,352)	\$3,254,896 (\$62,594)
79 (74)	New York Rangers	NHL	£2,451,224 (£47,139)	\$3,240,217 (\$62,312)
80 (-)	Gujarat Lions	IPL	£2,425,317 (£46,641)	\$3,205,970 (\$61,653)
81 (100)	Minnesota Wild	NHL	£2,371,052 (£45,597)	\$3,134,239 (\$60,274)
82 (61)	Kings XI Punjab	IPL	£2,364,202 (£45,465)	\$3,125,184 (\$60,100)
83 (99)	St Louis Blues	NHL	£2,355,394 (£45,296)	\$3,113,542 (\$59,876)
84 (162)	Calgary Flames	NHL	£2,331,371 (£44,834)	\$3,081,786 (\$59,265)
85 (92)	Detroit Red Wings	NHL	£2,328,129 (£44,772)	\$3,077,500 (\$59,183)
86 (105)	Nashville Predators	NHL	£2,326,753 (£44,745)	\$3,075,682 (\$59,148)
87 (107)	Boston Bruins	NHL	£2,313,163 (£44,484)	\$3,057,717 (\$58,802)
88 (91)	Tampa Bay Lightning	NHL	£2,287,751 (£43,995)	\$3,024,125 (\$58,156)
89 (89)	Philadelphia Flyers	NHL	£2,283,041 (£43,905)	\$3,017,900 (\$58,037)
90 (119)	West Ham	EPL	£2,263,704 (£43,533)	\$2,988,089 (\$57,463)
91 (111)	Buffalo Sabres	NHL	£2,262,922 (£43,518)	\$2,991,304 (\$57,525)
92 (139)	New York Islanders	NHL	£2,260,044 (£43,462)	\$2,987,500 (\$57,452)
93 (151)	Anaheim Ducks	NHL	£2,259,616 (£43,454)	\$2,986,935 (\$57,441)
94 (106)	Vancouver Canucks	NHL	£2,251,081 (£43,290)	\$2,975,652 (\$57,224)
95 (133)	Ottawa Senators	NHL	£2,224,274 (£42,775)	\$2,940,217 (\$56,543)
96 (36)	Cincinnati Reds	MLB	£2,195,194 (£42,215)	\$2,901,776 (\$55,803)
97 (110)	Oakland Athletics	MLB	£2,188,964 (£42,095)	\$2,893,541 (\$55,645)
98 (117)	Colorado Avalanche	NHL	£2,173,211 (£41,793)	\$2,872,717 (\$55,245)
99 (127)	Green Bay Packers	NFL	£2,164,013 (£41,616)	\$2,860,559 (\$55,011)
100 (163)	Oakland Raiders	NFL	£2,156,596 (£41,473)	\$2,850,755 (\$54,822)
101 (90)	Everton	EPL	£2,145,000 (£41,250)	\$2,831,400 (\$54,450)
102 (152)	Columbus Blue Jackets	NHL	£2,136,290 (£41,083)	\$2,823,913 (\$54,306)

103-149

103 (167)	Arizona Cardinals	NFL	£2,135,685 (£41,071)	\$2,823,112 (\$54,291)
104 (27)	Philadelphia Phillies	MLB	£2,117,696 (£40,725)	\$2,799,333 (\$53,833)
105 (-)	Leicester	EPL	£2,100,800 (£40,400)	\$2,773,056 (\$53,328)
106 (126)	Cincinnati Bengals	NFL	£2,094,349 (£40,276)	\$2,768,472 (\$53,240)
107 (114)	Miami Marlins	MLB	£2,088,864 (£40,170)	\$2,761,222 (\$53,100)
108 (82)	Cleveland Indians	MLB	£2,082,109 (£40,041)	\$2,752,293 (\$52,929)
109 (121)	Southampton	EPL	£2,072,571 (£39,857)	\$2,735,794 (\$52,611)
110 (166)	Jacksonville Jaguars	NFL	£2,059,118 (£39,598)	\$2,721,901 (\$52,344)
111 (62)	Borussia Dortmund	Bundesliga	£2,008,603 (£38,627)	\$2,651,357 (\$50,988)
112 (120)	Dallas Stars	NHL	£2,002,943 (£38,518)	\$2,647,644 (\$50,916)
113 (175)	Dallas Cowboys	NFL	£2,000,160 (£38,465)	\$2,643,965 (\$50,845)
114 (131)	Tampa Bay Bucs	NFL	£1,995,541 (£38,376)	\$2,637,860 (\$50,728)
115 (113)	Florida Panthers	NHL	£1,978,058 (£38,040)	\$2,614,750 (\$50,284)
116 (160)	Houston Texans	NFL	£1,973,197 (£37,946)	\$2,608,324 (\$50,160)
117 (97)	Edmonton Oilers	NHL	£1,970,028 (£37,885)	\$2,604,135 (\$50,080)
118 (177)	Crystal Palace	EPL	£1,968,571 (£37,857)	\$2,598,514 (\$49,971)
119 (143)	Seattle Seahawks	NFL	£1,948,097 (£37,463)	\$2,575,145 (\$49,522)
120 (79)	Napoli	Serie A	£1,938,642 (£37,282)	\$2,559,007 (\$49,212)
121 (157)	New York Giants	NFL	£1,923,730 (£36,995)	\$2,542,935 (\$48,903)
122 (135)	Minnesota Vikings	NFL	£1,923,447 (£36,989)	\$2,542,560 (\$48,895)
123 (168)	Indianapolis Colts	NFL	£1,921,367 (£36,949)	\$2,539,811 (\$48,843)
124 (103)	Winnipeg Jets	NHL	£1,920,001 (£36,923)	\$2,538,005 (\$48,808)
125 (176)	New York Jets	NFL	£1,911,096 (£36,752)	\$2,526,234 (\$48,581)
126 (124)	Miami Dolphins	NFL	£1,901,163 (£36,561)	\$2,513,104 (\$48,329)
127 (129)	Stoke	EPL	£1,899,857 (£36,536)	\$2,507,811 (\$48,227)
128 (138)	Pittsburgh Steelers	NFL	£1,884,677 (£36,244)	\$2,491,312 (\$47,910)
129 (148)	Tennessee Titans	NFL	£1,879,894 (£36,152)	\$2,484,989 (\$47,788)
130 (153)	Washington Redskins	NFL	£1,873,331 (£36,026)	\$2,476,313 (\$47,621)
131 (94)	Sunderland	EPL	£1,872,000 (£36,000)	\$2,471,040 (\$47,520)
132 (58)	Milan	Serie A	£1,867,452 (£35,913)	\$2,465,037 (\$47,405)
133 (170)	Los Angeles Rams	NFL	£1,862,675 (£35,821)	\$2,462,227 (\$47,351)
134 (130)	Denver Broncos	NFL	£1,847,123 (£35,522)	\$2,441,670 (\$46,955)
135 (109)	West Brom	EPL	£1,841,583 (£35,415)	\$2,430,890 (\$46,748)
136 (158)	Baltimore Ravens	NFL	£1,825,924 (£35,114)	\$2,413,648 (\$46,416)
137 (84)	Toronto Maple Leafs	NHL	£1,817,870 (£34,959)	\$2,403,000 (\$46,212)
138 (159)	Atlanta Falcons	NFL	£1,810,649 (£34,820)	\$2,393,455 (\$46,028)
139 (141)	Philadelphia Eagles	NFL	£1,807,190 (£34,754)	\$2,388,883 (\$45,940)
140 (125)	Detroit Lions	NFL	£1,772,519 (£34,087)	\$2,343,053 (\$45,059)
141 (154)	Carolina Panthers	NFL	£1,772,386 (£34,084)	\$2,342,877 (\$45,055)
142 (53)	Schalke	Bundesliga	£1,768,125 (£34,002)	\$2,333,925 (\$44,883)
143 (150)	San Diego Chargers	NFL	£1,766,279 (£33,967)	\$2,334,804 (\$44,900)
144 (146)	Valencia	La Liga	£1,757,167 (£33,792)	\$2,319,460 (\$44,605)
145 (73)	Atlanta Braves	MLB	£1,740,096 (£33,463)	\$2,300,193 (\$44,234)
146 (172)	Kansas City Chiefs	NFL	£1,734,860 (£33,363)	\$2,293,271 (\$44,101)
147 (134)	Arizona Coyotes	NHL	£1,718,709 (£33,052)	\$2,271,922 (\$43,691)
148 (144)	Chicago Bears	NFL	£1,710,233 (£32,889)	\$2,260,718 (\$43,475)
149 (98)	Wolfsburg	Bundesliga	£1,707,584 (£32,838)	\$2,254,011 (\$43,346)

150-196

150 (72)	Milwaukee Brewers	MLB	£1,690,722 (£32,514)	\$2,234,927 (\$42,979)
151 (161)	San Francisco 49ers	NFL	£1,655,807 (£31,842)	\$2,188,774 (\$42,092)
152 (122)	New Jersey Devils	NHL	£1,653,866 (£31,805)	\$2,186,207 (\$42,042)
153 (115)	Carolina Hurricanes	NHL	£1,647,042 (£31,674)	\$2,177,188 (\$41,869)
154 (116)	Sevilla	La Liga	£1,615,250 (£31,063)	\$2,132,130 (\$41,003)
155 (137)	Buffalo Bills	NFL	£1,614,862 (£31,055)	\$2,134,649 (\$41,051)
156 (156)	New England Patriots	NFL	£1,567,500 (£30,144)	\$2,072,042 (\$39,847)
157 (-)	Watford	EPL	£1,553,552 (£29,876)	\$2,050,689 (\$39,436)
158 (132)	Tampa Bay Rays	MLB	£1,542,647 (£29,666)	\$2,039,190 (\$39,215)
159 (78)	Monaco	Ligue 1	£1,510,215 (£29,043)	\$1,993,484 (\$38,336)
160 (190)	Shangdong Luneng	CSL	£1,469,943 (£28,268)	\$1,943,084 (\$37,367)
161 (-)	Shanghai SIPG	CSL	£1,434,803 (£27,592)	\$1,896,633 (\$36,474)
162 (95)	Swansea	EPL	£1,412,320 (£27,160)	\$1,864,262 (\$35,851)
163 (108)	Bayer Leverkusen	Bundesliga	£1,410,513 (£27,125)	\$1,861,877 (\$35,805)
164 (147)	New Orleans Saints	NFL	£1,395,460 (£26,836)	\$1,844,627 (\$35,474)
165 (254)	Jiangsu Suning	CSL	£1,372,039 (£26,385)	\$1,813,667 (\$34,878)
166 (195)	Guangzhou Evergrande	CSL	£1,364,610 (£26,243)	\$1,803,846 (\$34,689)
167 (192)	Villarreal	La Liga	£1,360,840 (£26,170)	\$1,796,309 (\$34,544)
168 (86)	Lyon	Ligue 1	£1,353,793 (£26,034)	\$1,787,007 (\$34,366)
169 (180)	Athletic Bilbao	La Liga	£1,285,336 (£24,718)	\$1,696,644 (\$32,628)
170 (-)	Middlesbrough	EPL	£1,229,704 (£23,648)	\$1,623,209 (\$31,216)
171 (174)	Hull	EPL	£1,228,000 (£23,615)	\$1,620,960 (\$31,172)
172 (149)	Lazio	Serie A	£1,214,056 (£23,347)	\$1,602,553 (\$30,818)
173 (142)	Cleveland Browns	NFL	£1,193,317 (£22,948)	\$1,577,418 (\$30,335)
174 (102)	Marseille	Ligue 1	£1,185,427 (£22,797)	\$1,564,763 (\$30,092)
175 (155)	Fiorentina	Serie A	£1,140,347 (£21,930)	\$1,505,258 (\$28,947)
176 (-)	Hebei China Fortune	CSL	£1,117,603 (£21,492)	\$1,477,333 (\$28,410)
177 (-)	Bournemouth	EPL	£1,109,333 (£21,333)	\$1,464,320 (\$28,160)
178 (201)	Fukuoka SoftBank Hawks	NPB	£1,091,220 (£20,985)	\$1,442,459 (\$27,740)
179 (194)	Real Sociedad	La Liga	£1,015,362 (£19,526)	\$1,340,278 (\$25,775)
180 (171)	Borussia Monchengladbach	Bundesliga	£975,093 (£18,752)	\$1,287,123 (\$24,752)
181 (-)	Burnley	EPL	£954,417 (£18,354)	\$1,259,830 (\$24,228)
182 (193)	Yomiuri Giants	NPB	£932,060 (£17,924)	\$1,232,068 (\$23,694)
183 (136)	Hamburg	Bundesliga	£889,700 (£17,110)	\$1,174,404 (\$22,585)
184 (178)	Hoffenheim	Bundesliga	£813,411 (£15,643)	\$1,073,702 (\$20,648)
185 (185)	Hertha Berlin	Bundesliga	£787,341 (£15,141)	\$1,039,290 (\$19,986)
186 (184)	Genoa	Serie A	£777,292 (£14,948)	\$1,026,025 (\$19,731)
187 (199)	Espanyol	La Liga	£761,327 (£14,641)	\$1,004,952 (\$19,326)
188 (-)	RB Leipzig	Bundesliga	£758,542 (£14,587)	\$1,001,275 (\$19,255)
189 (189)	Torino	Serie A	£753,691 (£14,494)	\$994,873 (\$19,132)
190 (187)	Bordeaux	Ligue 1	£738,029 (£14,193)	\$974,198 (\$18,735)
191 (197)	Bologna	Serie A	£723,391 (£13,911)	\$954,876 (\$18,363)
192 (181)	Celtic	SPL	£717,860 (£13,805)	\$947,575 (\$18,223)
193 (230)	Orix Buffaloes	NPB	£714,371 (£13,738)	\$944,310 (\$18,160)
194 (198)	Sampdoria	Serie A	£700,676 (£13,475)	\$924,892 (\$17,786)
195 (213)	Sassuolo	Serie A	£678,272 (£13,044)	\$895,319 (\$17,218)
196 (-)	Deportivo La Coruna	La Liga	£646,609 (£12,435)	\$853,523 (\$16,414)

197-243

197 (240)	Beijing Guoan	CSL	£621,113 (£11,944)	\$821,034 (\$15,789)
198 (212)	Hanshin Tigers	NPB	£620,216 (£11,927)	\$819,850 (\$15,766)
199 (234)	New York City FC	MLS	£620,150 (£11,926)	\$819,762 (\$15,765)
200 (169)	Werder Bremen	Bundesliga	£617,894 (£11,883)	\$815,620 (\$15,685)
201 (-)	FC Koln	Bundesliga	£616,625 (£11,858)	\$813,945 (\$15,653)
202 (191)	Saint-Etienne	Ligue 1	£611,416 (£11,758)	\$807,069 (\$15,521)
203 (232)	Shanghai Shenua	CSL	£611,176 (£11,753)	\$807,900 (\$15,537)
204 (204)	Toronto FC	MLS	£603,233 (£11,601)	\$797,400 (\$15,335)
205 (179)	Eintracht Frankfurt	Bundesliga	£601,607 (£11,569)	\$794,121 (\$15,272)
206 (165)	Lille	Ligue 1	£592,531 (£11,395)	\$782,141 (\$15,041)
207 (231)	Tokyo Yakult Swallows	NPB	£583,572 (£11,223)	\$771,411 (\$14,835)
208 (233)	Celta Vigo	La Liga	£578,448 (£11,124)	\$763,551 (\$14,684)
209 (219)	Cagliari	Serie A	£575,139 (£11,060)	\$759,183 (\$14,600)
210 (236)	Saitama Seibu Lions	NPB	£573,139 (£11,022)	\$757,620 (\$14,570)
211 (228)	Hokkaido Nippon Ham Fighters	NPB	£563,192 (£10,831)	\$744,470 (\$14,317)
212 (203)	Atalanta	Serie A	£544,310 (£10,468)	\$718,490 (\$13,817)
213 (208)	Nice	Ligue 1	£533,073 (£10,251)	\$703,656 (\$13,532)
214 (210)	Udinese	Serie A	£529,356 (£10,180)	\$698,749 (\$13,437)
215 (186)	Malaga	La Liga	£516,048 (£9,924)	\$681,183 (\$13,100)
216 (245)	Hiroshima Toyo Carp	NPB	£511,511 (£9,837)	\$676,154 (\$13,003)
217 (182)	Mainz	Bundesliga	£504,573 (£9,703)	\$666,037 (\$12,808)
218 (215)	Granada	La Liga	£499,200 (£9,600)	\$658,944 (\$12,672)
219 (224)	Chiba Lotte Marines	NPB	£495,410 (£9,527)	\$654,871 (\$12,594)
220 (229)	LA Galaxy	MLS	£489,678 (£9,417)	\$647,294 (\$12,448)
221 (202)	Augsburg	Bundesliga	£453,050 (£8,713)	\$598,026 (\$11,501)
222 (217)	Tohoku Rakuten Golden Eagles	NPB	£435,239 (£8,370)	\$575,332 (\$11,064)
223 (200)	Real Betis	La Liga	£420,130 (£8,079)	\$554,572 (\$10,665)
224 (220)	Toulouse	Ligue 1	£414,648 (£7,974)	\$547,335 (\$10,526)
225 (221)	Chievo	Serie A	£413,154 (£7,945)	\$545,363 (\$10,488)
226 (216)	Montpellier	Ligue 1	£409,283 (£7,871)	\$540,254 (\$10,390)
227 (-)	Empoli	Serie A	£393,180 (£7,561)	\$518,997 (\$9,981)
228 (-)	Eibar	La Liga	£389,322 (£7,487)	\$513,905 (\$9,883)
229 (211)	Rennes	Ligue 1	£384,129 (£7,387)	\$507,050 (\$9,751)
230 (214)	Osasuna	La Liga	£383,460 (£7,374)	\$506,167 (\$9,734)
231 (218)	Chunichi Dragons	NPB	£378,931 (£7,287)	\$500,900 (\$9,633)
232 (-)	Palermo	Serie A	£371,278 (£7,140)	\$490,087 (\$9,425)
233 (235)	Bastia	Ligue 1	£369,100 (£7,098)	\$487,212 (\$9,369)
234 (250)	Yokohama DeNA Bay Stars	NPB	£368,347 (£7,084)	\$486,910 (\$9,364)
235 (-)	Caen	Ligue 1	£362,236 (£6,966)	\$478,151 (\$9,195)
236 (248)	Lorient	Ligue 1	£362,207 (£6,966)	\$478,113 (\$9,194)
237 (-)	Pescara	Serie A	£357,436 (£6,874)	\$471,815 (\$9,073)
238 (-)	Sporting Gijon	La Liga	£352,192 (£6,773)	\$464,893 (\$8,940)
239 (-)	Dijon	Ligue 1	£335,593 (£6,454)	\$442,982 (\$8,519)
240 (205)	Freiburg	Bundesliga	£332,113 (£6,387)	\$438,390 (\$8,431)
241 (-)	FC Ingolstadt 04	Bundesliga	£330,208 (£6,350)	\$435,874 (\$8,382)
242 (-)	Metz	Ligue 1	£328,343 (£6,314)	\$433,413 (\$8,335)
243 (-)	Angers	Ligue 1	£327,600 (£6,300)	\$432,432 (\$8,316)

