As the Lionesses continue to roar in Euro 2017, is the shift in women’s sport finally happening? As a result will the financial rewards start to follow?

As the women’s Euro 2017 kicked off a couple of weeks ago, it made me think of the gulf between women’s and men’s sport. The cult following the men’s team have when embarking on tournaments are for the fans nothing less than emotionally draining, financially challenging and a liver-destroying couple of months!

We all know that men’s sport is heavily endorsed with considerable backing from continuous sponsorship streams which creates a buoyant football market. But, how does this translate into the women’s football world? The answer currently is it doesn’t! However, with viewing figures reaching new heights for England vs France, you wonder whether this is the start of a shift of opinion towards women’s sport.

You often associate the need to protect wealth with male footballers but with women’s sport on an upward curve, it has never been more sensible to financially plan in the women’s sport world. With people becoming wealthier and the stat that if you are born today you will live till you are 120, then the idea of protecting your wealth has never been more important. In particular before you get married and if you are already on the marital train then it isn’t too late to make a financial planning stop.

A pre-nuptial agreement does not have the legal standing of a Court Order as they are not governed by any legislation. However, following the case of Radmacher v Granatino, the law is now more defined than it has ever been. In general terms pre-nuptial agreements had not been enforceable under English law because it is not possible to oust the jurisdiction of the court in such matters. The courts had traditionally adopted the view that such agreements contravene public policy because they undermine the concept of marriage. However as a result of the above case, the courts’ attitude in this respect is changing and is very likely to continue to do so. A Pre-Nuptial Agreement shows intention to create legal relations between the parties, so although the Supreme Court did not go so far as to say that Pre-Nuptial Agreements will automatically be binding, English courts are currently ‘bound to have regard to them’. The Supreme Court stated: “the Court should give effect to a nuptial agreement that is freely entered into by each party with a full appreciation of its implications unless in the circumstances prevailing it would not be fair to hold the parties to the same.”

There is now an appetite for the Court to consider whether pre-nuptial agreements are a clear indication of how the parties wanted to divide their matrimonial assets on Divorce at the time of their marriage. Indeed, if you are already married and do not have a Pre- Nuptial Agreement then a Post Nuptial agreement is not outside the realms of possibilities open to you. However, what is clear is that if you are already married and your spouse has entered into wedlock with you, the chances of them signing an agreement potentially limiting their entitlement if you divorce may be slim. It is therefore important to mention it early on and consider it before you wed in the first place. There is no point limiting your options if you can easily consider and plan before your big day. There is an underlying requirement in any event, that if you are to enter into a pre-nuptial agreement it must be completed 21 days before your wedding or it may not be enforceable. This is because the court does not want either party to feel under duress with one hand being twisted behind their back.

The fundamental point is as individuals become wealthier and older, the need to plan becomes more prevalent. If you are a Lioness, you are on the wave of putting your name in the history books. This is not only because you have landed yourself in the semi-finals of a major tournament but also because you are on the cusp of changing the perception, financial reward and following of women’s football and sport for good.

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