

## The country where football continues

### Elementary

#### 1 Warmer

Match the countries and their capital cities.

- |               |             |
|---------------|-------------|
| 1. Taiwan     | a. Dushanbe |
| 2. Belarus    | b. Managua  |
| 3. Tajikistan | c. Taipei   |
| 4. Nicaragua  | d. Minsk    |

#### 2 Key words

Fill the gaps in the sentences with these key words from the text. The paragraph numbers will help you.

season

postpone

cancel

live

stadium

miss

1. You can watch a \_\_\_\_\_ television programme at the same time as it happens. (para 1)
2. If people \_\_\_\_\_ a football match, they decide to play it at a later time. (para 2)
3. If people \_\_\_\_\_ a football match, they decide that it will not happen at all. (para 2)
4. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a period of the year when a particular sport is played. (para 2)
5. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a large building where people watch sports such as football. (para 2)
6. If you \_\_\_\_\_ something, you feel unhappy or sad because you do not have it. (para 4)

#### 3 Find the information

Find the following information in the text as quickly as possible.

1. When did major football leagues begin postponing matches?
2. When was the last game fans could watch in Spain?
3. What is the population of Belarus?
4. When did the football season begin in Belarus?
5. How many teams play in the Belarussian top league?
6. How many teams in the Belarussian top league come from the capital city?

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7 May, 2020

- 1 The coronavirus crisis is very bad news for sport. Millions of sports fans around the world normally watch football, rugby, basketball and other sports live on TV but since early March, 2020, this has not been possible.
- 2 All major football leagues began postponing matches during the first two weeks of March. Some leagues even cancelled the entire season. The last match of the English Premier League was on Monday, 9 March, when Leicester City beat Aston Villa 4–0. In Spain, Eibar's game against Real Sociedad on Tuesday, 10 March was the last game fans were able to watch in the stadium or on TV. In Germany, Borussia Monchengladbach's 2–1 defeat of Cologne on Wednesday, 11 March was the last time football fans there saw a live game. With no live TV, football clubs around the world, and in Europe in particular, are already losing a lot of money, especially money from television deals.
- 3 But there is one country in Europe where professional football has continued. In Belarus, a small country of just 9.5 million people, football is normally played from spring to autumn because the weather in winter is too cold. The football season there actually began on Thursday, 19 March. There are 16 teams in the Belarussian top league, including four from the capital city, Minsk.
- 4 With football fans really missing live games on TV, the Belarussian league has signed television deals with several countries, including Russia, Ukraine and India. It is also possible for football fans to watch live games from Belarus on social media. At the moment, no one knows when, or if, the other European leagues will start again in 2020. So, for now, if you are a football fan, it's football from Belarus (and also from Tajikistan, Taiwan and Nicaragua).

#### 4 Comprehension check

Match the beginnings and endings to make statements about the text.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Watching live sport on TV has not been possible for the last few weeks ... | a. ... continuing in Tajikistan, Taiwan and Nicaragua.                  |
| 2. Some football leagues around the world ...                                 | b. ... because of the coronavirus crisis.                               |
| 3. Apart from Belarus, football is also ...                                   | c. ... signed television deals with several countries around the world. |
| 4. Winters are very cold in Belarus, so ...                                   | d. ... losing money from television deals because of the crisis.        |
| 5. The Belarussian league has ...   | e. ... football is normally played from spring to autumn.               |
| 6. Many football clubs around the world are ...                               | f. ... have cancelled the entire season.                                |

#### 5 Two-word phrases

Match the words in the left-hand column with the words in the right-hand column to make expressions from the text.

- |             |               |
|-------------|---------------|
| 1. football | a. news       |
| 2. bad      | b. particular |
| 3. social   | c. season     |
| 4. in       | d. media      |

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#### 6 Chunks

Rearrange the words to make phrases from the text.

1. has this not possible been
2. fans millions around of sports world the
3. Wednesday March the on of eleventh
4. Thursday nineteenth the on March of

#### 7 Prepositions

Complete the phrases from the text using these prepositions.

for

since

on

around

1. live \_\_\_\_\_ TV
2. bad news \_\_\_\_\_ sport
3. millions of sports fans \_\_\_\_\_ the world
4. \_\_\_\_\_ early March

#### 8 Discussion

- Should football clubs finish this season by playing matches in stadiums without fans? Why? Why not?