



Charles Mota, a Tottenham fans from Canada, planned to watch their match against Manchester City

FOOTBALL

## Postponement of all Premier League games has cost us so much money, fans say

Matthew Kayanja

Saturday September 10 2022, 12.01am, The Times

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Overseas fans have wasted thousands of pounds travelling to see Premier League games that were postponed after the Queen's death, amid widespread outrage that football is one of the few sports whose fixtures have been called off this weekend.

Unable to use their tickets at future games, and unlikely to get refunds on flights and accommodation, many have missed out on carefully planned and budgeted for trips.

Charles Mota, a Tottenham Hotspur-supporting lawyer who lives just north of Toronto, Canada, planned to watch Manchester City versus Tottenham today along with his younger brother, a City fan.

“We specifically targeted this game as two brothers on a vacation to see our teams play each other,” Mota said. “My brother supported [Manchester City] when Mario Balotelli joined the club; we’re Italian by background and that was his favourite player. I started supporting Spurs in 2011; originally it was Gareth Bale that got my attention.

“It would have meant more to do a moment of silence or commemoration with all the fans in attendance and also applauding for the Queen. As sad as it is we all knew that this day would eventually come.

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“Luckily for me, I did get to see the Tottenham Champions League game [against Marseille] on Wednesday but my brother didn’t get to see any of the games with his club. But seeing our two teams play against each other was the purpose of the trip and and expected to be the highlight. I’m just disappointed more than anything else.”

Mota, 40, said their flights cost roughly £1,000 each and accommodation for their stay from Tuesday until Monday, plus train travel from London to Manchester, brought their total

outlay to more than £2,000 each. “I can’t legitimately ask the airlines or hotels to give me any money back — they provided the services they were expected to provide,” Mota added.

“We had talked about the trip since before Covid, because I wanted to see the new stadium.”

Sumeet, 26, an engineer from Edmonton, Canada, missed out on seeing his team, Arsenal, play Everton tomorrow. “I tried to watch an Arsenal game against Burnley in May 2020 and it was postponed because of the pandemic. Maybe I should stop booking trips to the UK, it’s not a good omen,” he said.

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Ashley Mofrad, 38, from Vancouver, Canada, also came to watch the Arsenal v Everton game along with his mother.

“Obviously the passing of the Queen is massive,” he said. “But the Premier League [missed] a chance to show how much the Queen meant to people. There are only a certain amount of vacation days and now that’s it. I’ve been supporting the club since I was eight and founded the Vancouver Arsenal supporters group. It’s a tough pill to swallow.

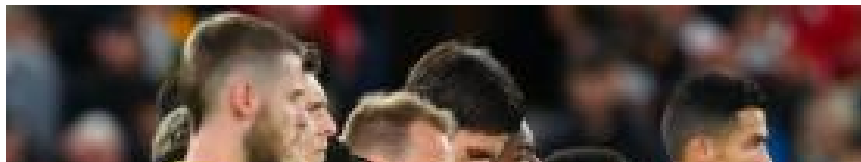
“My mother’s probably just as disappointed as I am. She’s not a big Arsenal fan but I think she’s more a fan of me.”

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