244-291

244 (-)	Rangers	SPL	£316,888 (£6,094)	\$418,292 (\$8,044)
245 (247)	Seattle Sounders	MLS	£313,829 (£6,035)	\$414,844 (\$7,978)
246 (-)	Crotone	Serie A	£310,092 (£5,963)	\$409,321 (\$7,872)
247 (-)	SV Darmstadt 98	Bundesliga	£299,300 (£5,756)	\$395,076 (\$7,598)
248 (-)	Deportivo Alaves	La Liga	£298,963 (£5,749)	\$394,631 (\$7,589)
249 (241)	Orlando City	MLS	£296,378 (£5,700)	\$391,776 (\$7,534)
250 (252)	Guingamp	Ligue 1	£293,650 (£5,647)	\$387,618 (\$7,454)
251 (223)	Nantes	Ligue 1	£291,460 (£5,605)	\$384,727 (\$7,399)
252 (253)	Urawa Red Diamonds	J.League	£288,350 (£5,545)	\$380,622 (\$7,320)
253 (-)	Las Palmas	La Liga	£273,481 (£5,259)	\$360,996 (\$6,942)
254 (-)	Leganes	La Liga	£272,350 (£5,238)	\$359,502 (\$6,914)
255 (309)	Colorado Rapids	MLS	£242,718 (£4,668)	\$320,844 (\$6,170)
256 (258)	Tianjin Teda	CSL	£240,950 (£4,634)	\$318,507 (\$6,125)
257 (261)	Gamba Osaka	J.League	£224,221 (£4,312)	\$295,971 (\$5,692)
258 (259)	Yokohama F Marinos	J.League	£214,292 (£4,121)	\$282,865 (\$5,440)
259 (265)	FC Tokyo	J.League	£208,776 (£4,015)	\$275,585 (\$5,300)
260 (-)	Nancy	Ligue 1	£208,385 (£4,007)	\$275,068 (\$5,290)
261 (-)	Chongqing Lifan	CSL	£205,201 (£3,946)	\$271,250 (\$5,216)
262 (283)	Sanfrecce Hiroshima	J.League	£194,281 (£3,736)	\$256,451 (\$4,932)
263 (269)	Hawthorn	AFL	£190,893 (£3,671)	\$251,979 (\$4,846)
264 (272)	West Coast Eagles	AFL	£189,310 (£3,641)	\$249,889 (\$4,806)
265 (260)	Vissel Kobe	J.League	£188,716 (£3,629)	\$249,105 (\$4,790)
266 (277)	Collingwood	AFL	£187,728 (£3,610)	\$247,801 (\$4,765)
267 (281)	Portland Timbers	MLS	£186,004 (£3,577)	\$245,874 (\$4,728)
268 (285)	Kawasaki Frontale	J.League	£183,730 (£3,533)	\$242,524 (\$4,664)
269 (304)	Montreal Impact	MLS	£181,625 (£3,493)	\$240,087 (\$4,617)
270 (298)	San Jose Earthquakes	MLS	£180,597 (£3,473)	\$238,728 (\$4,591)
271 (268)	Fremantle	AFL	£179,377 (£3,450)	\$236,778 (\$4,553)
272 (263)	Henan Jianye	CSL	£178,848 (£3,439)	\$236,415 (\$4,546)
273 (266)	Geelong	AFL	£178,431 (£3,431)	\$235,529 (\$4,529)
274 (262)	Sydney Swans	AFL	£176,770 (£3,399)	\$233,336 (\$4,487)
275 (273)	Essendon	AFL	£175,829 (£3,381)	\$232,094 (\$4,463)
276 (267)	Greater Western Sydney	AFL	£175,597 (£3,377)	\$231,788 (\$4,457)
277 (274)	Carlton	AFL	£174,410 (£3,354)	\$230,221 (\$4,427)
278 (291)	Kashima Antlers	J.League	£174,114 (£3,348)	\$229,830 (\$4,420)
279 (256)	New England Revolution	MLS	£171,038 (£3,289)	\$226,091 (\$4,348)
280 (275)	Richmond	AFL	£170,626 (£3,281)	\$225,226 (\$4,331)
281 (297)	Sporting Kansas City	MLS	£169,979 (£3,269)	\$224,691 (\$4,321)
282 (295)	Vancouver Whitecaps	MLS	£168,671 (£3,244)	\$222,962 (\$4,288)
283 (302)	Philadelphia Union	MLS	£167,022 (£3,212)	\$220,783 (\$4,246)
284 (278)	Adelaide Crows	AFL	£164,949 (£3,172)	\$217,733 (\$4,187)
285 (246)	New York Red Bulls	MLS	£164,792 (£3,169)	\$217,835 (\$4,189)
286 (305)	Real Salt Lake	MLS	£162,947 (£3,134)	\$215,396 (\$4,142)
287 (264)	Nagoya Grampus	J.League	£160,386 (£3,084)	\$211,710 (\$4,071)
288 (301)	Columbus Crew	MLS	£158,705 (£3,052)	\$209,788 (\$4,034)
289 (-)	Jubilo Iwata	J.League	£158,460 (£3,047)	\$209,167 (\$4,022)
290 (292)	Hangzhou Greentown	CSL	£155,563 (£2,992)	\$205,635 (\$3,955)
291 (280)	Gold Coast	AFL	£154,069 (£2,963)	\$203,371 (\$3,911)

292-333

292 (279)	Port Adelaide	AFL	£152,671 (£2,936)	\$201,526 (\$3,876)
293 (276)	Melbourne	AFL	£151,971 (£2,923)	\$200,602 (\$3,858)
294 (286)	Omiya Ardija	J.League	£151,436 (£2,912)	\$199,896 (\$3,844)
295 (282)	Brisbane Lions	AFL	£151,272 (£2,909)	\$199,679 (\$3,840)
296 (326)	Liaoning Whowin	CSL	£150,975 (£2,903)	\$199,570 (\$3,838)
297 (271)	North Melbourne	AFL	£149,873 (£2,882)	\$197,832 (\$3,804)
298(287)	St Kilda	AFL	£148,838 (£2,862)	\$196,466 (\$3,778)
299 (290)	Kashiwa Reysol	J.League	£148,567 (£2,857)	\$196,108 (\$3,771)
300 (303)	DC United	MLS	£147,912 (£2,844)	\$195,521 (\$3,760)
301 (284)	Western Bulldogs	AFL	£147,440 (£2,835)	\$194,621 (\$3,743)
302 (293)	Houston Dynamo	MLS	£137,904 (£2,652)	\$182,292 (\$3,506)
303 (242)	Guangzhou R&F	CSL	£134,689 (£2,590)	\$178,042 (\$3,424)
304 (270)	Aberdeen	SPL	£134,670 (£2,590)	\$177,764 (\$3,419)
305 (255)	Changchun Yatai	CSL	£134,615 (£2,589)	\$177,945 (\$3,422)
306 (-)	Shijiazhuang Ever Bright	CSL	£129,726 (£2,495)	\$171,482 (\$3,298)
307 (289)	Chicago Fire	MLS	£125,227 (£2,408)	\$165,535 (\$3,183)
308 (294)	FC Dallas	MLS	£119,601 (£2,300)	\$158,098 (\$3,040)
309 (322)	Sagan Tosu	J.League	£110,698 (£2,129)	\$146,121 (\$2,810)
310 (310)	Albirex Niigata	J.League	£109,929 (£2,114)	\$145,106 (\$2,791)
311 (-)	Shonan Bellmare	J.League	£104,826 (£2,016)	\$138,370 (\$2,661)
312 (-)	Yanbian Funde	CSL	£93,335 (£1,795)	\$123,377 (\$2,373)
313 (306)	Vegalta Sendai	J.League	£92,695 (£1,783)	\$122,357 (\$2,353)
314 (319)	Hearts	SPL	£86,890 (£1,671)	\$114,694 (\$2,206)
315 (-)	Avispa Fukuoka	J.League	£81,010 (£1,558)	\$106,934 (\$2,056)
316 (327)	Edmonton Eskimos	CFL	£73,875 (£1,421)	\$97,653 (\$1,878)
317 (323)	Ventforet Kofu	J.League	£71,060 (£1,367)	\$93,799 (\$1,804)
318 (318)	Ottawa Redblacks	CFL	£66,573 (£1,280)	\$88,001 (\$1,692)
319 (316)	Calgary Stampeders	CFL	£66,149 (£1,272)	\$87,440 (\$1,682)
320 (324)	Saskatchewan Roughriders	CFL	£65,119 (£1,252)	\$86,080 (\$1,655)
321 (317)	Hamilton Tiger-Cats	CFL	£64,767 (£1,246)	\$85,614 (\$1,646)
322 (321)	Winnipeg Blue Bombers	CFL	£64,462 (£1,240)	\$85,210 (\$1,639)
323 (320)	BC Lions	CFL	£62,581 (£1,203)	\$82,725 (\$1,591)
324 (329)	Toronto Argonauts	CFL	£61,890 (£1,190)	\$81,811 (\$1,573)
325 (-)	Dundee	SPL	£61,837 (£1,189)	\$81,624 (\$1,570)
326 (325)	Montreal Alouettes	CFL	£61,343 (£1,180)	\$81,088 (\$1,559)
327 (330)	Inverness	SPL	£53,345 (£1,026)	\$70,416 (\$1,354)
328 (315)	Motherwell	SPL	£49,335 (£949)	\$65,122 (\$1,252)
329 (312)	Kilmarnock	SPL	£48,950 (£941)	\$64,614 (\$1,243)
330 (333)	Ross County	SPL	£47,515 (£914)	\$62,720 (\$1,206)
331 (314)	St Johnstone	SPL	£47,206 (£908)	\$62,311 (\$1,198)
332 (332)	Partick Thistle	SPL	£42,671 (£821)	\$56,326 (\$1,083)
333 (299)	Hamilton	SPL	£42,606 (£819)	\$56,239 (\$1,082)

NBA ANALYSIS

NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION



TOTAL SALARIES:
\$2,869,204,745

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:
\$6,390,211

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:
No1 LEAGUE

MEDIAN SALARY:
\$3,750,000

RATIO BETWEEN HIGHEST PAID TEAM AND LOWEST PAID: 2.25 TO 1
(FIVE OF 17 LEAGUES HAVE A 'FAIRER' SPREAD, WITH A LOWER GAP; 11 OF 17 ARE LESS FAIR)

THE LOWDOWN

NBA salaries have soared year-on-year because the league's new 9-year \$24 billion TV deals have come into effect from 2016-17. The deals, with Turner and ESPN, are worth a little more \$2.6 billion a year, or an increase of 180 per cent on the previous agreements. The bottom line is NBA average salaries, already the highest for any sports league at \$4.6m per year, have ballooned in a season to almost \$6.4m per year. Or in other words, the NBA's players collectively, already the richest, have had an annual pay rise worth the thick end of \$2 million each.

THE JAW DROP

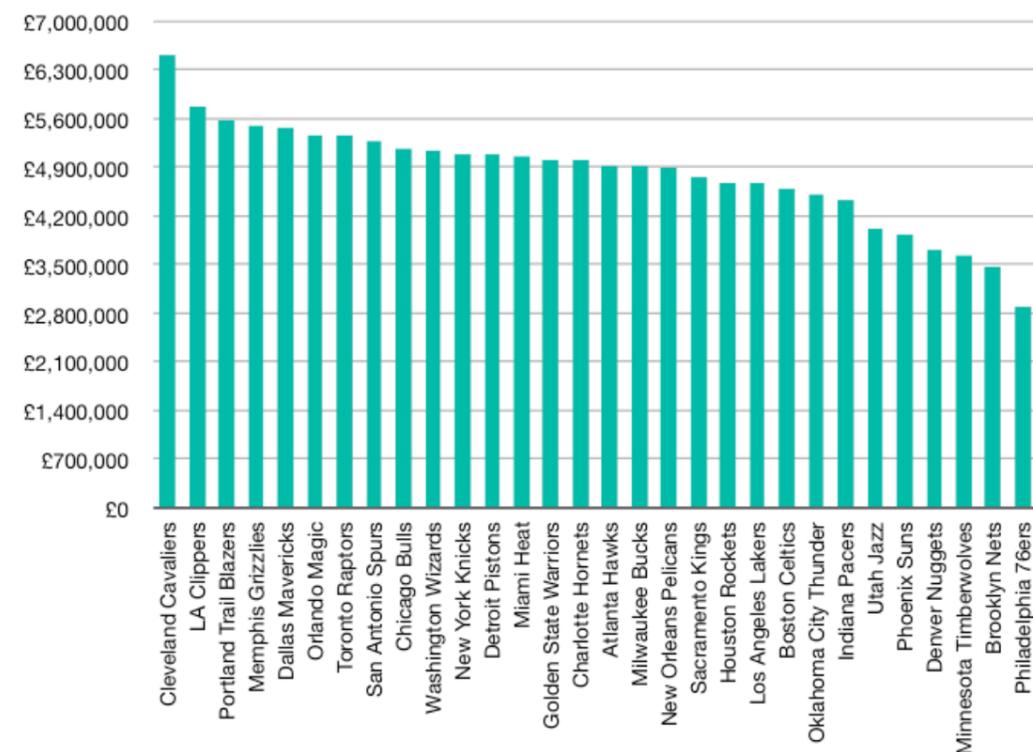
Of the 449 players, almost one in four, or 109 (24%), are earning \$10 million or more for the 2016-17 season. Of those, 58 individuals are earning \$15m+ and 29 are earning \$20m+. For some added context, the total salaries of every player combined in the 2016 women's NBA - the WNBA - was \$11.1m. There are 95 players in the 2016-17 NBA who alone are earning more than the WNBA. (A related research project by Sportingintelligence is ongoing so confirmation is pending, but we believe the WNBA is the highest paying women's sports league in the world by average salary, which at \$75,100 per player for 2016, is one 85th the average of the NBA).

THE MONEY TALK

If the money talks, then the Cleveland Cavaliers started the season as leading contenders for the championship, followed by the LA Clippers, Portland Trail Blazers, Memphis Grizzlies, Dallas Mavericks, Orlando Magic, Toronto Raptors and San Antonio Spurs, all averaging \$7m+ per player wage bills. Conversely if the money talks, the Philadelphia 76ers will fare badly, and most of the lowest paid 10 teams will miss the post season: those 10 being the 76ers, Nets, Timberwolves, Nuggets, Suns, Jazz, Pacers, Thunder, Celtics and Lakers.

AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, NBA, 2016-17 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, £	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, \$
1	Cleveland Cavaliers	£6,545,934	\$8,652,920
2	LA Clippers	£5,789,976	\$7,653,636
3	Portland Trail Blazers	£5,590,003	\$7,389,296
4	Memphis Grizzlies	£5,513,376	\$7,288,005
5	Dallas Mavericks	£5,500,474	\$7,270,951
6	Orlando Magic	£5,385,535	\$7,119,015
7	Toronto Raptors	£5,372,233	\$7,101,431
8	San Antonio Spurs	£5,298,738	\$7,004,280
9	Chicago Bulls	£5,198,221	\$6,871,409
10	Washington Wizards	£5,158,154	\$6,818,445
11	New York Knicks	£5,115,284	\$6,761,776
12	Detroit Pistons	£5,097,100	\$6,737,739
13	Miami Heat	£5,082,595	\$6,718,566
14	Golden State Warriors	£5,036,233	\$6,657,281
15	Charlotte Hornets	£5,024,914	\$6,642,318
16	Atlanta Hawks	£4,954,348	\$6,549,039
17	Milwaukee Bucks	£4,943,505	\$6,534,705
18	New Orleans Pelicans	£4,911,201	\$6,492,004
19	Sacramento Kings	£4,765,968	\$6,300,024
20	Houston Rockets	£4,699,093	\$6,211,624
21	Los Angeles Lakers	£4,690,283	\$6,199,978
22	Boston Celtics	£4,613,890	\$6,098,995
23	Oklahoma City Thunder	£4,540,518	\$6,002,007
24	Indiana Pacers	£4,448,154	\$5,879,913
25	Utah Jazz	£4,045,923	\$5,348,213
26	Phoenix Suns	£3,962,678	\$5,238,173
27	Denver Nuggets	£3,731,530	\$4,932,624
28	Minnesota Timberwolves	£3,644,392	\$4,817,438
29	Brooklyn Nets	£3,480,900	\$4,601,323
30	Philadelphia 76ers	£2,908,957	\$3,845,284



MLB ANALYSIS

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL



TOTAL SALARIES:

\$3,781,920,218

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:

\$4,387,378

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:

No2 LEAGUE

MEDIAN SALARY:

\$1,500,000

RATIO BETWEEN HIGHEST PAID TEAM AND LOWEST PAID: 3.8 TO 1

(SEVEN OF 17 LEAGUES HAVE A 'FAIRER' SPREAD, WITH A LOWER GAP; NINE OF 17 ARE LESS FAIR)

THE LOWDOWN

The average salary across the league was up by \$221,000 per player, year-on-year from 2015, or by 5.3%. The New York Yankees began the season having won by far the most World Series titles (27) and having regained their role as the biggest payers in MLB, overtaking the LA Dodgers on a per capita basis. One of the more remarkable aspects of the Yanks' 2016 payroll by season's end was the unconditional release after 12 years of Alex Rodriguez, paid \$7,103,825 for the final 65 days of the season despite not playing them, and owed another \$20m for a 2017 he won't play. Among the less favoured teams at the outset were the two who had waited longest since their last wins (of those who had ever won): the Chicago Cubs, last winners in 1908, and Cleveland Indians, last winners in 1948. What would be their fate?

THE JAW DROP

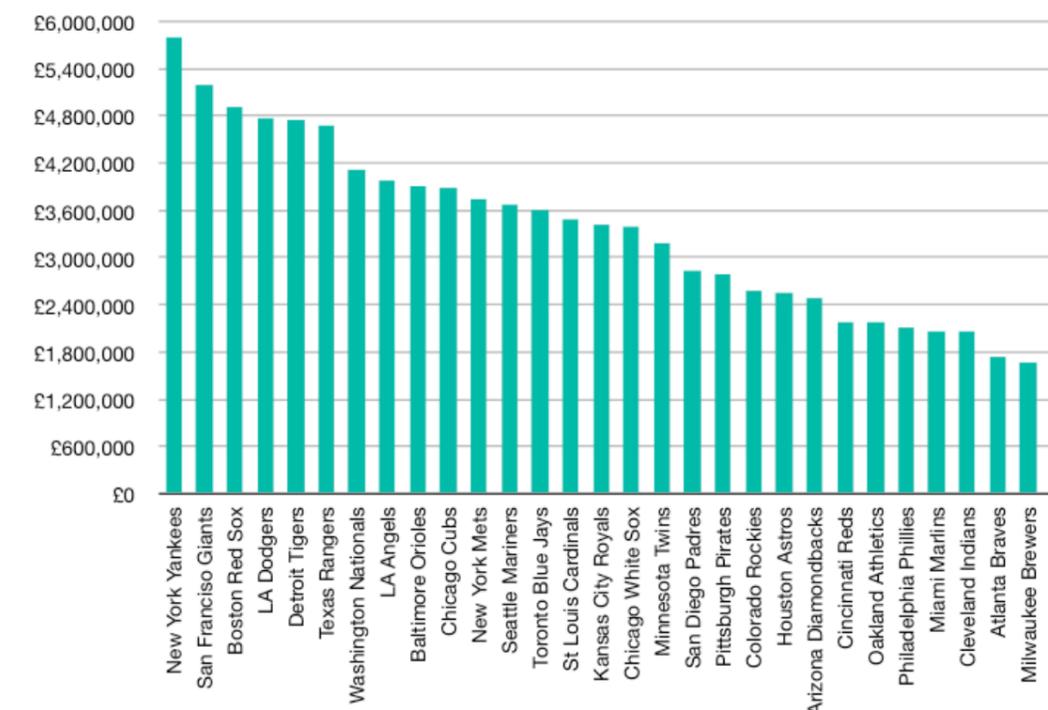
MLB has more individual players earning \$10m+ each than any sports league in the world. The figure for 2016 was 125, which was more than NBA in aggregate if not as a percentage of the workforce (14.5% of MLB versus 24% in the NBA). The top 10% of players in the MLB in 2016 earned 43.4% of all the money, a bigger slice for the top one-tenth than in any other US sport. This is indicative of a 'star heavy' league, and borne out by a median salary of 'only' \$1.5m in MLB, in turn just 34% of the average of \$4.4m.

THE MONEY TALK

If salaries alone dictated success then you would have expected the six teams with average pay of \$6m+ to at least reach the post-season, and four of the six did (Dodgers, Giants, Red Sox, Rangers) while the Yankees and Tigers didn't. And you'd expect most of the teams with the lowest averages to fare less well. Of the eight teams averaging below \$3m, seven had losing records (Rays, Braves, Brewers, Reds, Marlins, Phillies, Athletics) and just one didn't. The exceptions who proved the rule were the Indians.

AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, MLB, 2016 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, £	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, \$
1	New York Yankees	£5,817,167	\$7,689,579
2	San Francisco Giants	£5,212,399	\$6,890,151
3	Boston Red Sox	£4,918,444	\$6,501,578
4	LA Dodgers	£4,782,990	\$6,322,525
5	Detroit Tigers	£4,755,615	\$6,286,338
6	Texas Rangers	£4,691,276	\$6,201,291
7	Washington Nationals	£4,121,547	\$5,448,179
8	LA Angels	£3,993,486	\$5,278,897
9	Baltimore Orioles	£3,932,011	\$5,197,635
10	Chicago Cubs	£3,897,870	\$5,152,506
11	New York Mets	£3,751,375	\$4,958,857
12	Seattle Mariners	£3,695,981	\$4,885,632
13	Toronto Blue Jays	£3,618,201	\$4,782,817
14	St Louis Cardinals	£3,490,967	\$4,614,629
15	Kansas City Royals	£3,430,000	\$4,534,039
16	Chicago White Sox	£3,419,340	\$4,519,947
17	Minnesota Twins	£3,187,383	\$4,213,328
18	San Diego Padres	£2,841,773	\$3,756,475
19	Pittsburgh Pirates	£2,803,882	\$3,706,387
20	Colorado Rockies	£2,582,303	\$3,413,487
21	Houston Astros	£2,563,824	\$3,389,061
22	Arizona Diamondbacks	£2,501,047	\$3,306,076
23	Cincinnati Reds	£2,195,194	\$2,901,776
24	Oakland Athletics	£2,188,964	\$2,893,541
25	Philadelphia Phillies	£2,117,696	\$2,799,333
26	Miami Marlins	£2,088,864	\$2,761,222
27	Cleveland Indians	£2,082,109	\$2,752,293
28	Atlanta Braves	£1,740,096	\$2,300,193
29	Milwaukee Brewers	£1,690,722	\$2,234,927
30	Tampa Bay Rays	£1,542,647	\$2,039,190



IPL ANALYSIS

INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE



TOTAL SALARIES:
\$66,843,999

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:
No3 LEAGUE

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:
(PRO RATA, FROM WEEKLY AVERAGE)
\$3,879,339

MEDIAN SALARY:
(PRO RATA, FROM WEEKLY AVERAGE)
\$2,718,857

RATIO BETWEEN HIGHEST PAID TEAM AND LOWEST PAID: 1.5 TO 1
(TWO OF 17 LEAGUES HAVE A 'FAIRER' SPREAD, WITH A LOWER GAP; 14 OF 17 ARE LESS FAIR)

THE LOWDOWN

The 9th season of the IPL saw average first-team pay drop below \$4m per player (pro rata, annually, from a weekly wage base) for the first time since 2012. In 2015 it was \$4.3m, in 2014 it was \$4.2m, in 2013 it was \$4.2m and in 2012 it was \$3.6m. Whether this was due to a tightening of belts, India's economic climate or general turbulence around the competition and its future is not certain. Eight teams took part in 2016 but two of them, Rising Pune Supergiants and Gujarat Lions, were replacements for Chennai Super Kings and Rajasthan Royals - both suspended from October 2015 until 2017 for spot-fixing and betting-related corruption. PepsiCo subsequently ended a title sponsorship deal two years early, replaced by Chinese smartphone firm, Vivo.

THE JAW DROP

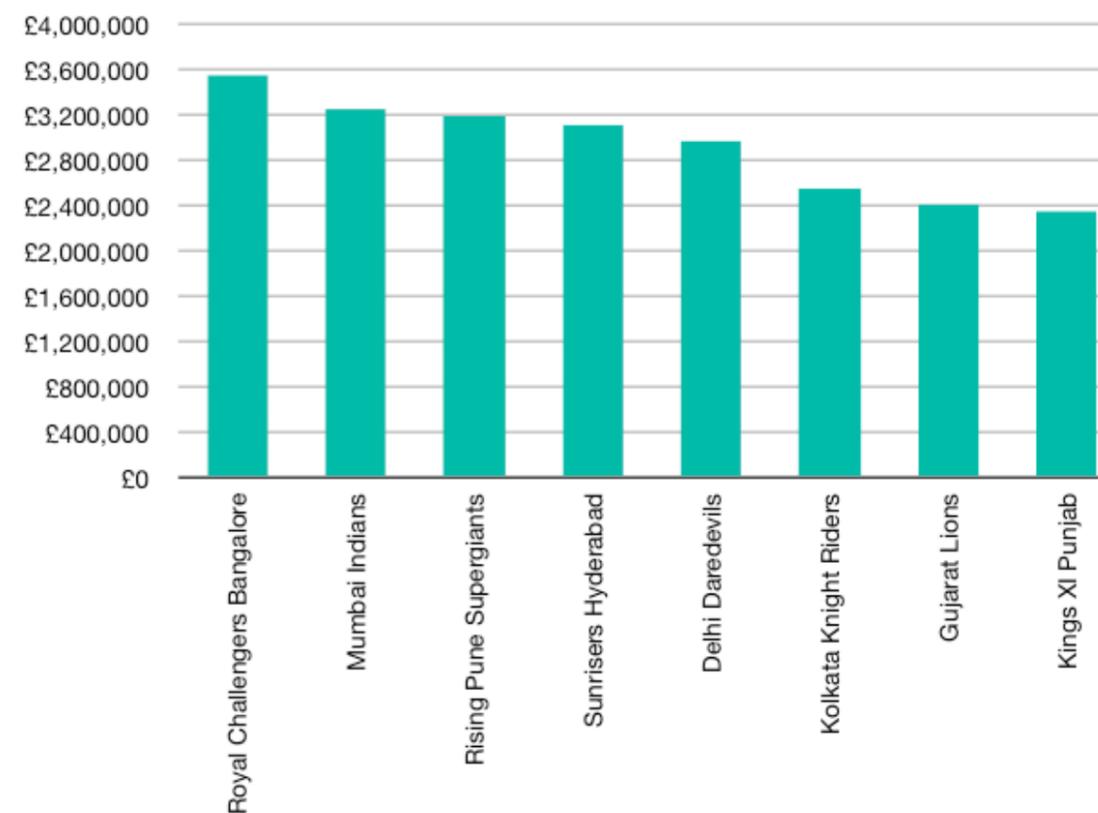
The world's best paid cricketer, MS Dhoni, earns more than \$30m a year, of which 'only' around \$6m came in 2016 from his central contract to play for India and from his IPL contract with Rising Pune Supergiants (combined, including bonuses). The rest is endorsements. His Supergiants pay of \$2m for seven weeks equates to \$286,000 a week or almost \$15m a year, pro rata. Virat Kohli's pro rata annual earnings at Bangalore were higher still. The decision to include IPL teams in this survey was always debatable but we felt justified because, uniquely, in the era of T20 'guns for hire', top stars can and do earn six-figure weekly sums from multiple employers each year. Jamaica's Chris Gayle, for example, was paid to play in 2016 for his country as well as for teams in Pakistan (Lahore), Bangladesh (Chittagong), Australia (Melbourne), Jamaica (Tallawahs) and India (Bangalore). His gigs were worth up to \$200,000 per week and he was only the IPL's ninth best paid player, in a downturn.

THE MONEY TALK

In a small league with half the eight teams reaching the play-off phase, the winners from Hyderabad and runners-up from Bangalore were both among the top four teams in average salaries (the four averaging \$4m a year, pro rata) while the other two were from the poorer four (Kolkata and Gujarat). The small ratio between richest and poorest (1.5 to 1) is indicative of competitive balance, and six different winners in nine seasons supports that.

AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, IPL, 2016 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, £	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, \$
1	Royal Challengers Bangalore	£3,555,757	\$4,700,274
2	Mumbai Indians	£3,263,649	\$4,314,143
3	Rising Pune Supergiants	£3,199,608	\$4,229,488
4	Sunrisers Hyderabad	£3,119,175	\$4,123,166
5	Delhi Daredevils	£2,988,283	\$3,950,143
6	Kolkata Knight Riders	£2,561,770	\$3,386,345
7	Gujarat Lions	£2,425,317	\$3,205,970
8	Kings XI Punjab	£2,364,202	\$3,125,184



EPL ANALYSIS

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE FOOTBALL



TOTAL SALARIES:
\$1,696,161,456

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:
\$3,218,523

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:
No4 LEAGUE

MEDIAN SALARY:
\$2,402,400

RATIO BETWEEN HIGHEST PAID TEAM AND LOWEST PAID: 6.1 TO 1

(TEN OF 17 LEAGUES HAVE A 'FAIRER' SPREAD, WITH A LOWER GAP; SIX OF 17 ARE LESS FAIR, ALL FOOTBALL LEAGUES)

THE LOWDOWN

Leicester City's 'miracle' win in 2015-16 was a 5,000-1 chance with bookmakers, the longest shot single event ever confirmed by odds-setters to have paid out in any genre, let alone just in football or sport. This was likely a result of a 'perfect storm' of good planning by Leicester, multiple rivals faltering, and some luck. But an increasingly equal wealth distribution in the league is one factor - one - in aiding competition. With bumper new TV deals coming on stream, the 20 clubs for 2016-17 spent a record £1.18 billion on transfers fees in summer 2016 ahead of a new campaign. And most if not all Premier League clubs can now afford to offer salaries that outdo virtually ever non-English club in the world.

