

World Cup Fever in the London Market



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With just days to go, football fans are filled with the buzz of anticipation ahead of the opening stages of the World Cup. This excitement will be amplified tenfold by what the England fans among us optimistically hope will be a nail-biting finale, where one nation's heart will break while England's soars as they soak up the joy of football coming home.

Getting in on the action and creating a buzz of its own around Lime Street, Lloyd's held an excellent event to predict the winner of the 2022 World Cup. Using modeling research, published with the support of the Centre for Economics and Business Research (Cebr), Lloyd's has a superb record, having correctly predicted the winning teams in the last two competitions: Germany in 2014 and France in 2018.

Lloyd's is now aiming for their hat-trick prediction with this year's winner, which was announced at its event on November 10. I was in the privileged position of sitting on a panel alongside England legends Sir Geoff Hurst and Fara Williams. We'd been invited to make nerve-wracking predictions on the knockouts of every round and did pretty well, right up to the final when it was revealed that according to the model, you have guessed it, England will reign victorious in Qatar. Was it ever in doubt?!

More seriously, although England is notorious for bestowing tense uncertainty on supporters during international competitions, Lloyd's and Cebr have their dependable track record, and when you break it down the prediction makes a lot of sense.

The insurable values provide significant insight into the teams and their players. England's squad in Qatar will have an estimated insurable value of £3.17bn, ahead of France (£2.66bn) and Brazil (£2.56bn). The research also found the average insurable value of one England or France player is more than the entire Costa Rica squad.

Value of youth

A shared factor of the England and France teams is their relatively young squads and players who compete among the abundance of talent in Europe's top leagues. The value of youth is demonstrated in England's Jude Bellingham. The analysis rated the Birmingham teenager as the only 100% insurable player. Additionally, the

players aged between 18 and 24 have an average insurable value of £32m compared to £12m for players over 31. More information can be found in the Lloyd's press release [here](#).

These findings no doubt sent many off to the bookies in the hope that the predictions play out. But more than this, the event was also an opportunity to highlight the significant role insurance can play in supporting players and the multibillion-pound industry of football.

Beyond the Premier League, improving awareness and education of insurance available to footballers – and other athletes – at all levels has the potential to minimize the risk of loss-of-income to players and clubs who employ them.

We also discussed the risks career-ending injury or health issues can have on players' finances and futures. Policies cover footballers' risks in a number of forms, for both players, their agents and the clubs they play for. This includes accidental death, such as car accidents, permanent total disablement or career ending injury and temporary total disability, which takes over the cost of players wages when injured for a short period of time. This helps protect players future earnings, agent's fees and the club's assets.

Fara Williams, who played in three World Cups until 2015, explained that she and her fellow Lionesses did not have insurance on their radar. They did not consider the need for it as individuals, nor did the clubs suggest it as an option. Fortunately, these policies have evolved over time alongside the women's game. Female professionals today are insured in the Women's Super-Leagues 1 and 2. Mental illness in addition to physical injury is insured today.

High-profile incidents spread awareness at club level that even players who appear to be in their prime can suffer an injury or illness. And from a business perspective, clubs are reminded they risk losing the investment made on a player if not insured.

Amid fast-paced change, insurers need to stay ahead of the game and make sure the policies we offer keep up with the specialist and often niche nature of the risks we insure.

With the first round about to kick off, we look forward to the start of the World Cup and to seeing if the prediction by Lloyd's come to fruition. Come on England!

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