

Irish Examiner – 02.12.2011

Colm O'Connor

Games in Ukraine 'could add €1,000 to travel costs'



AVOIDING the tournament big guns isn't the only ambition for Irish football fans ahead of this evening's draw for the 2012 Euro Championships.

Republic of Ireland supporters will also be praying for group games in Poland and not in neighbouring co-host Ukraine.

Eoghan Corry, editor of Travel Extra, believes games in Ukraine could add at least €1,000 to travel costs.

"Poland is the dream; Ukraine is the nightmare," Mr Corry said. "Poland is easily accessible by land and air and is well equipped to handle large numbers given their hotels and accommodation. Ukraine is more difficult to get too, and with the exception of Kiev, there is the issue of where to stay as they are serious lacking in terms of hotels and beds.

"Our dream draws would be in Groups A and C which are in Poland; Group B and D would represent trips to the Ukraine, questionable accommodation and huge internal travel."

He divides those intending to travel into two categories — those who will go on a package deal and those who will make their own arrangements to head east.

"For those going to the tour operator route, take your time, don't act too quickly... The big plus is that you are certain of tickets and hotels.

"At a minimum be prepared to spend €1,500 to get a basic package if the Irish games are in Poland. Add at least another €1,000 onto that if we end up in Ukraine."

And for those with a greater spirit of adventure?

"If Ireland are drawn in Poland, then get onto the Ryanair website straight away, as those flights will be booked out in a matter of minutes. But again going independently means that you have to source tickets. So you have to decide if that is a risk worth taking."