

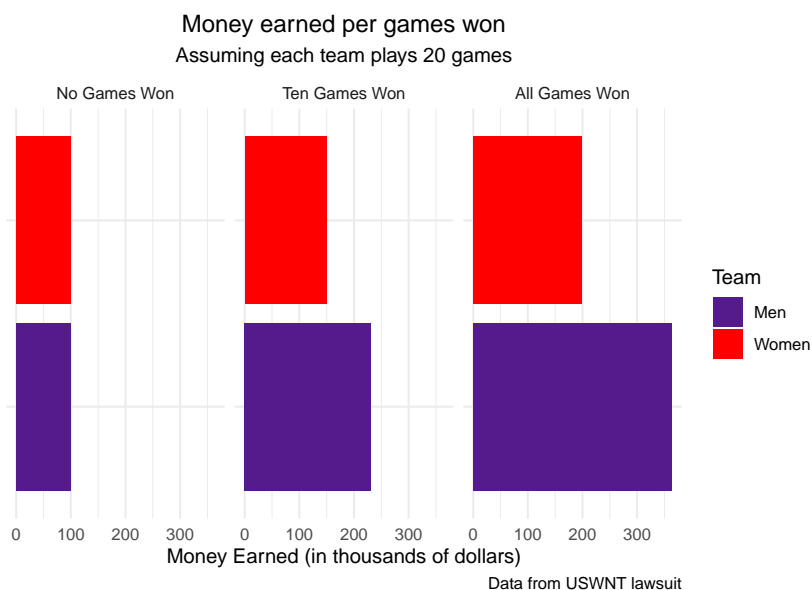
# State of Women's Soccer 2019

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In March 2019, the 28 members of the United States Women's National Soccer Team (USWNT) filed a class-action lawsuit against their employer, U.S. Soccer. The lawsuit accuses U.S. soccer of violating the Equal Pay Act and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by consistently paying USWNT athletes less than their male counterparts (players on the U.S. Men's National Team or USMNT). The lawsuit, and the subsequent dominance of the USWNT in the 2019 Women's World Cup, have drawn significant attention to the issue of equal pay in professional soccer. However, the USWNT and USMNT have different pay structures that makes it difficult to compare their earnings. This project seeks to explain the USWNT and USMNT compensation structures and earning potentials in a way that allows for useful comparisons. It will also go beyond the USWNT to examine how professional female soccer players are compensated throughout the world. Please feel free to contact me at [bstadler@g.harvard.edu](mailto:bstadler@g.harvard.edu) with any questions about this project.

## Regular Season Pay

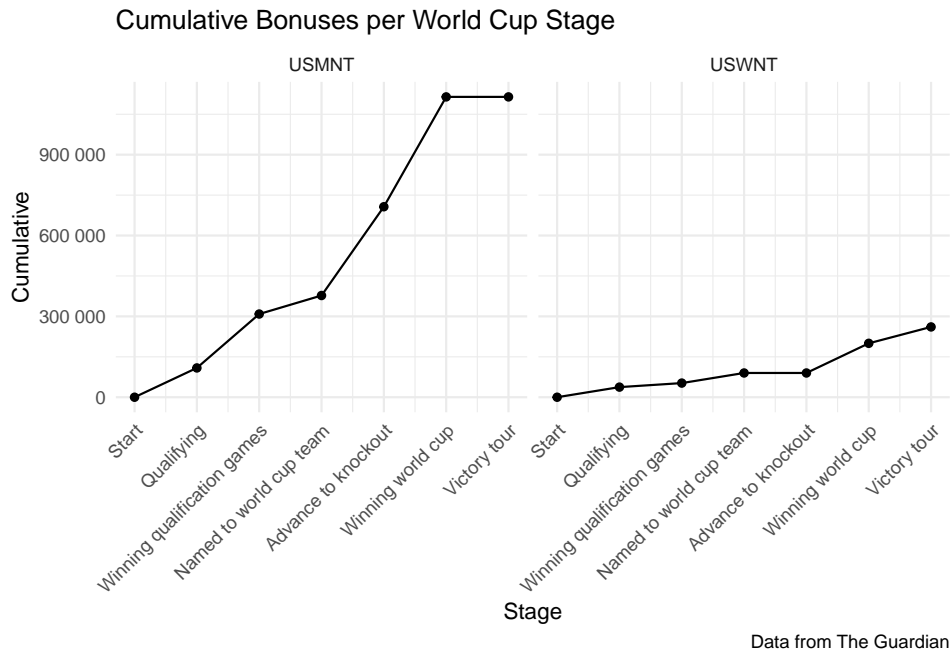
The USWNT and USMNT have different payment structures, which makes it different to compare their salaries. USWNT players make a base salary of \$100,000 and earn bonuses of on average \$4,950 for games they win. The actual amount they earn may depend on the FIFA rating of their opponent. The USMNT does not have a base salary, but players make a bonus of \$5,000 for losing a game and up to \$17,625 for a win, depending on the opponent's ranking. On average, USMNT players would make around \$13,166 per game that they win. The USMNT and USWNT also play differing number of games per year, further complicating efforts to directly compare their salaries. The graph below shows how much the USMNT and USWNT would make if each team played 20 games, depending on the number of games won.



