

# England World Cup wins and losses linked to 30 percent rise in domestic violence

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Domestic violence rates rose by an average of 30 percent each time England won or lost their games during the 2010 World Cup, but draws had little impact on the statistics.

Those are the key findings of research carried out by [statistician](#) Professor Allan Brimicombe and BBC News journalist Rebecca Cafe and published in the October issue of *Significance*, the magazine of The [Royal Statistical Society](#) and the [American Statistical Association](#).

As a consequence of this and previous research, Professor Brimicombe believes there is a strong case for schools to educate pupils of the dangers of [domestic violence](#), event organisers should promote initiatives that tackle domestic violence and that police forces should prepare themselves for peaks in domestic violence around major sporting events.

"Domestic violence is widespread, accounting for 15 percent of all [violent crimes](#) and 35 percent of murders in the UK," explains Professor Brimicombe, from the Centre for Geo-Information Studies at the University of East London.

"It is a crime that is estimated to affect some 30 percent of women and 17 percent of men at some point in their lives."

The researchers based their findings on statistics provided by 33 of the 39 [police forces](#) in England, which between them cover 77 percent of the country's population.

The data, for the period covering the 2010 World Cup and the same period in 2009, was obtained under the [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#), which enables members of the public to request official information from public bodies.

The figures showed that when England drew 1-1 against the USA, domestic violence fell by 1.9 percent and when England drew 0-0 against Algeria it rose by 0.1 percent.

However when England won its game against Slovenia 1-0, domestic violence rose by 27.7 percent. And England's exit from the World Cup, after losing 4-1 to Germany, was accompanied by a 31.5 percent rise in domestic violence.

The research aimed to test the validity of an analysis carried out by the Home Office that showed that domestic violence had risen during the 2006 [World Cup](#). "Major sporting events do not cause domestic violence, as perpetrators are responsible for their actions," said the analysis, "but the levels of alcohol consumption linked to the highly charged emotional nature of those events seems to increase the prevalence of such incidents."

Professor Brimicombe concludes that the Home Office findings were right in some respects but fell short in their analysis in other respects.

Professor Brimicombe explains: "Our research shows that increased levels of domestic violence are associated with national football matches, but only if there is a definite win or lose result. The failing of the earlier Home Office analysis was that it ignored the outcome of the match, which as we have seen is crucial.

"The percentage differences that we found are so great that we believe we have established a strong case for linking wins and losses, but not

draws, to increased domestic violence.

"I hope that the findings will encourage improved education around the links between [major sporting events](#) and peaks in domestic violence and greater awareness of the risk.

"And I would applaud initiatives like the recent beer mat campaign highlighting the dangers of domestic violence, run by the London Borough of Newham and Metropolitan Police during the 2012 Olympics."

**More information:** Allan Brimicombe and Rebecca Cafe; Beware, win or lose: Domestic violence and the World Cup. Significance (2012); [DOI: 10.1111/j.1740-9713.2012.00606.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1740-9713.2012.00606.x)

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