THE JAW DROP

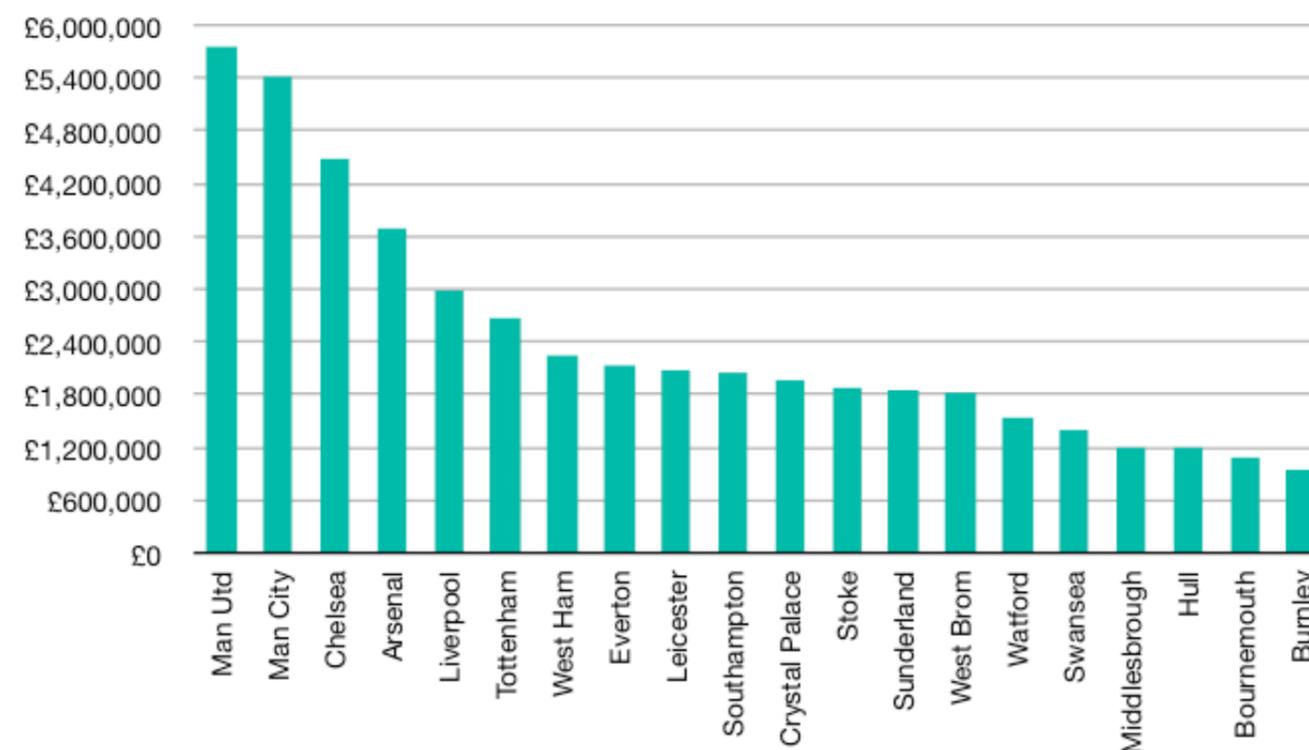
Average first-team wages in the Premier League in 2016-17, at \$3.2m per player, or £2.4m and more when bonuses are added, will be double those in the next highest paying league in world football, Spain's La Liga. Of course, some clubs will pay more than others, not least Manchester United, rising to become the best paid football team in the world by average salary for the first time. But two other metrics are fascinating: the Premier League's top 10% of players earn 'only' 29% of all the wages, a much lower and fairer figure than other football leagues. And the PL's median salary is almost three-quarters of the average - a high and 'fair' proportion.

THE MONEY TALK

The Premier League began 2016-17 having had four different winners in four seasons, more than any league in Europe. Six teams started the season with average first-team salaries above \$3.5m (£2.7m), and in order they are Manchester United, Manchester City, Chelsea, Arsenal, Liverpool and Tottenham. If the money talks, and money alone, then a six-horse race involving those clubs is absolutely credible. But as Leicester showed, anything can happen, almost.

AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, EPL, 2016-17 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, £	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, \$
1	Man Utd	£5,770,000	\$7,616,400
2	Man City	£5,423,077	\$7,158,462
3	Chelsea	£4,513,600	\$5,957,952
4	Arsenal	£3,707,407	\$4,893,778
5	Liverpool	£3,012,414	\$3,976,386
6	Tottenham	£2,679,500	\$3,536,940
7	West Ham	£2,263,704	\$2,988,089
8	Everton	£2,145,000	\$2,831,400
9	Leicester	£2,100,800	\$2,773,056
10	Southampton	£2,072,571	\$2,735,794
11	Crystal Palace	£1,968,571	\$2,598,514
12	Stoke	£1,899,857	\$2,507,811
13	Sunderland	£1,872,000	\$2,471,040
14	West Brom	£1,841,583	\$2,430,890
15	Watford	£1,553,552	\$2,050,689
16	Swansea	£1,412,320	\$1,864,262
17	Middlesbrough	£1,229,704	\$1,623,209
18	Hull	£1,228,000	\$1,620,960
19	Bournemouth	£1,109,333	\$1,464,320
20	Burnley	£954,417	\$1,259,830



NHL ANALYSIS

NATIONAL HOCKEY LEAGUE



TOTAL SALARIES:
\$2,061,835,309

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:
\$2,916,316

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:
No5 LEAGUE

MEDIAN SALARY:
\$2,075,000

RATIO BETWEEN HIGHEST PAID TEAM AND LOWEST PAID: 1.6 TO 1
(THREE OF 17 LEAGUES HAVE A 'FAIRER' SPREAD, WITH A LOWER GAP; 13 OF 17 ARE LESS FAIR)

THE LOWDOWN

The Pittsburgh Penguins started the 2016-17 as defending Stanley Cup champions and among a group of half a dozen teams all rated by the bookmakers as around 10-1 shots or thereabouts. The Penguins are among three teams to be multiple winners in the past eight seasons alone, also triumphing in 2009, along with the Chicago Blackhawks (2015, 2013 and 2010) and the LA Kings (2014 and 2012). A majority of the NHL's players are Canadian and the teams with the most Stanley Cup wins are both Canadian (Canadiens 24, Maple Leafs 13) but no Canadian team has won for 23 years and counting.

THE JAW DROP

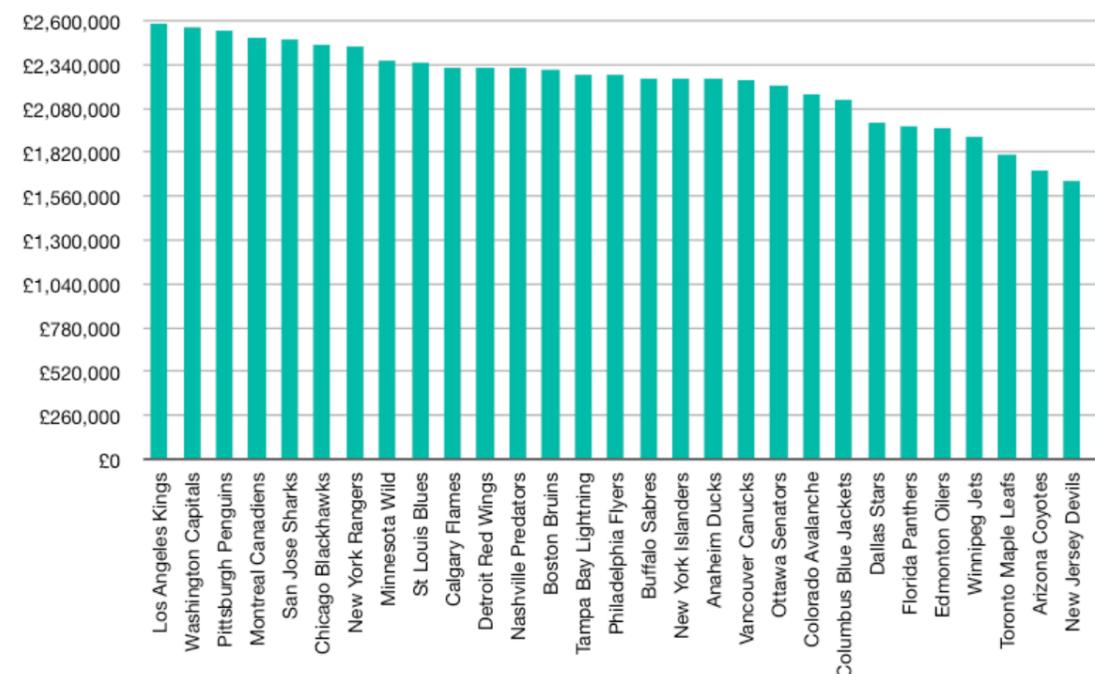
The average salary in the NHL is half a million dollars more, per player per year, than the average salary in the NFL, or \$2.9m per player in NHL against \$2.4m in the NFL. Given that the NFL provides the biggest national TV audience each year in North America by a country mile (110m in the USA alone watch Super Bowl), and as a consequence has by far the biggest TV contracts, that hockey superiority may surprise some. The NHL median salary at \$2m is more than twice the NFL median. The NHL has by far the 'fairest' wage distribution between teams of any major N American sports league, by differential from best paid to worst, by closeness of median salary to average, and by the small percentage earned by the top 10 per cent ('only' 27 per cent of all salaries).

THE MONEY TALK

On salaries alone - using our first-team average metric - you would expect the LA Kings, Washington Capitals, Pittsburgh Penguins and Montreal Canadiens to be up there as the leading contenders with the Sharks, Blackhawks and Rangers in the pack. And you would expect the Hurricanes, Devils, Coyotes and Maple Leafs to be among those struggling to make the post-season.

AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, NHL, 2016-17 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, £	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, \$
1	Los Angeles Kings	£2,588,710	\$3,421,957
2	Washington Capitals	£2,566,168	\$3,392,159
3	Pittsburgh Penguins	£2,551,224	\$3,372,404
4	Montreal Canadiens	£2,504,882	\$3,311,146
5	San Jose Sharks	£2,490,866	\$3,292,619
6	Chicago Blackhawks	£2,462,329	\$3,254,896
7	New York Rangers	£2,451,224	\$3,240,217
8	Minnesota Wild	£2,371,052	\$3,134,239
9	St Louis Blues	£2,355,394	\$3,113,542
10	Calgary Flames	£2,331,371	\$3,081,786
11	Detroit Red Wings	£2,328,129	\$3,077,500
12	Nashville Predators	£2,326,753	\$3,075,682
13	Boston Bruins	£2,313,163	\$3,057,717
14	Tampa Bay Lightning	£2,287,751	\$3,024,125
15	Philadelphia Flyers	£2,283,041	\$3,017,900
16	Buffalo Sabres	£2,262,922	\$2,991,304
17	New York Islanders	£2,260,044	\$2,987,500
18	Anaheim Ducks	£2,259,616	\$2,986,935
19	Vancouver Canucks	£2,251,081	\$2,975,652
20	Ottawa Senators	£2,224,274	\$2,940,217
21	Colorado Avalanche	£2,173,211	\$2,872,717
22	Columbus Blue Jackets	£2,136,290	\$2,823,913
23	Dallas Stars	£2,002,943	\$2,647,644
24	Florida Panthers	£1,978,058	\$2,614,750
25	Edmonton Oilers	£1,970,028	\$2,604,135
26	Winnipeg Jets	£1,920,001	\$2,538,005
27	Toronto Maple Leafs	£1,817,870	\$2,403,000
28	Arizona Coyotes	£1,718,709	\$2,271,922
29	New Jersey Devils	£1,653,866	\$2,186,207
30	Carolina Hurricanes	£1,647,042	\$2,177,188



NFL ANALYSIS

NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE



TOTAL SALARIES:
\$4,115,561,020

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:
No6 LEAGUE

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:
\$2,439,574

MEDIAN SALARY:
\$973,274

RATIO BETWEEN HIGHEST PAID TEAM AND LOWEST PAID: 1.8 TO 1
(FOUR OF 17 LEAGUES HAVE A 'FAIRER' SPREAD, WITH A LOWER GAP; 12 OF 17 ARE LESS FAIR)

THE LOWDOWN

A 256-game regular season that would soon become mired with suggestions that the TV public are turning their backs on it, kicked off with defending Super Bowl champions, the Denver Broncos, in a rematch of Super Bowl 50 against the Carolina Panthers. And the Broncos came from 10 points down to sneak it 21-20. As the NFL continues to look abroad to expand the audience, four games were scheduled overseas, three in London and one in Mexico. One big early-season narrative was the early suspension of New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady after Deflategate, and whether his return would involve redemption and glory.

THE JAW DROP

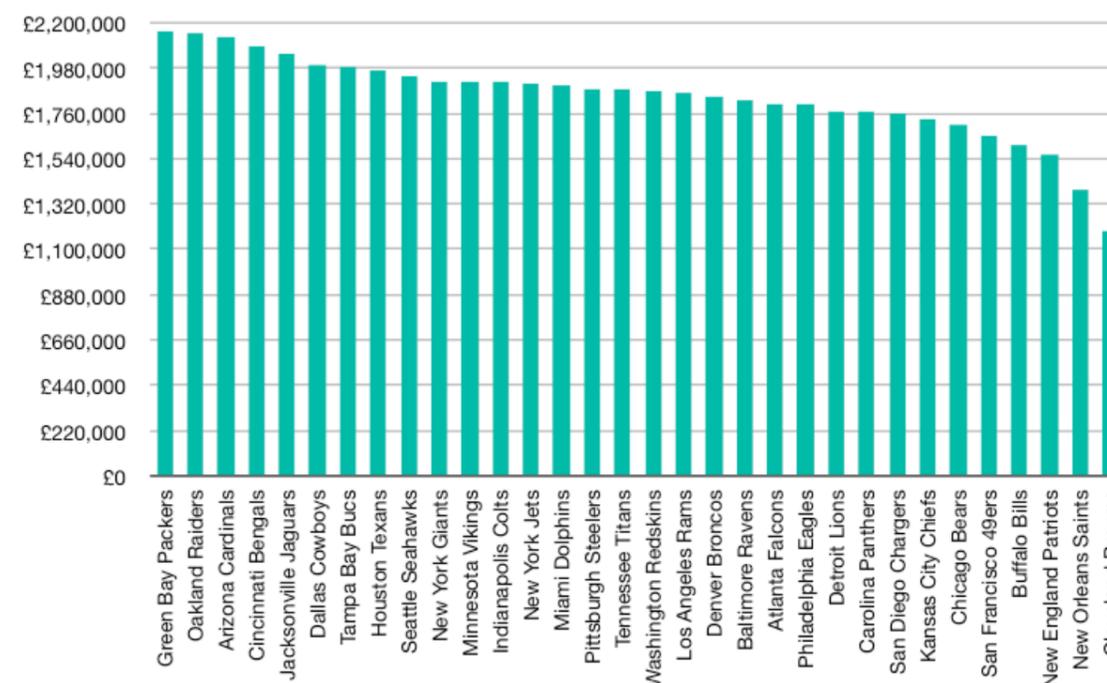
The NFL's 32 teams will pay more in salaries to their players this season than the 78 clubs in Europe's four richest football leagues ... combined. (The four are the Premier League, La Liga, Serie A and the Bundesliga). The numbers: \$4.12bn in the NFL versus \$4bn in the 'Big Four' leagues. Yes, the NFL teams have big rosters, but the NFL wages number is for 1,687 players against 2,083 in the 'Big Four'. The point? The NFL pays 'only' the sixth largest salaries by average first-team pay in the 17 leagues in this report, but it's a huge and loaded entity nonetheless. Still, 'only' 68 NFL players, or 4 per cent, earn \$10m+ each. The respective percentages in the NBA and MLB are 24 per cent and 15 per cent.

THE MONEY TALK

An early edition of this report described the 'chaos of relative fairness' in the NFL, created by low pay disparity across teams, and the structure of the season and post-season scheduling. But on our first-team salary metric alone you'd expect a post-season featuring multiple teams from the Packers, Raiders, Cardinals, Bengals, Jaguars, Cowboys, Bucs, Texans, Seahawks and Giants. And certainly fewer from among the cohort of the Browns, Saints, Patriots, Bills, 49ers, Bears, Chiefs, Chargers, Panthers and Lions.

AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, NFL, 2016-17 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, £	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, \$
1	Green Bay Packers	£2,164,013	\$2,860,559
2	Oakland Raiders	£2,156,596	\$2,850,755
3	Arizona Cardinals	£2,135,685	\$2,823,112
4	Cincinnati Bengals	£2,094,349	\$2,768,472
5	Jacksonville Jaguars	£2,059,118	\$2,721,901
6	Dallas Cowboys	£2,000,160	\$2,643,965
7	Tampa Bay Bucs	£1,995,541	\$2,637,860
8	Houston Texans	£1,973,197	\$2,608,324
9	Seattle Seahawks	£1,948,097	\$2,575,145
10	New York Giants	£1,923,730	\$2,542,935
11	Minnesota Vikings	£1,923,447	\$2,542,560
12	Indianapolis Colts	£1,921,367	\$2,539,811
13	New York Jets	£1,911,096	\$2,526,234
14	Miami Dolphins	£1,901,163	\$2,513,104
15	Pittsburgh Steelers	£1,884,677	\$2,491,312
16	Tennessee Titans	£1,879,894	\$2,484,989
17	Washington Redskins	£1,873,331	\$2,476,313
18	Los Angeles Rams	£1,862,675	\$2,462,227
19	Denver Broncos	£1,847,123	\$2,441,670
20	Baltimore Ravens	£1,825,924	\$2,413,648
21	Atlanta Falcons	£1,810,649	\$2,393,455
22	Philadelphia Eagles	£1,807,190	\$2,388,883
23	Detroit Lions	£1,772,519	\$2,343,053
24	Carolina Panthers	£1,772,386	\$2,342,877
25	San Diego Chargers	£1,766,279	\$2,334,804
26	Kansas City Chiefs	£1,734,860	\$2,293,271
27	Chicago Bears	£1,710,233	\$2,260,718
28	San Francisco 49ers	£1,655,807	\$2,188,774
29	Buffalo Bills	£1,614,862	\$2,134,649
30	New England Patriots	£1,567,500	\$2,072,042
31	New Orleans Saints	£1,395,460	\$1,844,627
32	Cleveland Browns	£1,193,317	\$1,577,418



LA LIGA ANALYSIS

SPANISH TOP-DIVISION FOOTBALL



TOTAL SALARIES:
\$806,483,515

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:
\$1,635,869

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:
No7 LEAGUE

MEDIAN SALARY:
\$686,400

RATIO BETWEEN HIGHEST PAID TEAM AND LOWEST PAID: 20.7 TO 1
(15 OF 17 LEAGUES HAVE A 'FAIRER' SPREAD, WITH A LOWER GAP; ONLY LIGUE 1 OF FRANCE IS LESS 'FAIR')

THE LOWDOWN

Barcelona started the season seeking a hat-trick of La Liga titles and a seventh title in nine years, with the only two interlopers in the previous eight campaigns being Atletico Madrid in 2014 and Real Madrid in 2012. Barca's trinity of biggest stars - Lionel Messi, Neymar and Luis Suarez - are among the most well known and most 'followed' people in the world, in any genre, as is Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo, who started 2016-17 as a Euro 2016 medal winner with Portugal. La Liga is using a collective sharing model for TV revenues for the first time this season, hoping to inject a greater element of equality.

