Clarion

Family law team warns of woes of ‘World Cup widows’

Clarion’s family team is predicting a summer of tension as football fans and World Cup widows alike feel the pressure of the World Cup adding strain to their relationship which could prove to be the final whistle.

Cheryl Grace, associate solicitor in the family team at Clarion said: “While for many fans the World Cup is a time for fun and excitement, unfortunately it can also highlight and worsen existing relationship problems and cause further issues which may ultimately lead to separation. These issues usually arise in relationships where one party is a football fan and the other has no or little interest.

“For the latter group, commonly known as World Cup widows, the month of the tournament is dreaded as a time of wall-to-wall World Cup coverage which not only disrupts their TV viewing and news bulletins, but worse still, results in them being neglected by their partners. What’s more, if their partner’s team is not playing well or winning, he or she may be bad tempered and argumentative which in itself runs the risk of causing lasting damage to the relationship.”

Cheryl continues: “Whilst the World Cup cannot be blamed for the breakdown of a relationship, there’s no doubt that, like Christmas, it can highlight existing problems and bring underlying tensions to a head. Our clients often tell us that little things can make a big difference in an already strained relationship so with a little consideration, communication and planning, many of the potential issues the World Cup
poses to a relationship can be avoided. For example, just looking at the fixture list together and working out when the most crucial games are can really help as both people then know where they stand.

“Whilst frustrating for World Cup widows, the tournament is only for a month every four years, with the Euros sandwiched in the middle, and it doesn’t have to be all doom and gloom - statistics show that if a football fan’s team is enjoying success, the tournament can have the opposite effect on a relationship. For example, when England reached the quarter finals of the World Cup in summer 2002, the number of babies born in the country the following Spring/Summer increased by over 13,000!”

Justine Osmotherley, head of the family team at Clarion concludes: “If being a World Cup widow is the final straw in your relationship and you are considering separating, perhaps counselling would help. Our clients have shown that sometimes it is possible to reconcile and in those cases where this is not possible, there are lots of other options, so it is important to consult a family lawyer who can advise you of these, usually on an initial no obligation basis.”

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Photo shows: Cheryl Grace, associate solicitor in the family team at Clarion

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