



The British Are Coming

By [Scott Paul](#)
TBS Editor-in-Chief
Posted Jul 11, 2006

The World Cup may be over, but there is still a chance to watch quality international soccer. Tonight (Tuesday) at 7:00 p.m. the Cougars host the biggest game in BYU soccer history when the Coventry City Sky Blues from England's Championship League come to Provo for a showdown on South Field.

Along side the main entrance to Brigham Young University is a sign declaring "The World Is Our Campus." This week, [BYU](#) may need to change that proclamation to "The World Is *On* Campus." Monday morning over 50 delegates and representatives from 30 different countries arrived at BYU for the World Family Policy Forum. When Coventry City arrives at South Field tonight there will be guests from at least 34 nationalities on campus.

The match tonight will go a long way toward establishing the reputation of BYU *and its fans* in the international soccer community. A bad first impression and BYU may be hard pressed to get another club of this caliber to visit Provo.

This is about a representing the university, or perhaps more accurately not embarrassing the university. The smallest crowd Coventry played for last season was 16,156. Their average home attendance was 21,301. The only way to do this event justice is to pack all 3,000 seats in the stands with a sell out crowd and have fans lined up two-deep along the fences.

Of course, there is more to this game than BYU's international image. There is also going to be some great soccer played. Coventry City is easily the best team ever to play a match in Provo, and that includes BYU's games against Real Salt Lake. Soccer fans, and even those with a mild curiosity, have a unique opportunity to see some of the better soccer talent in the world.

The Championship League, in which Coventry plays, is the second highest league in England. Each year the best three teams from the Championship League are promoted to the English Premier League, the best soccer league in the world. The bottom three Premier League teams are relegated to the Championship League. Players from the

Championship League regularly sign contracts with Premier League clubs or other major European clubs.

The Championship League is a step up from Major League Soccer, the top U.S. league. Stern John from Trinidad and Tobago played for the Columbus Crew where he was the leading MLS scorer. When the chance came to play for Coventry, he left MLS without hesitation.

BYU plays in the Premiere Development League, which is three steps down from MLS in the U.S. soccer hierarchy. There is a substantial difference in the talent level between the Championship League and the PDL. Tonight's contest will truly be a battle between David and Goliath. To put it in context, this would be like BYU football playing the [Houston Texans](#), or BYU basketball playing Golden State, or baseball playing Kansas City.

Whether it is to root for the underdog, represent the university, be a part of history, or just watch the beautiful game, there are plenty of reasons to show up at South Field tonight.

Tickets can be purchased at www.byutickets.com or at the gate before the game.

For more information on Coventry's trip to Provo, click on the following link to visit their website: [Coventry City Home Page](#)