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Villa tops Premier League – for value

The likes of Chelsea, Man Utd and Arsenal may sit at the top of the Premiership – but they're not leading the league when it comes to value for supporters.

The ING Direct Value League, compiled each season by the savings provider, compares clubs' season ticket costs with their Premier League performance¹ – and when it comes to getting the most points for your pound it's Aston Villa, Blackburn and Man City who really deliver.

And with one in every three fans forced to make serious financial sacrifices to follow their club, many are being squeezed to the limit. As a consequence nearly one in ten supporters won't be able to renew if prices rise next season – the equivalent to around 40,000 season ticket holders².

What's more, the research also reveals the Premiership's best value players – as voted for by fans. In first place is the battling Scott Parker, followed by Wayne Rooney and Darren Bent (Full list below).

Yet despite having one of the best value players, West Ham are sitting in the relegation zone in terms of value, accompanied by Wolves and Portsmouth (even ignoring their nine point deduction).

Furthermore, a number of Premier League clubs are taking risks next year when it comes to delivering value, with just 10 out of 20 clubs choosing to freeze or lower next season's ticket prices³. This could spell bad news for Manchester United in particular, with a third of their fans saying they won't renew if prices rise.

However, the current climate has forced a small number of supporters to give up their tickets regardless of price changes, with around one in 12 (eight per cent) [of](#) Sunderland and Wolves fans surrendering their season tickets – twice the rate of the average club⁴.

On the other end of the scale, around one in eight (13 per cent) say that they'll pay out whatever it takes to follow their side, with Man City, Liverpool and Tottenham fans most willing to stretch their finances for their club⁵.

ING Direct CEO Johan de Wit commented: *"It's clear that some clubs are delivering better value for money than others. Yet it seems that this year fans are paying more attention to the value they're getting because so many are willing to walk if prices continue to rise.*

"We understand why this might be the case, as many fans, including thousands of our customers, save hard all year to be able to afford this considerable cost to follow their team."

ING Direct 'Value League'

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| 1. Aston Villa | 11. Liverpool |
| 2. Blackburn Rovers | 12. Tottenham |
| 3. Man City | 13. Fulham |
| 4. Man Utd | 14. Bolton |
| 5. Wigan Athletic | 15. Stoke |
| 6. Birmingham City | 16. Burnley |
| 7. Everton | 17. Hull City |
| 8. Chelsea | 18. Wolves |
| 9. Arsenal | 19. West Ham |
| 10. Sunderland | 20. Portsmouth |

Best value players

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Scott Parker | 11. Joe Hart |
| 2. Wayne Rooney | 12. Bobby Zamora |
| 3. Darren Bent | 13. Kevin Doyle |
| 4. James Milner | 14. Tyrone Mears |
| 5. Jamie O'Hara | 15. Gareth Bale |
| 6. Stephen Hunt | 16. Fernando Torres |
| 7. Matthew Etherington | 17. John Heitinga |
| 8. Carlos Tevez | 18. Christopher Samba |
| 9. Cesc Fabregas | 19. Steven N'Zonzi |
| 10. Jose Reina | 20. Charles N'Zogbia |

Breakdowns by Premiership team

Team	Best value player	Won't renew if prices go up (%)	Pay whatever it takes to follow club (%)	Put savings away for season ticket (%)	Make financial sacrifices to follow club (%)
Arsenal	Fabregas	5	6	12	35
Aston Villa	Milner	7	11	17	31
Birmingham	Hart	5	7	14	29
Blackburn	Samba	5	15	8	38
Bolton	Chung-Yong	5	6	5	25
Burnley	Mears	6	14	7	21
Chelsea	Ivanovic	2	5	19	43
Everton	Heitinga	8	8	8	38
Fulham	Zamora	4	16	15	38
Hull City	Hunt	3	6	6	44
Liverpool	Reina	4	21	15	33
Man City	Tevez	2	22	18	29
Man Utd	Rooney	31	14	14	34
Portsmouth	O'Hara	20	12	18	18
Stoke City	Etherington	2	14	14	14
Sunderland	Bent	1	13	22	34
Tottenham	Bale	2	19	10	29
West Ham	Parker	5	17	17	28
Wigan	N'Zogbia	6	17	6	23
Wolves	Doyle	9	7	7	21

Ends

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Notes to editors

Research was conducted by Football Fans Census and ING Direct in March and May 2010. Total sample size was 2,020 adult season ticket holders of Premiership clubs.

1. The value league was compiled by comparing season ticket prices with points earned, with a bonus for goals scored (which affects fans' enjoyment of the game). This calculation was supported by Dr Steve Kelly from the University of Huddersfield, an expert in sports and society.
2. Of the 680,000 fans who attend premier league games every year (based on average attendance figures), around 73 per cent are season ticket holders = 496,400 (buzzle.com). Eight per cent of fans said they wouldn't renew their tickets if prices were increased = 39,712 approx 40,000 season ticket holders.
3. As of 10th May 2010, just 10 of the 20 premier league clubs have frozen or lowered ticket prices for next year, the remaining clubs are either yet to announce (2) or have announced rises (8). While eight per cent of fans won't renew if ticket prices rise, this figure stands at 31 per cent for Manchester United fans.
4. When asked about renewing their season ticket, an average of four per cent of fans said that they wouldn't be renewing regardless of what happened to the price. This figure sat at eight per cent for Sunderland, Wolves, Hull City and Portsmouth fans (double the average).
5. 13 per cent of season ticket holders questioned said that they would "pay whatever it takes" to follow their club. When analysed by club, 22 per cent of Man City, 21 per cent of Liverpool and 19 per cent of Tottenham fans made this statement.