

## **SPORT WORTH OVER £2.6 BILLION A YEAR TO THE SOUTH EAST'S ECONOMY**

Research commissioned by **Sport England** shows that sport-related economic activity in the South East reached a record high of £2.64 billion in 2005. This includes everything from sales of sports clothing and equipment, to jobs in the sports industry - a 10 per cent increase since 2003.

The South East's sport-related economy has outstripped that of any other region in England, and the value added to the South East economy by sport-related activity in 2005 was 75 per cent greater than the English average (£2,640 million compared to £1,519 million).

The South East also has the greatest level of sports participation in the country; bringing in an impressive £640 million to the nation's economy.

Judith Dean, South East Regional Director at Sport England, said:

"This research shows how important a role sport plays in the local economy. More people than ever before are spending money on sports-related activities, whether it is watching sport, joining gyms through to buying the latest sports equipment.

We hope that this increase in activity, equating to some £7.9 billion since 2000, will also help get more people active in 2008. As sporting spend increases in the region, we hope it will give people a better, and healthier, quality of life."

Key findings from the report include:

- Sport-related economic activity in the South East increased from £2.41 billion in 2003 to £2.64 billion in 2005; an increase of almost 10%\*.
- Consumer expenditure on sport in the South East increased from £2.16 billion in 2000 to £2.78 billion in 2005; an increase of nearly 30%.
- The highest category of consumer spending is 'participation subscription and fees' (this includes gym membership) at £642 million in 2005 - more than sports-clothing and gambling categories.
- Spending on sports-related equipment in the South East stood at £195 million in 2005, more than any of the other English regions.
- Sport-related employment in the South East stood at 71,600 jobs in 2005, an increase of 6,600 jobs (10%) since 2000.

The research was carried out by the Sport Industry Research Centre (SIRC) at Sheffield Hallam University on behalf of Sport England.

\*This is based on current prices.

**- ends -**

For further information, or to request an interview with Judith Dean, please contact Launch Group:

Katrina Brady	020 7758 3933
Sophie McKenzie	020 7758 3948
Chris Seymour	020 7758 3926

**Notes to Editors:**

- The Economic Impact of Sport has been assessed across England as a whole (from 1985-2005) and separately for each region (2000-2005).
- Sport England is a non-departmental public body and National Lottery distributor. We are committed to creating a world class community sports development system and increasing participation in sport. Sport England has been a statutory consultee on planning applications affecting playing fields since August 1996. We object to any application that is detrimental to sport, unless alternative provision of at least equivalent value is found elsewhere.