THE JAW DROP

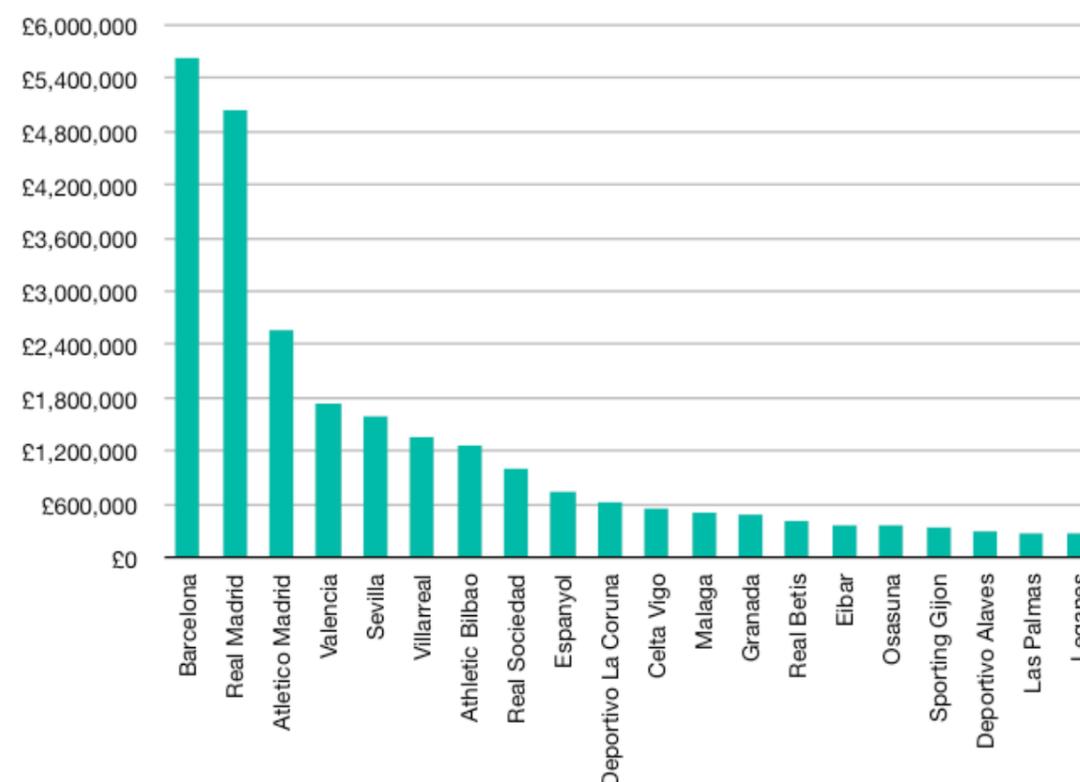
The basic annual first-team wage bills of either Barcelona or Real Madrid by themselves in 2016-17, at around £164m and £160m respectively, would be comfortably enough to pay the salaries of every player at the 10 lowest paid clubs in La Liga, and still have £25m+ spare change. (The basic salaries of the 256 first-team players at Celta Vigo, Malaga, Granada, Real Betis, Eibar, Osasuna, Sporting Gijon, Deportivo Alaves, Las Palmas and Leganes, combined, are around £135m). It will be no surprise that La Liga is a 'star heavy' league where the top 10 per cent of the players earn a disproportionately huge chunk of all salaries, or more than 49 per cent.

THE MONEY TALK

On wage expenditure you would expect Barcelona, Real Madrid and Atletico Madrid to fill the podium places with Valencia, Sevilla, Villarreal, Athletic Bilbao and Real Sociedad to be scrapping it out for the fourth Champions League berth and the two other places in Europe. You would also expect several relegation candidates from Leganes, Las Palmas, Alaves, Gijon and Osasuna.

AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, LA LIGA, 2016-17 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, £	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, \$
1	Barcelona	£5,649,091	\$7,456,800
2	Real Madrid	£5,051,875	\$6,668,475
3	Atletico Madrid	£2,583,391	\$3,410,077
4	Valencia	£1,757,167	\$2,319,460
5	Sevilla	£1,615,250	\$2,132,130
6	Villarreal	£1,360,840	\$1,796,309
7	Athletic Bilbao	£1,285,336	\$1,696,644
8	Real Sociedad	£1,015,362	\$1,340,278
9	Espanyol	£761,327	\$1,004,952
10	Deportivo La Coruna	£646,609	\$853,523
11	Celta Vigo	£578,448	\$763,551
12	Malaga	£516,048	\$681,183
13	Granada	£499,200	\$658,944
14	Real Betis	£420,130	\$554,572
15	Eibar	£389,322	\$513,905
16	Osasuna	£383,460	\$506,167
17	Sporting Gijon	£352,192	\$464,893
18	Deportivo Alaves	£298,963	\$394,631
19	Las Palmas	£273,481	\$360,996
20	Leganes	£272,350	\$359,502



SERIE A ANALYSIS

ITALIAN TOP-DIVISION FOOTBALL



TOTAL SALARIES:
\$791,014,314

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:
\$1,459,436

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:
No8 LEAGUE

MEDIAN SALARY:
\$902,000

RATIO BETWEEN HIGHEST PAID TEAM AND LOWEST PAID: 12.8 TO 1
(11 OF 17 LEAGUES HAVE A 'FAIRER' SPREAD, WITH A LOWER GAP; FIVE OF 17 ARE LESS FAIR)

THE LOWDOWN

Juventus won the Italian title at a canter in 2016 to seal a record-extending 32nd Serie A crown in their history. They also won in 2015. And 2014, 2013, 2012. Their current streak of five in a row equals the all-time Italian record jointly held by Internazionale between 2006 and 2010 (how distant that now seems) and by Torino in the seasons either side of WW2. So if Juventus were to deliver on their pre-season odds-on favouritism for the 2016-17 title, then six consecutive titles would be a new high for them, and arguably a new low for Calcio competitive balance.

THE JAW DROP

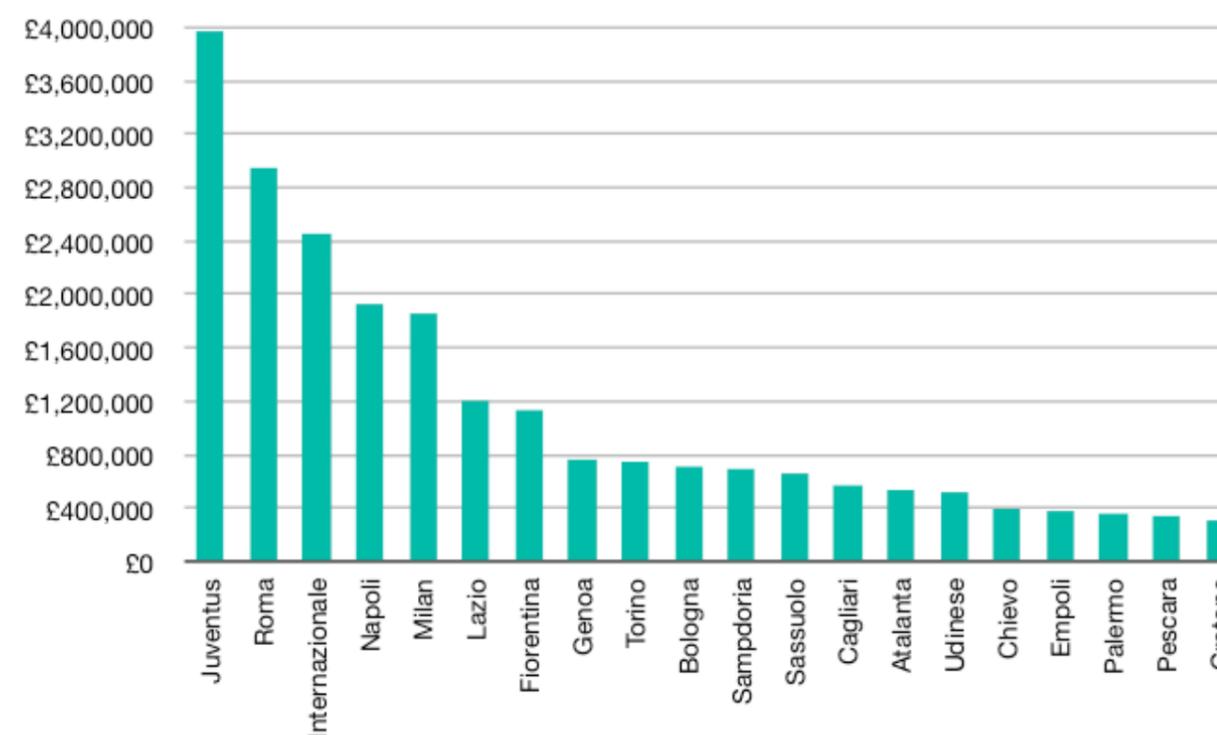
Despite there being a huge gap between average salaries at the best paid club Juventus and the lowest paid club Crotone, by a factor of almost 13 times, Serie A is the most competitively balanced major league in Europe aside from the Premier League, financially speaking. Basic first-team salaries average £3.98m this season while at Crotone they are £310,000, so the former is 12.8 times as big as the latter. In the Bundesliga the equivalent ratio is 13.9 to 1, in La Liga it is 20.7 to 1 and in Ligue 1 it is 21.5 to 1. In the Premier League it is 6 to 1.

THE MONEY TALK

If the money talks then Juventus make history with a sixth straight title with Roma in second place. Internazionale finish third with Napoli, Milan and Lazio vying for the places in European football in 2017-18 available for finishing fourth and fifth. At the other end, four clubs with average first-team pay of below £400,000 according to the data collected in the survey period scrap to stay out of the relegation zone, that quartet being Crotone, Pescara, Palermo and Empoli.

AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, SERIE A, 2016-17 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, £	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, \$
1	Juventus	£3,977,569	\$5,250,392
2	Roma	£2,956,159	\$3,902,130
3	Internazionale	£2,474,609	\$3,266,484
4	Napoli	£1,938,642	\$2,559,007
5	Milan	£1,867,452	\$2,465,037
6	Lazio	£1,214,056	\$1,602,553
7	Fiorentina	£1,140,347	\$1,505,258
8	Genoa	£777,292	\$1,026,025
9	Torino	£753,691	\$994,873
10	Bologna	£723,391	\$954,876
11	Sampdoria	£700,676	\$924,892
12	Sassuolo	£678,272	\$895,319
13	Cagliari	£575,139	\$759,183
14	Atalanta	£544,310	\$718,490
15	Udinese	£529,356	\$698,749
16	Chievo	£413,154	\$545,363
17	Empoli	£393,180	\$518,997
18	Palermo	£371,278	\$490,087
19	Pescara	£357,436	\$471,815
20	Crotone	£310,092	\$409,321



BUNDESLIGA ANALYSIS

GERMAN TOP-DIVISION FOOTBALL



TOTAL SALARIES:
\$715,129,562

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:
\$1,372,610

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:
No9 LEAGUE

MEDIAN SALARY:
\$757,680

RATIO BETWEEN HIGHEST PAID TEAM AND LOWEST PAID: 13.9 TO 1
(12 OF 17 LEAGUES HAVE A 'FAIRER' SPREAD, WITH A LOWER GAP; FOUR OF 17 ARE LESS FAIR)

THE LOWDOWN

Bayern Munich started the season expecting to win a fifth Bundesliga title in a row and a 13th in 20 seasons, and were hot odds-on favourites to do so under new manager Carlo Ancelotti. The difference in resources between Bayern and every other club is now so marked that the Bavarian giants pay twice as much on average than their closest rivals of recent years, Borussia Dortmund. One intriguing subplot to the season before it started was how well the upstarts of RB Leipzig would fare in their inaugural season in Germany's top division, just seven years after being founded by energy drinks firm Red Bull and starting their journey upwards from the fifth tier of the nation's football pyramid.

THE JAW DROP

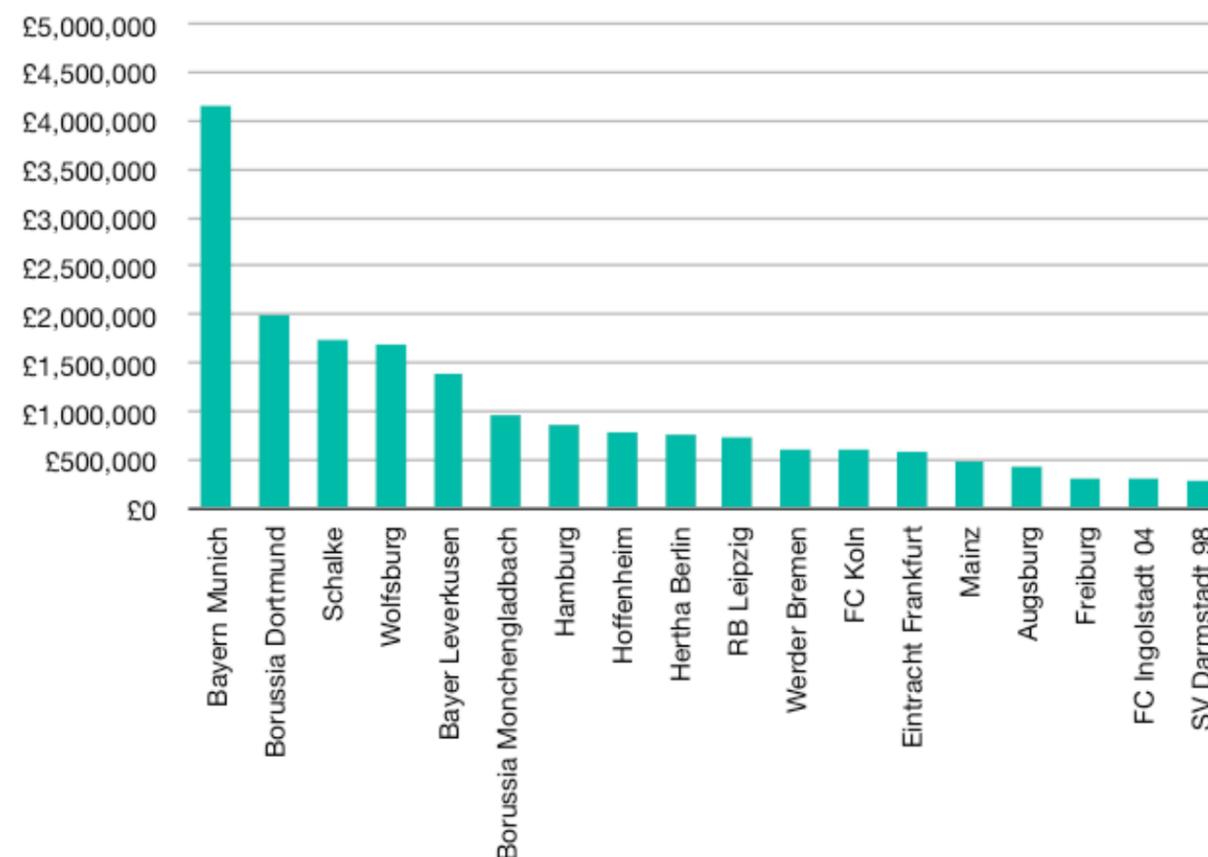
The combined first-team salaries of the four richest clubs (£272m) outstrip the total salaries paid by the other 14 clubs in the division combined (around £270m). Bayern Munich's average first-team pay is a long way clear of their nearest rivals, but even while being so far behind, the next three clubs - Dortmund, Schalke and Wolfsburg - are well clear of the rest of the pack. But there is then a sizeable 'middle class' of nine clubs paying between £500,000 and £1m a year on average to their first-team players. The difference between the the fifth best payers Leverkusen and sixth-placed Monchengladbach (about £450,000) is the same as between the latter in sixth and Mainz in 14th. Arrivistes Leipzig are in the middle of that bunch.

THE MONEY TALK

Money would say Bayern for the title, again, followed by Dortmund, Schalke, Wolfsburg and Leverkusen, with the four lowest paid - Darmstadt, Ingolstadt, Freiburg and Augsburg - in greatest peril. But that, as everywhere else, is based on salaries alone, not the individual brilliance or routine fallibility of individual clubs.

AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, BUNDESLIGA, 2016-17 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, £	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, \$
1	Bayern Munich	£4,165,600	\$5,498,592
2	Borussia Dortmund	£2,008,603	\$2,651,357
3	Schalke	£1,768,125	\$2,333,925
4	Wolfsburg	£1,707,584	\$2,254,011
5	Bayer Leverkusen	£1,410,513	\$1,861,877
6	Borussia Monchengladbach	£975,093	\$1,287,123
7	Hamburg	£889,700	\$1,174,404
8	Hoffenheim	£813,411	\$1,073,702
9	Hertha Berlin	£787,341	\$1,039,290
10	RB Leipzig	£758,542	\$1,001,275
11	Werder Bremen	£617,894	\$815,620
12	FC Koln	£616,625	\$813,945
13	Eintracht Frankfurt	£601,607	\$794,121
14	Mainz	£504,573	\$666,037
15	Augsburg	£453,050	\$598,026
16	Freiburg	£332,113	\$438,390
17	FC Ingolstadt 04	£330,208	\$435,874
18	SV Darmstadt 98	£299,300	\$395,076



LIGUE 1 ANALYSIS

FRENCH TOP-DIVISION FOOTBALL



TOTAL SALARIES:
\$525,054,288

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:
\$961,638

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:
No10 LEAGUE

MEDIAN SALARY:
\$480,480

RATIO BETWEEN HIGHEST PAID TEAM AND LOWEST PAID: 21.5 TO 1
(ALL OF THE OTHER 17 LEAGUES HAVE A 'FAIRER' SPREAD, WITH A LOWER GAP; LA LIGA IS THE LEAST 'FAIR')

THE LOWDOWN

Paris Saint-Germain began the season hoping to win a fifth consecutive Ligue 1 title, but this time with a new manager (Unai Emery in place of Laurent Blanc) and without some big-name departed players, notably Zlatan Ibrahimovic and David Luiz. Both moved to England, the former on a free transfer to Manchester United, the latter back to Chelsea for tens of millions, but still less than PSG paid Chelsea. The main pre-season questions were whether PSG's ongoing massive financial advantage over all their domestic rivals would allow them to continue their on-pitch dominance, and if not, which of their next-wealthiest rivals (Monaco, Lyon, Marseille) might capitalise. An intriguing sideline: how might Nice fare without the departed manager Claude Puel (gone to Southampton), and what might replacement Lucien Favre elicit from the mercurial Mario Balotelli?

THE JAW DROP

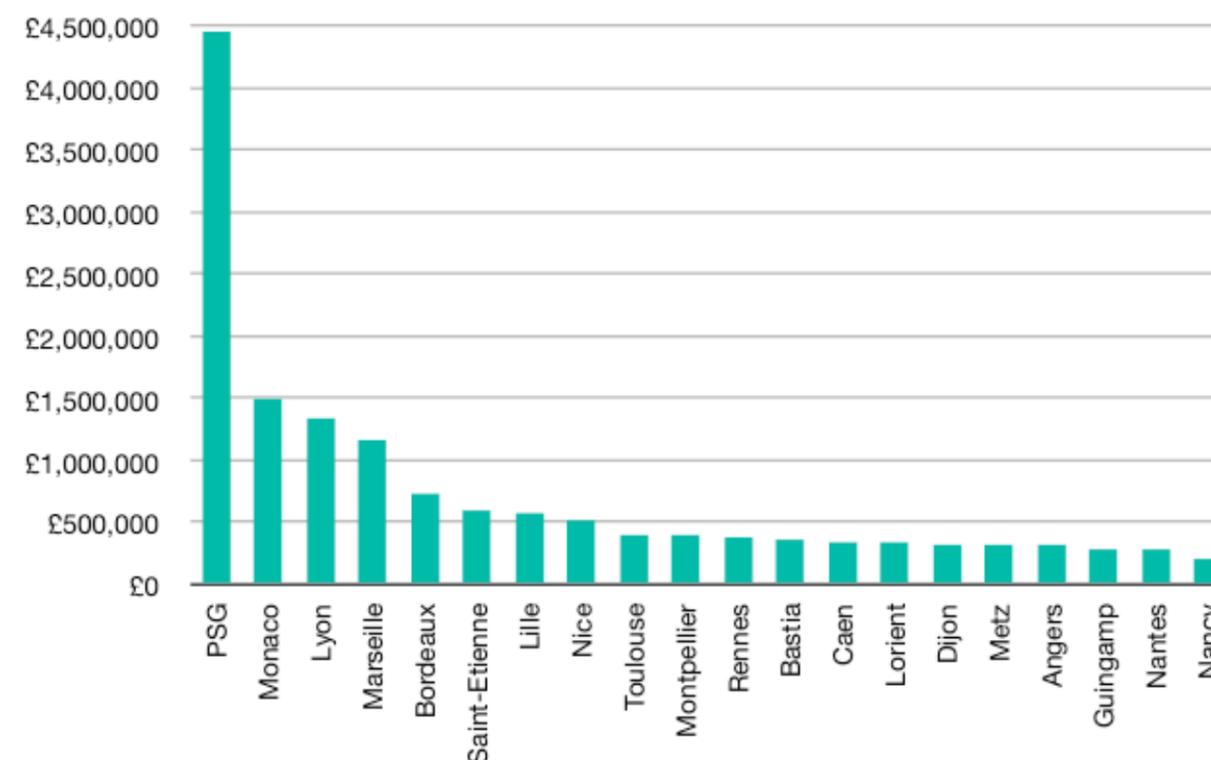
The discrepancy between the highest average first-team salary in Ligue 1 and the lowest is wider than in any of the 17 leagues in any sport in any nation in this year's survey. PSG's average pay of almost £4.5m is 21.5 times the average of £208,000 paid per year to first-team players at Nancy. You need only to glance at the graphic on the right depicting the salary spread in Ligue 1 to see the gulf between PSG and the rest but other metrics confirm France's top division as the most 'unfairly' skewed by finance. The top 10 per cent of players earn 49.91 per cent of the salaries - and that is almost entirely down to PSG players. Even in Spain, where Barcelona and Real Madrid dwarf the competition in fiscal terms, the top 10 per cent of players earn a slightly lower proportion of the cash.

THE MONEY TALK

If the money talks then PSG win again with Monaco and Lyon expected to push for the podium. Ten clubs with average first-team annual wages of below £400,000 a year might be expected to battle against relegation, from lowest paid Nancy and Nantes to Bastia and Rennes in 'mid-table' wages-wise.

AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, LIGUE 1, 2016-17 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, £	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, \$
1	PSG	£4,476,835	\$5,909,422
2	Monaco	£1,510,215	\$1,993,484
3	Lyon	£1,353,793	\$1,787,007
4	Marseille	£1,185,427	\$1,564,763
5	Bordeaux	£738,029	\$974,198
6	Saint-Etienne	£611,416	\$807,069
7	Lille	£592,531	\$782,141
8	Nice	£533,073	\$703,656
9	Toulouse	£414,648	\$547,335
10	Montpellier	£409,283	\$540,254
11	Rennes	£384,129	\$507,050
12	Bastia	£369,100	\$487,212
13	Caen	£362,236	\$478,151
14	Lorient	£362,207	\$478,113
15	Dijon	£335,593	\$442,982
16	Metz	£328,343	\$433,413
17	Angers	£327,600	\$432,432
18	Guingamp	£293,650	\$387,618
19	Nantes	£291,460	\$384,727
20	Nancy	£208,385	\$275,068



NPB ANALYSIS

NIPPON PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL



TOTAL SALARIES:
\$288,190,660

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:
\$800,530

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:
No11 LEAGUE

MEDIAN SALARY:
\$458,700

RATIO BETWEEN HIGHEST PAID TEAM AND LOWEST PAID: 3 TO 1
(SIX OF 17 LEAGUES HAVE A 'FAIRER' SPREAD, WITH A LOWER GAP; 10 OF 17 ARE LESS FAIR)

THE LOWDOWN

The Fukuoka SoftBank Hawks embarked on the 2016 season dreaming of a hat-trick of Japan Series wins after victories in 2014 and 2015. They have been up there in financial terms in recent times while not topping the pay league, at least in the lifetime of this survey. The Yomiuri Giants and Hanshin Tigers have traded the No1 spot in average pay terms. The Giants' monetary muscle has helped them win four titles in 20 years, and the Tigers none. Both teams have also been runners-up three times in two decades. In this season when the Hawks finally reached No1 in pay, the team ranked seventh of 12 and with average salaries at half the level won the Japan Series (Hokkaido's Nippon-Ham Fighters) as the eighth best payers, Hiroshima Toyo Carp, were runners-up.

THE JAW DROP

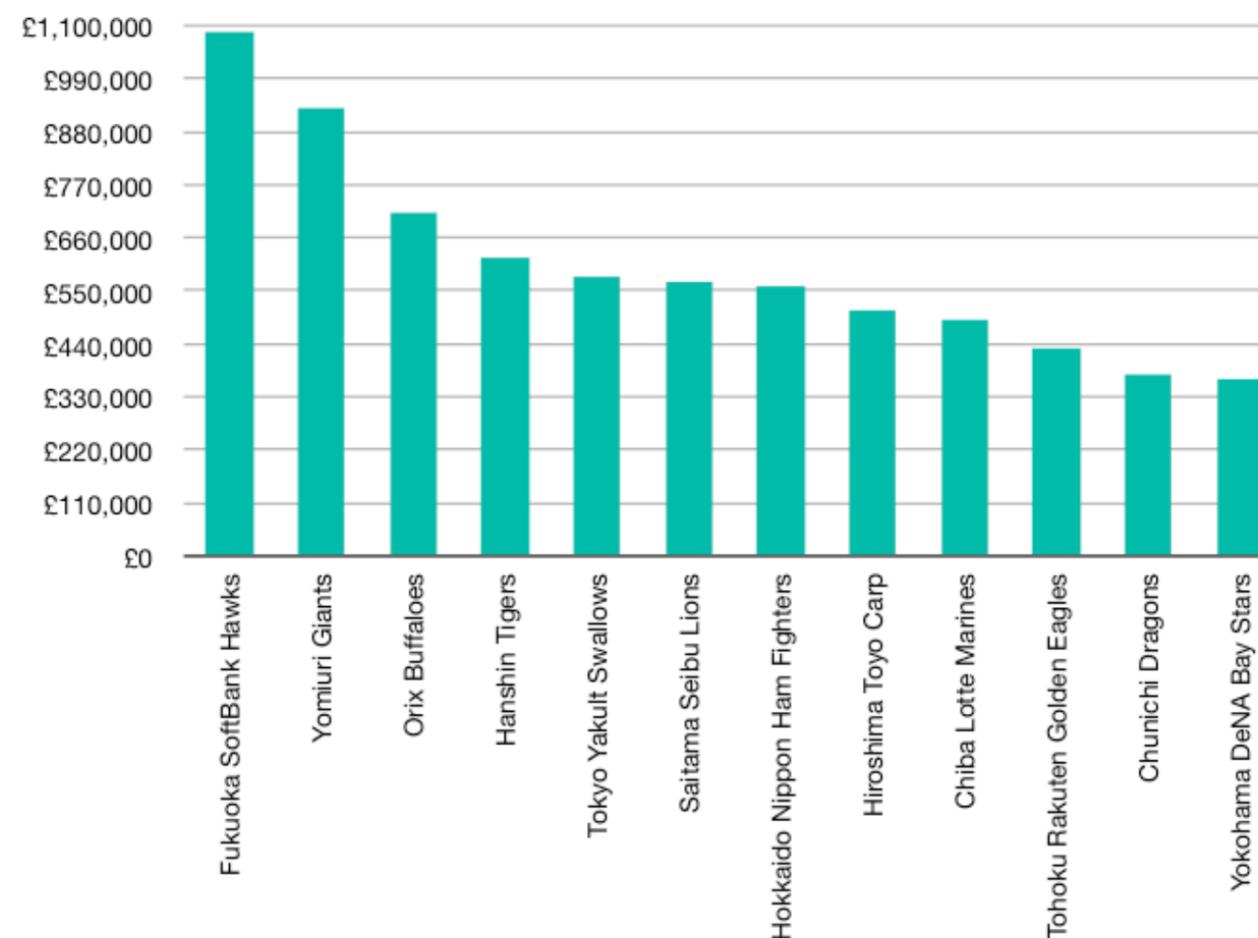
Hiroshima Toyo Carp reached the Japan Series with only the eighth-highest (and therefore fifth lowest) average salary, and only one player inside the 30 best-paid players in the league. While it should be noted that the one player was the best paid player in NPB in 2016 - the former LA Dodgers and New York Yankees pitcher Hiroki Kuroda - it should also be noted he was aged 41 in this swansong year of his career. The Series winners, the Fighters, meanwhile, had just two of the players in the top 30 best paid, ranked No29 and No30. The Hawks had eight of the top 30, and spent more than \$25m on salaries for these players alone, or more than the entire active rosters of nine of the 12 teams.

THE MONEY TALK

The best payers, the Hawks, made the Pacific League final stage, or what is in effect the season's semi-final, while the second highest payers, the Giants, had the second best record in the Central League behind the Japan Series runners-up, Carp. So while there wasn't an emphatic 'money wins' scenario, this small league with a relatively low wage disparity between teams again delivered reasonable competitive balance, and a seventh different winner in 10 seasons.

AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, NPB, 2016 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, £	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, \$
1	Fukuoka SoftBank Hawks	£1,091,220	\$1,442,459
2	Yomiuri Giants	£932,060	\$1,232,068
3	Orix Buffaloes	£714,371	\$944,310
4	Hanshin Tigers	£620,216	\$819,850
5	Tokyo Yakult Swallows	£583,572	\$771,411
6	Saitama Seibu Lions	£573,139	\$757,620
7	Hokkaido Nippon Ham Fighters	£563,192	\$744,470
8	Hiroshima Toyo Carp	£511,511	\$676,154
9	Chiba Lotte Marines	£495,410	\$654,871
10	Tohoku Rakuten Golden Eagles	£435,239	\$575,332
11	Chunichi Dragons	£378,931	\$500,900
12	Yokohama DeNA Bay Stars	£368,347	\$486,910



CSL ANALYSIS

CHINESE SUPER LEAGUE FOOTBALL



TOTAL SALARIES:
\$366,744,157

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:
\$775,358

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:
No12 LEAGUE

MEDIAN SALARY:
\$90,000

RATIO BETWEEN HIGHEST PAID TEAM AND LOWEST PAID: 15.8 TO 1
(13 OF 17 LEAGUES HAVE A 'FAIRER' SPREAD, WITH A LOWER GAP; THREE OF 17 ARE LESS FAIR)

THE LOWDOWN

China as a nation has decided to invest in football, with orders from the top, namely the president of the country. See the introductory essay of this report for more details. The upshot was a mammoth spree on transfer fees before the 2016 season, and a doubling of average first-team salaries, fuelled by a relatively small number of enormous contracts. On the pitch, Guangzhou Evergrande continued their recent domination with a sixth straight title, under 'Big Phil' Scolari, whose presence alongside the likes of fellow managers Manuel Pellegrini and Sven Goran Eriksson shows the continuing desire for big names in the dugout as well as in starting XIs. A key issue for investors would be whether, or rather how quickly, their tranches of new cash would help them close on Evergrande.

