



Spatial Economics Research Centre

Monday, 16 May 2011

Manchester: Top of the (northern) league

The double success of Manchester City and United at the weekend had journalists groping around for something to say about the wider implications. In these circumstances, linking football success to the wider economy appears to provide a ready made solution.

So, in yesterday's [Observer](#), we read: "The success of the two clubs cements Manchester's position as the powerhouse of the north." In practice, of course, the link between football and economic success is pretty tenuous. In fact, if anything, any causal effects are likely to operate in the other direction. Anecdotes suggest that it is easier to attract big name stars to some places than others - Manchester's lively nightlife may well help the clubs in this regard. The Observer story also suggests that Manchester's improving economic environment may have helped secure the massive outside investment that City currently benefit from.

I remember similar stories about Hull a couple of seasons ago, Blackpool last season (although annoyingly couldn't find the links). Happily [Norfolk radi](#) provide a good example for one of this season's championship promotion sides. Of course, none of this matters much although it does raise concerns about, for example, [local authorities spending money](#) on their local club in the hope of some future economic bonus.

Posted by [Prof Henry G. Overman](#) on [Monday, May 16, 2011](#)

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