

British NFL Betting Grows As Wagers Remain Foul Play At Home

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The first of three NFL games in London this year will be played Sunday at Wembley Stadium, and British sportsbooks are expecting another increase in betting even as wagering on games remains outlawed on the other side of the Atlantic.

Betting is increasing by about 40 percent per year on NFL games in London, but the amount pales compared with the sum that would be wagered if sports betting is legalized in New Jersey and other states, according to a top executive of the betting company William Hill.

"It's not really comparable," said Joe Asher, who is based in Las Vegas as CEO of William Hill in the United States.

"The NFL's popularity in London is nothing close to what it is in New Jersey," Asher said.

A better comparison, Asher said, might be between New Jersey and Nevada, which is the only state fully exempt from the federal betting ban prescribed by the [Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act \(PASPA\)](#) of 1992.

If the Miami Dolphins and Oakland Raiders were playing in Las Vegas instead of London on Sunday, and gamblers in New Jersey could bet on the game, Asher is confident which state would generate more wagers.

"I'm comfortable saying that we estimate the market in New Jersey would be three to four times the Nevada market," Asher said.

The other two NFL games in London this year will feature the Atlanta Falcons against the Detroit Lions on October 26 and the Dallas Cowboys against the Jacksonville Jaguars on November 9.

The games in London are an example of the hypocrisy of the NFL in [opposing the legalization of sports betting](#), according to Daniel L. Wallach, a gaming attorney in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

"The NFL says they will not expand into Las Vegas due to the presence of sports betting, yet they host games every year in jurisdictions such as London where sports betting is legal," Wallach said.

"This exemplifies the insincerity of the NFL's position on the issue and really does show that it is all about the money."

Wallach also cited a remark earlier this month by National Basketball Association commissioner Adam Silver who said expansion of legalized sports betting across America is "inevitable."

"Above all else, these leagues have shown that they monetize just about anything, including doing business with fantasy sports operators," Wallach said.

At the same time, the NFL and NBA are among the nation's major sports leagues opposing New Jersey's [ongoing effort](#) to legalize sports betting.

The U.S. Justice Department, which is supporting the leagues' effort to block sports betting in New Jersey, is scheduled to submit legal briefs on Monday to [U.S. District Judge Michael Shipp](#) of Trenton, New Jersey.

The leagues are attempting to block New Jersey's efforts to rescind its statutory prohibitions on sports wagering, allowing tracks and Atlantic City casinos to offer bets on games.

Earlier this year, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear related legal arguments by New Jersey that the federal ban in PASPA is

unconstitutional.

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