THE JAW DROP

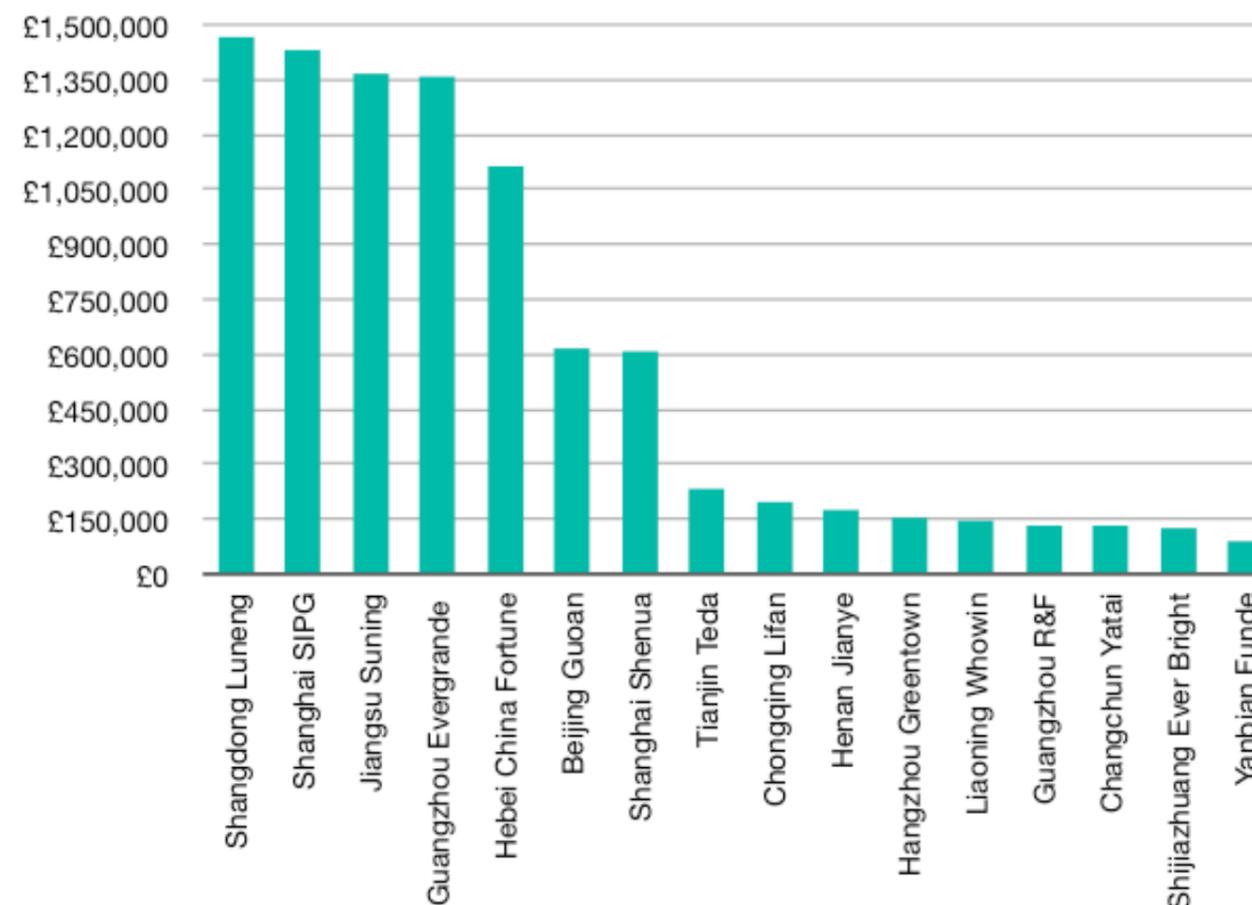
There are the same number of footballers in the CSL earning \$10m or more per year each (11 of them) as in Spain's La Liga. There are the same number of players in the CSL in the world's top 15 best paid footballers (5) as in La Liga (5). The best paid team in the CSL by average salary, Shangdong Luneng, is richer in wage terms than 66 of the 98 teams in Europe's 'Big 5' top divisions in the survey period. But the CSL is so hugely 'star heavy' in terms of wage distribution that the top 10 per cent of players (the highest earning 47 of 473) earn more than 81 per cent of the wages between them - a far higher proportion than in any other league in this edition of the GSSS. The next most skewed league in this particular way - where the 'stars' are so obviously and hugely rewarded more than most of their team-mates - is North America's MLS, where the top 10 per cent earn 58 per cent of the money.

THE MONEY TALK

On average first-team pay alone, the league table would see Shangdong Luneng win, but they narrowly avoided relegation in 14th place. But Shanghai SIPG would be second (actually third), Jiangsu Suninn third (second), Evergrande fourth (first), Hebei China Fortune fifth (seventh) and Beijing Guoan sixth (fifth). Performance overall, in fact, has started to become almost as strongly linked to wage spend as in some of Europe's big leagues, where it has been marked for years.

AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, CSL, 2016 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, £	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, \$
1	Shangdong Luneng	£1,469,943	\$1,943,084
2	Shanghai SIPG	£1,434,803	\$1,896,633
3	Jiangsu Suning	£1,372,039	\$1,813,667
4	Guangzhou Evergrande	£1,364,610	\$1,803,846
5	Hebei China Fortune	£1,117,603	\$1,477,333
6	Beijing Guoan	£621,113	\$821,034
7	Shanghai Shenua	£611,176	\$807,900
8	Tianjin Teda	£240,950	\$318,507
9	Chongqing Lifan	£205,201	\$271,250
10	Henan Jianye	£178,848	\$236,415
11	Hangzhou Greentown	£155,563	\$205,635
12	Liaoning Whowin	£150,975	\$199,570
13	Guangzhou R&F	£134,689	\$178,042
14	Changchun Yatai	£134,615	\$177,945
15	Shijiazhuang Ever Bright	£129,726	\$171,482
16	Yanbian Funde	£93,335	\$123,377



MLS ANALYSIS

MAJOR LEAGUE SOCCER



TOTAL SALARIES:
\$179,913,287

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:
\$313,438

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:
No13 LEAGUE

MEDIAN SALARY:
\$116,523

RATIO BETWEEN HIGHEST PAID TEAM AND LOWEST PAID: 5.2 TO 1
(NINE OF 17 LEAGUES HAVE A 'FAIRER' SPREAD, WITH A LOWER GAP; SEVEN OF 17 ARE LESS FAIR)

THE LOWDOWN

Major League Soccer continues to grow in more senses than one. The division itself will expand from 20 teams in 2016 to 22 in 2017 and 24 in 2018. Crowds continue to grow, with the total of 7,373,144 fans across 340 regular season games in 2016 being the largest number in MLS history, and with the largest average per game at 21,692. The aggregate total attendance is double the figure it was as recently as 2009, when 3.6m fans attended 225 games at an average of 16,037 per game. MLS continues to grow financially, in terms of revenues, and, pertinent to this study, wages.

THE JAW DROP

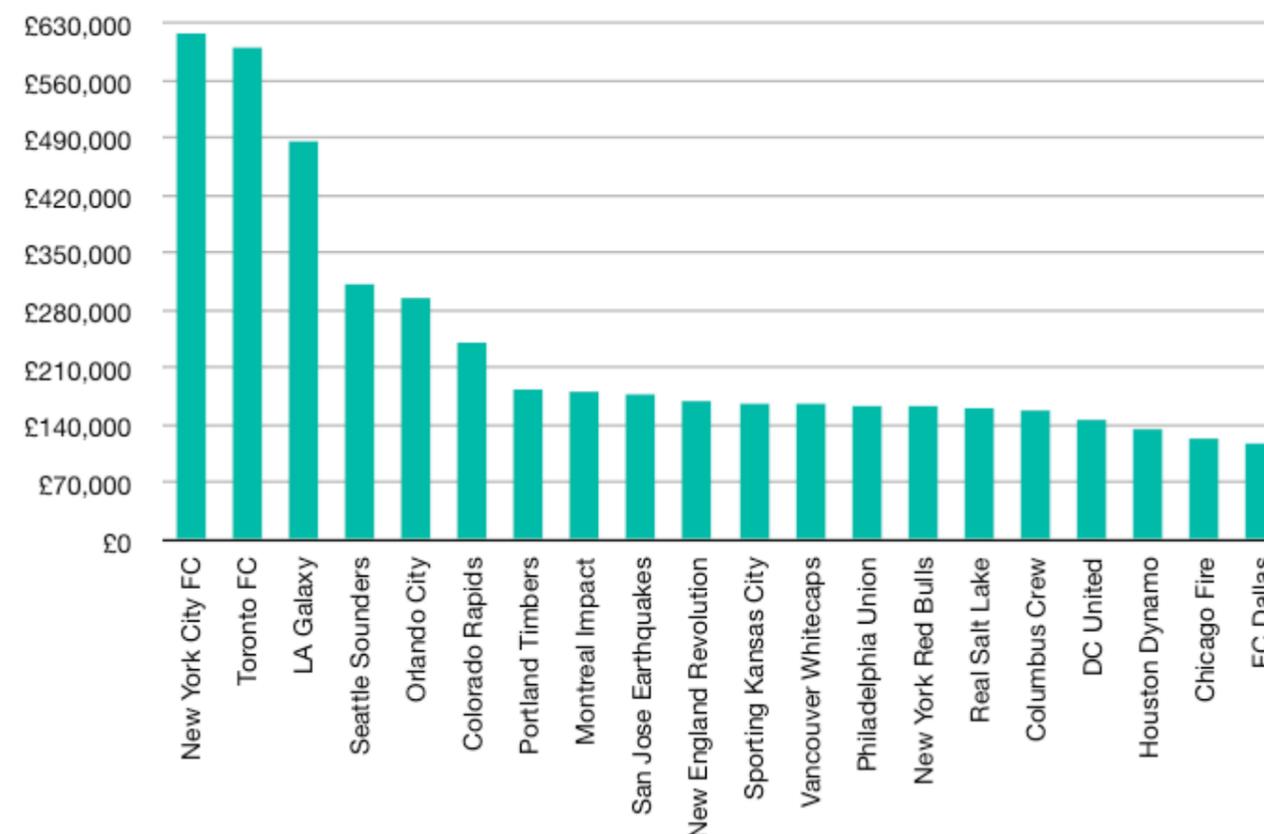
The total declared salary bills for the 20 teams of MLS, according to the official union data used in the compilation of this report, rose from \$147m in 2015 to \$180m in 2016, a year-on-year rise of 22 per cent. The number of individual clubs with payrolls above \$10m grew from four (Toronto, LA Galaxy, NYCFC and Orlando) in 2015 to five in 2016, with Seattle added. Some 24 players in MLS now earn a million dollars or more guaranteed from their playing contracts alone, although not a single player earns as much as \$10m. While wage restraints remain in place in MLS, it will remain a quirky statistic that some football teams in the world, like Manchester United, pay more in wages by themselves (or \$198m in first-team pay this season, according to this GSSS) than the entirety of MLS combined.

THE MONEY TALK

FC Dallas confounded their role as the lowest payers in MLS in terms of average first-team pay (\$158,000 on average) to win the Supporters' Shield, or 'the league' as it would be known in most places, by dint of having the best record at the end of the regular season. But the MLS Cup - the prize at the end of the play-offs - is the biggest prize. On salary alone you'd expect NYCFC or Toronto to go far, unless meeting each other (which is what happened), and fellow top-six payers LA Galaxy, the Sounders, Orlando City and the Colorado Rapids to thrive. Of those only Orlando did not get as far as the conference semi-finals, and three of them (Toronto, Seattle, Colorado) reached the last season's last four, along with No8 payers (of 20), Montreal Impact.

AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, MLS, 2016 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, £	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, \$
1	New York City FC	£620,150	\$819,762
2	Toronto FC	£603,233	\$797,400
3	LA Galaxy	£489,678	\$647,294
4	Seattle Sounders	£313,829	\$414,844
5	Orlando City	£296,378	\$391,776
6	Colorado Rapids	£242,718	\$320,844
7	Portland Timbers	£186,004	\$245,874
8	Montreal Impact	£181,625	\$240,087
9	San Jose Earthquakes	£180,597	\$238,728
10	New England Revolution	£171,038	\$226,091
11	Sporting Kansas City	£169,979	\$224,691
12	Vancouver Whitecaps	£168,671	\$222,962
13	Philadelphia Union	£167,022	\$220,783
14	New York Red Bulls	£164,792	\$217,835
15	Real Salt Lake	£162,947	\$215,396
16	Columbus Crew	£158,705	\$209,788
17	DC United	£147,912	\$195,521
18	Houston Dynamo	£137,904	\$182,292
19	Chicago Fire	£125,227	\$165,535
20	FC Dallas	£119,601	\$158,098



AFL ANALYSIS

AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE, AUSSIE RULES



TOTAL SALARIES:
\$159,067,764

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:
\$221,543

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:
No14 LEAGUE

MEDIAN SALARY:
\$196,531

RATIO BETWEEN HIGHEST PAID TEAM AND LOWEST PAID: 1.3 TO 1
(ONLY ONE OF 17 LEAGUES HAS A 'FAIRER' SPREAD, WITH A LOWER GAP; 15 OF 17 ARE LESS FAIR)

THE LOWDOWN

The Australian Football League season considered in this version of the survey is 2015, primarily because we can be most confident about the data in a financial landscape changing for various reasons for 2016. The AFL has a greater degree of transparency than many leagues about salaries, publishing a breakdown of what players earn, within brackets. While names and teams are not cited, having access to official figures that show the average AFL salary in the survey period was AUS\$302,104 (US\$221,543) provides corroboration that the GSSS data tallies. On the field of play, Hawthorn began the campaign seeking a hat-trick of titles, subsequently secured.

THE JAW DROP

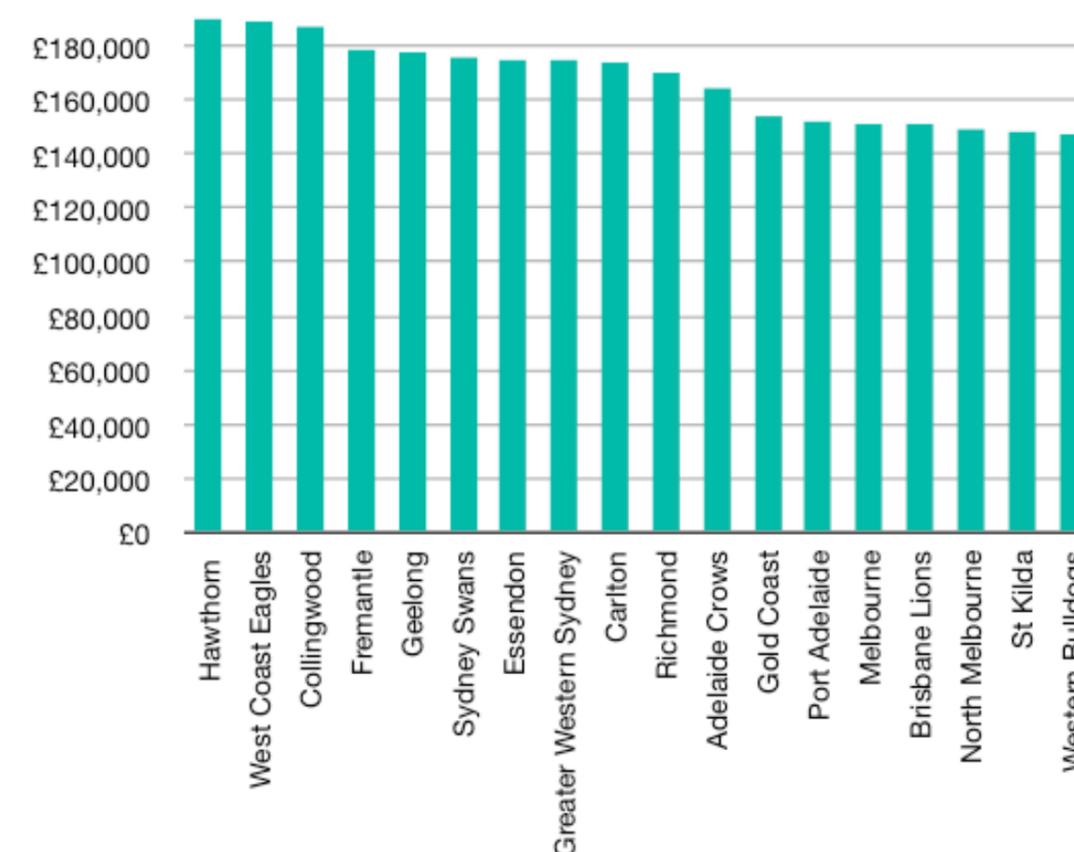
Big crowds often equate to big money in the world's professional domestic sports leagues. But among leagues with attendances per game of more than 30,000 fans, all the AFL's 'rivals' in this regard pay between six times and 21 times more per man per year. It's the Bundesliga where the salaries are 'only' six times higher, and MLB baseball where they are 21 times higher. The AFL as an institution spends a lot of time and effort trying to make its competition as competitively balanced as possible. With a pay differential of only 1.3 to 1 between the best paid team in our survey by average salary (Hawthorn) and the lowest paid (Western Bulldogs), it is far 'fairer' than most leagues. It is worth noting that Western Bulldogs went on to win the 2016 title, although salary levels for that campaign are still being collated.

THE MONEY TALK

Salaries alone in the survey period would say Hawthorn versus West Coast in the grand final, and Hawthorn win, which happened, with Collingwood and Fremantle in the preliminary finals. Fremantle were there. Collingwood didn't make the finals series. The lowest paid team finished sixth in the ladder (of 18), but the variance in salaries is small, the seventh bottom team paying less than 5 per cent more than the bottom team.

AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, AFL, 2015 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, £	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, \$
1	Hawthorn	£190,893	\$251,979
2	West Coast Eagles	£189,310	\$249,889
3	Collingwood	£187,728	\$247,801
4	Fremantle	£179,377	\$236,778
5	Geelong	£178,431	\$235,529
6	Sydney Swans	£176,770	\$233,336
7	Essendon	£175,829	\$232,094
8	Greater Western Sydney	£175,597	\$231,788
9	Carlton	£174,410	\$230,221
10	Richmond	£170,626	\$225,226
11	Adelaide Crows	£164,949	\$217,733
12	Gold Coast	£154,069	\$203,371
13	Port Adelaide	£152,671	\$201,526
14	Melbourne	£151,971	\$200,602
15	Brisbane Lions	£151,272	\$199,679
16	North Melbourne	£149,873	\$197,832
17	St Kilda	£148,838	\$196,466
18	Western Bulldogs	£147,440	\$194,621



J-LEAGUE ANALYSIS

JAPANESE TOP-DIVISION FOOTBALL



TOTAL SALARIES:
\$113,143,906

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:
\$211,880

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:
No15 LEAGUE

MEDIAN SALARY:
\$130,416

RATIO BETWEEN HIGHEST PAID TEAM AND LOWEST PAID: 4.1 TO 1
(EIGHT OF 17 LEAGUES HAVE A 'FAIRER' SPREAD, WITH A LOWER GAP; EIGHT OF 17 ARE LESS FAIR)

THE LOWDOWN

The 2016 season is the second of a mooted five-year 'experiment' period with a multiple stage format for the J.League. The teams each play 17 games in each of the campaign's first two stages, before a three-team championship stage settles the title. The winner of the first stage and second stage both make the championship stage, along with the highest ranking third team from the aggregate all-season table. The best aggregate team plays in the final against the winners of a play-off between the other two. Hiroshima started 2016 as winners of three of the four previous seasons, Gamba Osaka as closest challengers and big rivals, and Urawa Red Diamonds as consistently the biggest draw in terms of crowds.

