

WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

ISSUE 39

MAGAZINE

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AUNZ TO HOST WWC 2023

All the latest as Australia and New Zealand win the 2023 Women's World Cup bid, Ammo interviews Kerys Harrop, Allie Coker looks at the mass exodus at Liverpool and all the latest transfer news from across the leagues.

THE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL MAGAZINE



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Hello and welcome to Issue 39!

Hello everyone, welcome to our latest issue.

It's safe to say clubs have been busy since the transfer window opened! It's been a struggle keeping up with everyone's news but hopefully we have managed to pull together a quick low-down of the latest moves.

This month this issue includes Ammo interviews Birmingham City's leaving captain Kerys Harrop, Charlotte Spacey is back with a look at Millie Bright plus we have an exclusive interview with Upton Park Ladies manager Daniel Merrix.

As always we have all the latest news from across all the leagues, home nations and news stories from around the world and look into the exciting news that the 2023 Women's World Cup will be held in Australia and New Zealand—anyone else started planning their holidays?

The country is starting to open up, and we are looking forward to the completion of the Women's Champions League but as always, please keep yourselves and your families safe.

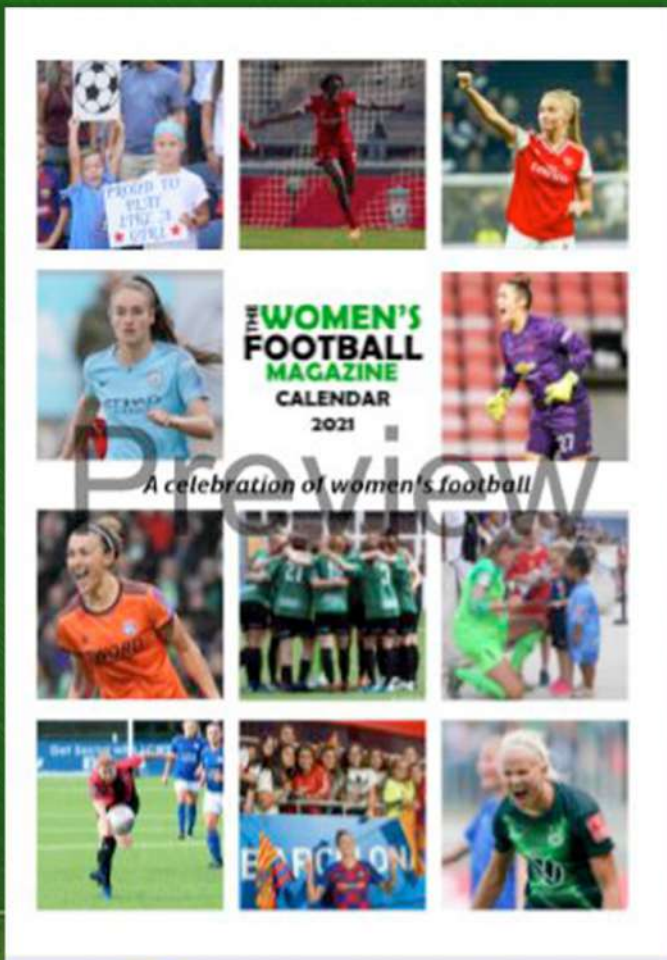
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Contents

WSL

7-8 Looking back over the WSL season

9 What's next?

10-12 The stars of the WSL

13-14 Ammo's Antics with Kerys Harrop

15-16 All things Bright

18-19 West Ham support victims of domestic abuse

20-21 Schillaci retires

23 Villa Women to play at Walsall

24-26 Transfers

27-28 Scottie Talks

29 Miedema wins FWA award

31 WSL award nominees

CHAMPIONSHIP

33-34 Looking back

35-36 Blackburn Rovers launch new pathway

37-38 Transfers

39-40 Game Changers podcasts

41-42 Scholarships at MMU

PREMIER LEAGUE

44 Bolton Ladies split from Wanderers

45 Gillingham ditch Ladies team

46-48 Latest team

49-50 Hitting between the Stix

GRASSROOTS

52-53 Millwall Lionesses appoint new manager

54 Q&A with Katie Whitmore

55-58 Exclusive: Upton Park Ladies

59 North Leigh ditches Ladies team

60 Simon Says

61 Maverick unveils new children's book

CUPS

63 Women's Champions League latest

HOME NATIONS

66-67 FA Women's Football Archive

68-69 Boost for Scottish Women's Football

70 Rangers coach departs

71 Berwick Rangers

73 Cascade Ladies promoted

74 Abergavenny new boss

INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENTS

77-79 Australia and NZ win WWC bid

AROUND THE WORLD

81-84 NWSL Challenge Cup latest including rosters

85-89 News from around the world

90 New children's book



WOMEN'S SUPER LEAGUE



Looking back over the WSL season



By Ali Rampling

On May 25 2020, the Football Association announced that the WSL season would be ended with immediate effect as a result of the coronavirus.

