

A team of researchers based in Germany and Scotland have come up with a mathematical theory for football scores, including the World Cup.

Leading experts on the “Mathematics of Football” will be at Coventry University at the end of the week to give a lecture on the subject.

Scientists from the University of Leipzig and Heriot-Watt University have co-authored a scientific paper which shows that one of the classic clichés of soccer is true – when a team scores a goal it gives them confidence!

Dr. Elmar Bittner, Prof. Wolfhard Janke, Dr Andreas Nussbaumer and Dr. Martin Weigel examined the results from the German men’s and women’s leagues (22,000 matches in total) and results from all previous World Cup tournaments (3,400 matches) and found that high-scoring games were happening far too often.

However, the high-scoring matches were not solely a result of the skills of the various teams, but the shot of confidence they got which spurred them on to score again and again.

The research team have designed a mathematical model using these findings and their work is receiving world-wide recognition.

Dr. Bittner, Prof. Janke and Dr. Weigel are guests of Coventry University for a conference called “The 16th Workshop in Lattice Field Theory and Statistical Physics” which is being hosted by the Applied Mathematics Research Centre.

Dr. Elmar Bittner will be giving the lecture on Friday 30 June.

Dr. Ralph Kenna, Deputy Director of the Centre, said:

“We are delighted to have such distinguished speakers at our workshop, especially as their research, coinciding with the World Cup, is attracting such international attention for mathematics. It is a pleasure for us to welcome such prestigious scientists, one of whom will be delivering the “Mathematics of Football” lecture.”

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For further information and requests to interview one of the visiting mathematicians, contact Dr Ralph Kenna on 024 7688 8594 (mobile 07879 254 337) or Ali Bushnell, External Press and Media Relations Officer on 024 7688 8245.