## World Cup Pay

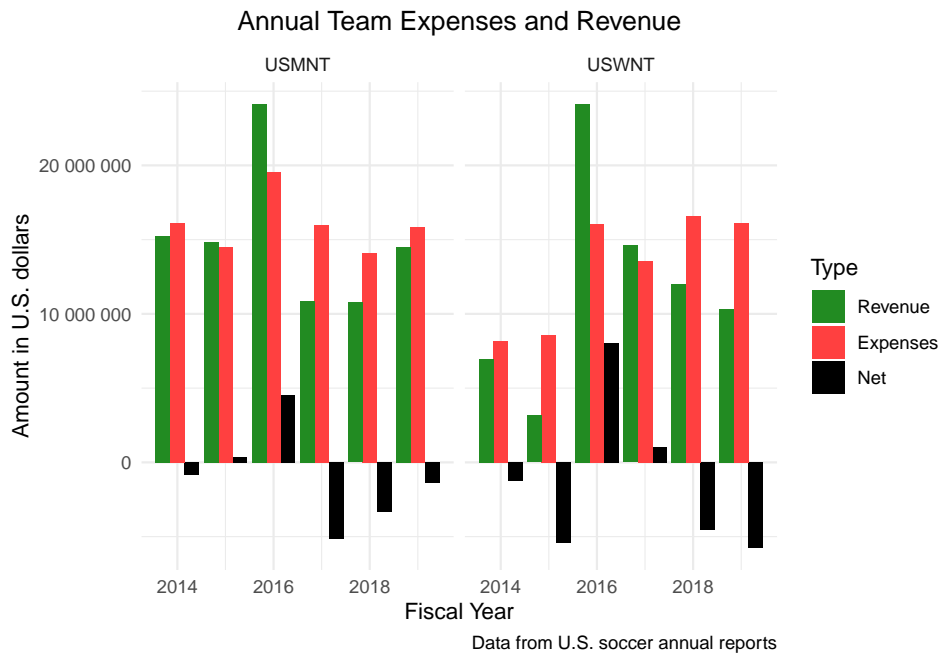
USMNT and USWNT players also make different amounts in bonuses for each stage of the world cup they reach, from being named to the world cup team to winning the world cup. The different bonuses made at

each stage add up to quite a difference. This chart shows the cumulative amount that a USWNT or USMNT player would walk away with if their team exited the tournament at each respective stage.



## Market realities?

In response to the USWNT lawsuit, U.S. Soccer has claimed that it is justified in paying female athletes less because of the market reality that women's soccer generates less revenue. This graph shows USWNT and USMNT revenue, expenses, and net income for fiscal year 2014 through the projected values for 2019. While the USWNT had generated less income for U.S. soccer in some years, the reverse is true in others.



## How much are female World Cup athletes paid around the world?

The question of equal (or unequal) investment in women's and men's soccer goes beyond the USWNT lawsuit. Please visit this project's [shiny app](#) for more information on the state of women's soccer worldwide.

## Is gender equality correlated with performance?

If paying male and female soccer players equally increases the performance of women's teams, that fact should incentivize national soccer governing bodies to do so. However, the real picture is more complicated, with gender equality (which I am using as a proxy for equal pay) only loosely correlated with better performance. GDP is much more strongly correlated with performance, suggesting it is not equality of investment between male and female teams that increases performance, but level of investment (as richer countries are able to invest more in their soccer teams).