Eleven days later, the FA confirmed that the season was to be decided via a points-per-game ratio. Chelsea leapfrogged Manchester City at the league summit and were WSL champions for the third time. Emma Hayes' side had sat a point behind City when the league was originally suspended back in March, but had played one game fewer.

Upon being awarded the title, Chelsea donated the £100,000 prize money - the inaugural WSL prize pot - to UK domestic abuse charity Refuge.

"It's a charity that's close to the hearts and minds of the Women's team, and is very important to our owner Mr Abramovich and everyone at the club," Hayes said.

"It makes me proud our club is supporting those less fortunate in times of need.

"It's an important message. It's a campaign that's really dear to us and the best way we can demonstrate our support further is by committing our prize money towards it and helping those in need."

Manchester City narrowly missed out on the title but secured the final Champions League spot ahead of Arsenal, who were four points behind the Citizens but had played one game fewer prior to the league's suspension.

Although the Gunners failed to successfully defend their title, striker Vivianne Miedema did win the golden boot for a second successive season. The Dutch forward hit 16 goals, two more than Chelsea's Beth England.

At the other end of the table, Liverpool were relegated. Just six years earlier the club had

been celebrating consecutive WSL titles. The Reds were bottom of the table when the league was suspended, having won just once all season.

However, Vicky Jepson's side were just a point behind second bottom Birmingham and three behind Bristol City before the season was curtailed. It was a lucky escape for the Blues, who had scored just five times all season and had suffered five straight defeats since the turn of the year.

Liverpool released a statement following their relegation, which read: "Liverpool FC is disappointed by the decision on how the 2019-20 Women's Super League season has been concluded.

"As proud founder members of the WSL, our fans greatly value our position within the league and we hoped for the opportunity to secure our status on the pitch.

"We enjoyed several notable firsts as a women's team this season – including a first WSL game at Anfield – and we are committed to continuing to grow the

women's game in this country with our fellow teams."

A selection of Liverpool players who departed the club at the ends of their contracts, including Courtney Sweetman-Kirk, Fran Kitching and Christie Murray, took to social media to write about their desire for a new, challenging environment where they can enjoy their football again.

Manchester United's debut WSL season ended with them finishing as the 'best of the rest'. The Reds finished fourth, with Reading fifth. Everton leapfrogged Tottenham into sixth, with West Ham and Brighton eighth and ninth respectively.

United manager Casey Stoney gave a positive assessment of her side's maiden WSL campaign, writing on Twitter: "For this team to finish 4th in our 1st ever season is credit to my staff & players. To my staff for their work ethic & commitment, to my players for their incredible drive & willingness to learn & improve, And finally to our fans who we can't wait to see again... THANK YOU!!"



So what about the women's game for next season?



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Following the conclusion of the season, the FA's director of the women's professional game Kelly Simmons held a press conference looking ahead to the next season.

- England's top women's leagues are planning to start next season on the weekend of 5-6 September.
- It is expected that the new season would start behind closed doors.
- The women's transfer window will now open on 19 June and close on 10 September.
- Provisionally, clubs' pre-season training will begin in July.

Simmons said: "We looked if we could come back earlier, but we want to put in place the

right pre-season for the players. We want to make sure we protect them from injury, having been out for so long.

"That 5-6 September date is a Fifa men's international fixture slot at the moment. That's when we launched the season last year and had a fantastic impact.

"The other thing about August is it looks like the Uefa Women's Champions League completion tournament might land there, so that's one to watch."

The FA is still keen to finish the 2019-20 FA Cup, but it remains in discussion.

If it is possible to resume, the games will be most likely played in September.

