

28 July 2005



## THE CHAMPIONSHIP BUILDS ON SUCCESSFUL DEBUT WITH 'EVERYTHING TO PLAY FOR' CAMPAIGN

Sven-Goran Eriksson Praises Championship's Role  
In Developing Future England Internationals

The Coca-Cola Football League Championship is to build on a successful debut season that saw attendances rise by nearly 10% to 9.8 million by launching a campaign to build its profile and develop its position as the pinnacle of The Football League.

The 'Everything To Play For' campaign will be launched today at Derby County's Pride Park Stadium to representatives of Championship clubs. It will communicate through a series of messages why The Coca-Cola Championship is one of Europe's major league competitions. The messages will focus on:

- **ATTENDANCE/REVENUE:** The Coca-Cola Championship is the fourth best attended division in Europe and sixth highest revenue generator
- **COMPETITIVE/EXCITEMENT:** With 20 games to go last season, every team still had hopes of promotion, Play-Off qualification or survival. On 8 May 2005 the fate of nine clubs depended on the crucial final day results
- **COMMUNITY:** 55% of fans live within a 10-mile radius of The Championship club they support
- **HOME GROWN TALENT:** 40% of players in England's U21 squad and 41% of those in Wales' U21 squad during the 2004/05 season came from Championship clubs
- **AFFORDABLE:** The Coca-Cola Championship offers a value for money day out for the whole family
- **HERITAGE:** The title 'Football League Championship' dates back to 1888 and The Championship name was brought back to reclaim its heritage
- **PLAY-OFFS:** The 2005 Deloitte Annual Review of Football Finance described The Championship Play-Off Final as 'the richest game on earth'

Speaking on the role The Championship plays in developing future internationals, England Coach, Sven-Goran Eriksson said: "**Young English players are getting the opportunity to shine in The Championship and it is a competition that will continue to contribute a great deal to the England team. Players such as Michael Carrick, Andy Johnson and Shaun Wright-Phillips all starred in this league during their careers before going on to represent England, while David James was a regular in the squad while playing at this level.**

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**"In addition, a large number of Championship players were involved in the England Under-21s squad last season, demonstrating that the pool of talent is encouragingly deep. I look forward to another exciting and competitive season in The Championship."**

Commenting on the campaign launch, Stewart Regan, Director of The Championship said: **"The Everything To Play For campaign will allow us to demonstrate that The Championship is one of Europe's major league competitions. From exciting, competitive action throughout the season, to a heritage dating back to 1888 and clubs that are at the heart of their communities, The Championship has a compelling story to tell and we intend to tell it."**

'Everything To Play For' will be promoted throughout the 2005/06 season. Fans can expect to see the strap-line and accompanying messages across a number of media platforms, from match day programme pages and TV advertising at stadia to PR activity across national and regional media.

The internet will also be used to raise awareness of the campaign and the first piece of online activity is a prize quiz – the 'Everything To Play For Challenge' – that features questions on The Championship.

## **WICKES BUILD CHAMPIONSHIP'S YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTION**

The Football League's contribution to youth development today received a further boost with the news that Wickes - the Official Home Improvements Partner of The Football League Championship - will be sponsoring a new award for the 2005-6 season.

The **Wickes Apprentice Trophy** will be given to the most improved Under 19 player in the Championship this season. Clubs will nominate their candidate and a Wickes award panel will meet to decide on the winner at the end of the season. The winner will take home the **Wickes Apprentice Trophy** as well as £5000 which will be donated to that player's youth academy.

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### **Notes to Editors:**

#### **Further evidence to substantiate messages**

**Attendance/Revenue:** Last season, aggregate attendances at Coca-Cola Championship games went up by nearly 10% to 9.8 million - the highest total at this level for more than 50 years.

Top Six Divisions In Europe By Total Attendance 2004/05<sup>1</sup> (millions)

|                         |             |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| F.A. PREMIER LEAGUE     | 12.88       |
| BUNDESLIGA (GERMANY)    | 11.57       |
| PRIMERA LIGA (SPAIN)    | 10.92       |
| <b>THE CHAMPIONSHIP</b> | <b>9.80</b> |
| SERIE A (ITALY)         | 9.77        |
| LIGUE 1 (FRANCE)        | 8.17        |