THE JAW DROP

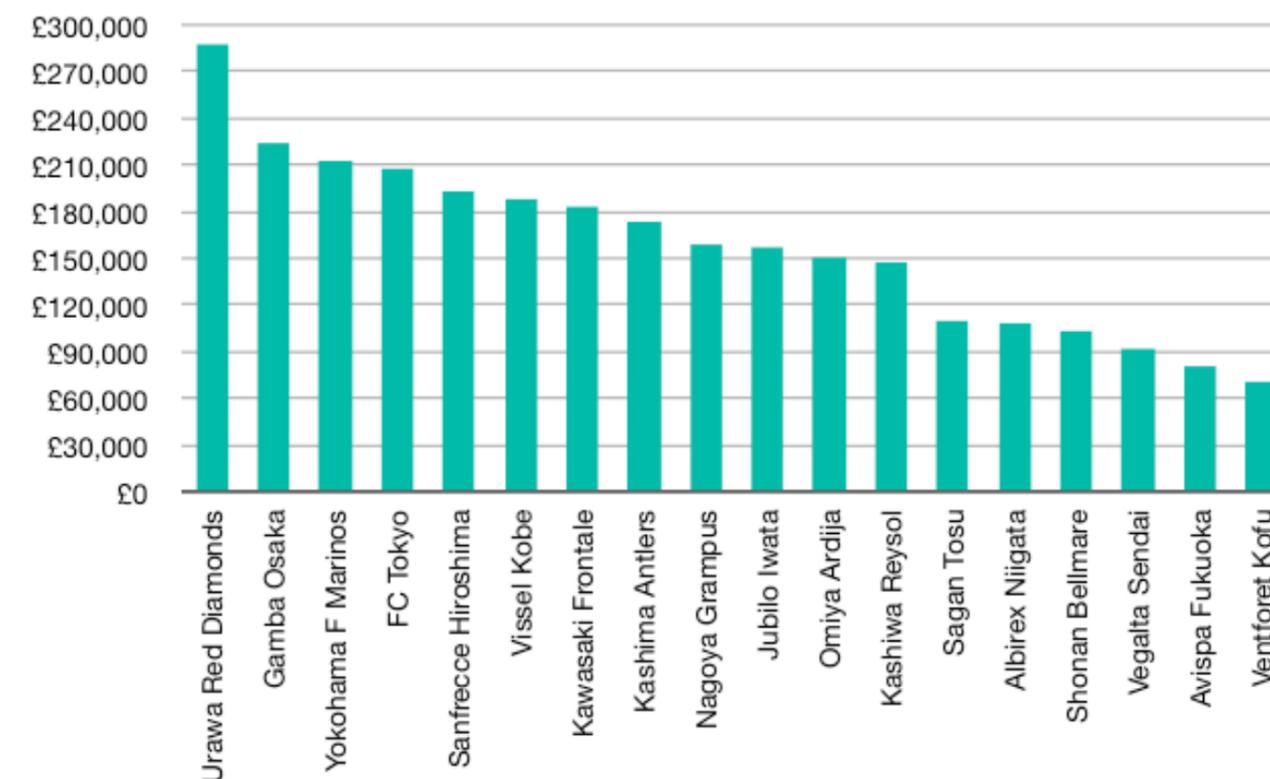
The J.League has the most 'star-light' make-up of players when it comes to wage distribution of any football league in our survey, bar the Premier League. The top 10 per cent of players earn 'only' 35 per cent of the total salaries (or \$39.6m between them, of \$113m). A curiosity in the J.League related to this fact is that Brazilian footballers are the go-to nationality in Japanese footballer for foreign players, of which three allowed per team. In fact, 15 of the 18 teams have a Brazilian as their first-choice foreigner, and two-thirds of all the foreigner berths are filled by Brazilians.

THE MONEY TALK

If money alone dictated success then Urawa Red Diamonds would be champions, and at the time of writing they had topped the overall table to reach the championship final. Gamba Osaka would be contenders (they finished fourth), along with Yokohama Marinos and FC Tokyo (ninth and 10th). As things have transpired, the seventh and eighth best payers (of 18), Kawasaki Frontale and Kashima Antlers, made the championship stage. Clearly detached from the pack in monetary terms were six low payers, and they finished, in order of least pay, in 14th, 18th (relegated), 12th, 17th (relegated), 15th and 11th.

AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, J.LEAGUE, 2016 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, £	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, \$
1	Urawa Red Diamonds	£288,350	\$380,622
2	Gamba Osaka	£224,221	\$295,971
3	Yokohama F Marinos	£214,292	\$282,865
4	FC Tokyo	£208,776	\$275,585
5	Sanfrecce Hiroshima	£194,281	\$256,451
6	Vissel Kobe	£188,716	\$249,105
7	Kawasaki Frontale	£183,730	\$242,524
8	Kashima Antlers	£174,114	\$229,830
9	Nagoya Grampus	£160,386	\$211,710
10	Jubilo Iwata	£158,460	\$209,167
11	Omiya Ardija	£151,436	\$199,896
12	Kashiwa Reysol	£148,567	\$196,108
13	Sagan Tosu	£110,698	\$146,121
14	Albirex Niigata	£109,929	\$145,106
15	Shonan Bellmare	£104,826	\$138,370
16	Vegalta Sendai	£92,695	\$122,357
17	Avispa Fukuoka	£81,010	\$106,934
18	Ventforet Kofu	£71,060	\$93,799



SPFL ANALYSIS

SCOTTISH TOP-DIVISION FOOTBALL



TOTAL SALARIES:
\$58,753,867

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:
\$193,907

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:
No16 LEAGUE

MEDIAN SALARY:
\$75,504

RATIO BETWEEN HIGHEST PAID TEAM AND LOWEST PAID: 16.9 TO 1
(14 OF 17 LEAGUES HAVE A 'FAIRER' SPREAD, WITH A LOWER GAP; 14 OF 17 ARE LESS FAIR)

THE LOWDOWN

Celtic began the 2016-17 season looking to win a sixth Scottish title in succession and a 48th in their history. The season promised spice because Celtic's Old Firm rivals Rangers, after a four-year absence, were back in the top division. One can easily make an argument that both are diminished - on the pitch and at the bank - in the absence of the other. Celtic's income and salaries, not to mention their playing standards, have gone down since 2012. While they started this season as strong odds-on favourites to give manager Brendan Rodgers the first title of his career, it was likely Rangers as well as Aberdeen and Hearts would be in the top-four mix, if not vying for glory.

THE JAW DROP

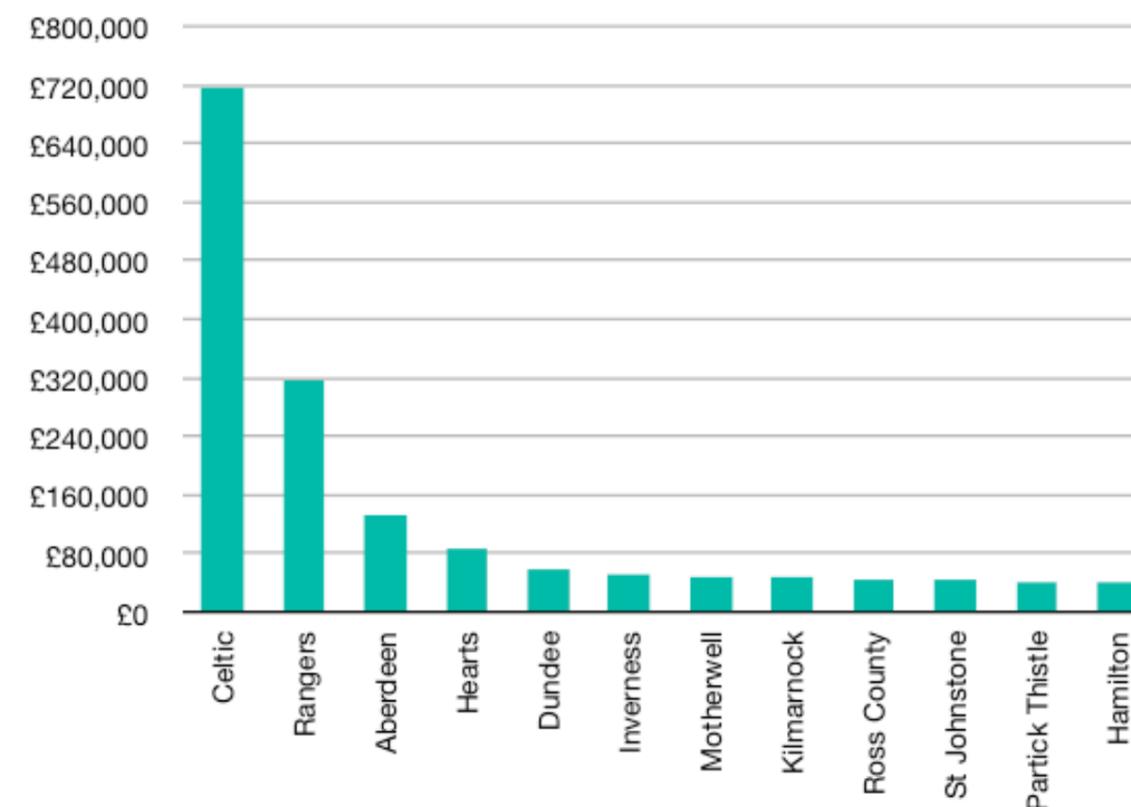
Celtic's average annual first-team pay of more than £700,000 is more than double that of Rangers in second place and almost 17 times that of the average salary at the lowest paid team of the 12 in the division, Hamilton. It is almost as many multiples of the majority of the teams. The gulf is put in perspective by the fact that Celtic's top players each earn approximately as much by themselves as the entire squads at Inverness, Motherwell, Kilmarnock, Ross County, St Johnstone, Partick Thistle and Hamilton. Celtic's first-team wage bill is not far off the wage bills at the other 11 clubs combined. Celtic and Rangers together are twice the value of the other 10 clubs combined.

THE MONEY TALK

If money talks, Celtic win the title with Rangers second, Aberdeen third, Hearts fourth and an eight-way tussle for the other places in which Dundee have decent resources (relatively) to get away from danger. It is a quirk of the season that Ross County had a particularly small first-team squad during the survey period (21 players) and Hamilton a large one (34). Ross County's total bill, we reckon, will be smaller due to fewer players - but all things being equal, slightly better players earning a bit more each.

AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, SCOTTISH PREMIERSHIP, 2016-17 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, £	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, \$
1	Celtic	£717,860	\$947,575
2	Rangers	£316,888	\$418,292
3	Aberdeen	£134,670	\$177,764
4	Hearts	£86,890	\$114,694
5	Dundee	£61,837	\$81,624
6	Inverness	£53,345	\$70,416
7	Motherwell	£49,335	\$65,122
8	Kilmarnock	£48,950	\$64,614
9	Ross County	£47,515	\$62,720
10	St Johnstone	£47,206	\$62,311
11	Partick Thistle	£42,671	\$56,326
12	Hamilton	£42,606	\$56,239



CFL ANALYSIS

CANADIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE, GRIDIRON



TOTAL SALARIES:
\$30,527,651

AVERAGE SALARY PER PLAYER:
\$86,726

AVERAGE SALARY RANKING:
No17 LEAGUE

MEDIAN SALARY:
\$58,500

RATIO BETWEEN HIGHEST PAID TEAM AND LOWEST PAID: 1.2 TO 1
(THE CFL HAS THE 'FAIREST' SPREAD OF ALL 17 LEAGUES IN THE SURVEY. NO LEAGUE IS CLOSER TOP TO BOTTOM)

THE LOWDOWN

The CFL earned a place in the original GSSS back in 2010 by being firmly inside the top 10 of the world's best attended professional domestic sports leagues. The average gate in 2009 was 28,464, and in 2010 was 27,132. Then, that was still beating more than one of Europe's major football (soccer) leagues. A steady decline has ensued, down to 24,737 fans per CFL game by 2015 and dipping again to 24,565 by 2016. With the rise of the Big Bash League in Australia (cricket), India's Super League football (soccer) and higher crowds in Mexico's Liga MX, the CFL is no longer in the top 10. But given its original place, its huge contrast in wealth to a gridiron neighbour league, and what the CFL can tell us about sustainable 'low cost' but (relatively) high popularity sport, it remains for now. Data on some of those other leagues remains elusive.

THE JAW DROP

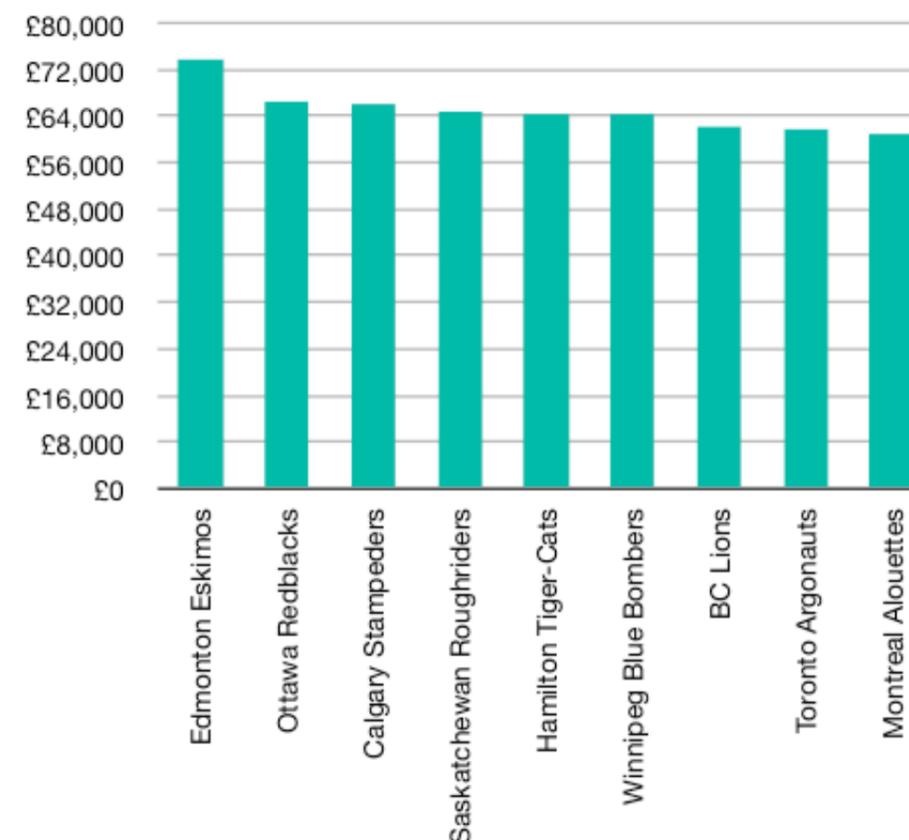
The CFL has always arguably been the toughest league from which to garner reliable numbers and that is down to the almost religious secrecy of everyone involved, not least the teams and team owners. No source that could be described as even vaguely public exists that tells us about player pay, and we can speculate why; certainly some players are unhappy with their lot. But pointers from agents and insiders do allow some insight. What's remarkable, in a sport where team incomes vary hugely (50%+) and one team's football operations budget can be 25 per cent bigger than the next, even given the relatively slender leeway between salary floor and cap, is quite how small the variance in average pay is; the ratio of 1.2 to 1 from top to bottom is unmatched, and other metrics highlight economic competitive balance, including the top 10% of earners making just 24.9% of all salaries (a GSSS low); and the median salary being a high percentage of the average.

THE MONEY TALK

Low pay differential and few teams allied with six teams of nine making the post-season mean pay isn't going to be as strong a predictive tool as in some leagues. The Eskimos winning the Grey Cup in 2015 as the much richer Roughriders failed to make the playoffs was one example. Six different winners in the six years to 2015 was another, not to mention six different winners in the six-year block before that.

AVERAGE FIRST-TEAM PAY, CFL, 2015 SEASON

RANK	TEAM	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, £	AVG ANNUAL PER PLAYER, \$
1	Edmonton Eskimos	£73,875	\$97,653
2	Ottawa Redblacks	£66,573	\$88,001
3	Calgary Stampeders	£66,149	\$87,440
4	Saskatchewan Roughriders	£65,119	\$86,080
5	Hamilton Tiger-Cats	£64,767	\$85,614
6	Winnipeg Blue Bombers	£64,462	\$85,210
7	BC Lions	£62,581	\$82,725
8	Toronto Argonauts	£61,890	\$81,811
9	Montreal Alouettes	£61,343	\$81,088



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