Top Five Second Tier Divisions In Europe By Average Attendance 2004/05<sup>2</sup>

|                         |               |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| <b>THE CHAMPIONSHIP</b> | <b>17,591</b> |
| BUNDESLIGA 2 (GERMANY)  | 13,561        |
| SEGUNDA (SPAIN)         | 7,555         |
| SERIE B (ITALY)         | 6,883         |
| LIGUE 2 (FRANCE)        | 6,704         |

Top Six European Leagues By Revenue 2003/04<sup>3</sup> (€millions)

|                         |            |
|-------------------------|------------|
| F.A. PREMIER LEAGUE     | 1,976      |
| SERIE A (ITALY)         | 1,153      |
| BUNDESLIGA (GERMANY)    | 1,058      |
| PRIMERA LIGA (SPAIN)    | 953        |
| LIGUE 1 (FRANCE)        | 655        |
| <b>THE CHAMPIONSHIP</b> | <b>428</b> |

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics supplied by Association of Football Statisticians and include Play-Off games where relevant

<sup>2</sup> Statistics supplied by Association of Football Statisticians and include Play-Off games where relevant

<sup>3</sup> Figures from June 2005 edition of The Deloitte Annual Review of Football Finance

**Competitive/Excitement:** 'The Coca-Cola Championship. The most exciting league in the country? We think so.' ITV programme page ad, Nov 2004. The programme page backed up the claim using the example of Crystal Palace who rose from 18th place on 1 January 2004 to promotion via the Play-Offs at the end of the 03/04 season.

Although it did not ultimately result in promotion, a similar feat was accomplished by Preston North End in the 2004/05 season. At the half way point they were in 16th position – but a fine run took them all the way to the Play-Off Final.

**Community:** 55% of fans live within a 10 mile radius of The Championship club they support. <sup>4</sup>

In 2004, over 500,000 young people took part in Football in the Community schemes run by Championship clubs.

"Championship clubs are at the very heart of their communities. Through community programmes they make a real difference to the lives of hundreds of thousands of people, whether they are supporters of football or not." Roger Reade, Chief Community Officer, Football in the Community

**Home Grown Talent:** 40% of players in the England Under 21 squad and 41% of players in the Wales Under 21 squad during the 2004/05 season came from Championship clubs (not including players on loan).<sup>5</sup>

Examples of England Under 21 players and the club they played for in 2004/05 are:

Lee Camp (Derby County)  
Michael Dawson (Nottingham Forest)  
Daniel Harding (Brighton & Hove Albion)  
Andrew Lonergan (Preston North End)

Examples of Wales Under 21 players and the club they played for in 2004/05 are:

James Collins (Cardiff City)  
Peter Gilbert (Plymouth Argyle)  
Anthony Pulis (Stoke City)  
David Vaughan (Crewe Alexandra)

32% of players in the full England squad and 82% of players in the full Wales squad during the 2004/05 season have played in The Championship or Division One during their careers (not including players on loan).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Statistic based on information supplied by 8 clubs competing in The Championship during the 2004/05 season

<sup>5</sup> Statistics supplied by Association of Football Statisticians

<sup>6</sup> Statistics supplied by Association of Football Statisticians for full England squads from England v Ukraine on 14 August 2004 to England v Colombia on 31 May 2005

**Affordable:** Buying a ticket for a Championship game represents good value for money compared to other entertainment aimed at families

Total price for two adults and two children<sup>7</sup>:

Championship game (average price across 24 clubs) £53.94

Alton Towers (family ticket – entry for one day) £78

McFly Gig (MEN Arena 23/24 Sept 05) £80

LegoLand Windsor (entry for one day) £92

Mamma Mia (Prince of Wales Theatre, London) £100

Daytona Go-Karting (price for 1 hour) £142

**Heritage:** The Championship was not a new title, but the reclamation of a name that dates back to the origins of The Football League.

'The Lady' trophy that was presented to Sunderland in May 05 as the inaugural winners of The Championship dates back to the turn of the nineteenth century. The engraving on it reads: 'The Football League Championship Cup'.

**Play-Offs:** The Championship Play-Off Final is described on page 7 of the June 2005 edition of The Deloitte Annual Review of Football Finance as 'the richest game on earth'

The review goes on to say on page 27 that: "The prize for promotion to the Premiership for the 2005/06 season is likely to be around £35m, even if the club is relegated to the Championship for the 2006/07 season – confirmation that the Championship Play-Off remains the richest single club game on earth."

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<sup>7</sup> Figures for Championship game based on average cost for lowest price seats for adult and children across all 24 Championship clubs in the 2004/05 season. Prices for other attractions were taken in July 2005 and may have been altered since