The Stars of the WSL



By Emily Cassidy

In recent news, the FA Women's Super League board agreed to end the season of the topflight of women's football, with immediate effect. The decision to use points per game was ultimately chosen over voiding the league, which saw Liverpool relegated and Chelsea crowned champions for the 3rd time.

With this news, I looked at the world-class stars that set the 19/20 season of the WSL alight.

Bethany England—Chelsea

Since her loan stint at Liverpool in the 2017/18 season, Beth England initially thought her Chelsea career was probably over as she struggled with her confidence.

Since then, she has shown her potential to be a great player, which led to her being rewarded in August 2019 with her first senior England call up for friendly fixtures.

This season she has been the standout star for me, and probably many others, having scored an impressive 14 goals in 15 league games. She has shown her range in the type of goals she has scored, alternating from a long-range left-footed effort against Tottenham in September, all the way to powerful headers giving the opposing keeper no chance. The 26-year old's goals and work rate has proven to be a vitally important factor in why Chelsea won the 2019/20 season.

A magnificent footballer, who has been a pleasure to watch over the season.

Guro Reiten – Chelsea

Just like England, the Norwegian midfielder maestro, has been another vitally important factor in why Chelsea won the league this season.

Nobody created more chances than Guro Reiten in the WSL, her stats showing that she has eight assists in fifteen games. On top of this, she was only outscored at her club by striker England, netting 5 times in the WSL this season. Having not spent much time in this new league, or time to adapt, makes her statistics for the season even more impressive.

A hard-working individual, with great movement on and off the ball makes her an easy name to put on the team sheet every week for manager Emma Hayes.

Leah Williamson – Arsenal

Even though she is still only 23 years old, Leah Williamson is slowly establishing herself as one of the best defenders in the WSL. This season she has been given a new role at time, playing slightly higher up, and it seems to have only benefited her.

Due to many injuries at Arsenal, Williamson has showed her control and ball playing abilities when she was trusted to step into a new midfield role. For me, the 19/20 season has arguably been her best, and Williamson is still yet to reach her full potential.

To make her even more impressive, no one in the WSL completed more passes than Williamson, proving her accuracy and ball-playing abilities is a clear strength of hers. On top of her passing abilities, she has shown she is a strong consistent defender who has 66% of tackles made.

A strong defender, who has shown her versatility throughout the season. A pleasure to watch and huge asset to Arsenal.

Chloe Kelly – Everton

Chloe Kelly has burst onto the scene this season, having scored 9 goals in 11 league appearances for Everton this season. Currently in her 2nd spell with Everton, Kelly made a permanent



transfer to the Blues in January of 2018 and has not looked back since. However, this week it was revealed that Kelly would be leaving Everton, with the name of her new club yet to be announced.

Statistics proving she is a defender's worst nightmare, Kelly is the most fouled player this season of the WSL. Additionally, she has the most-successful dribbles in the WSL proving she's not afraid to drive forward and attack defenders face on.

Very direct and exciting player, who is also yet to reach her full potential. Unplayable on her day. Will be interesting to see which club she will be continuing her journey at.

Gemma Bonner – Manchester City

The stand-out star of Manchester City's defence this season, has unarguably been

Gemma Bonner. She has won an impressive 68% of tackles made, and 61% of aerial duels.

The 28-year-old is an experienced defender who brings leadership and constancy to compliment the young stars of City's team. Bonner has also come up trumps in front of goal, having bagged three goals this season all the way from CB.

A strong consistent performer in the City side, which others can constantly rely on. Managers dream to have in the not only on the pitch every week, but as a older figure in the dressing room.





Ammo's Antics

Hi everyone, Ammo here.

This months Ammos antics is a little different.

Without much training or football to talk about I've taken time out to interview Blues Captain Fantastic Kerys Harrop.

Kerys was part of the England U19 squad that won the European championships in 2009 and with Birmingham City reached the FA cup final in 2012 and the semi finals of the champions league on 2014.

Kerys is also a key part of the fantastic grass roots sister club programme at Birmingham and is also a regular visitor to our RTC training sessions.

How's lockdown been for you?

Lockdown has surprisingly been ok, especially in the first few weeks when we had that glorious weather. I have been kept busy with carrying out my fitness training still, marking assignments for the University I teach at and I have also completed a couple of online courses to keep me busy and keep the brain ticking over. It has also been nice to do things that I wouldn't normally have time to do, such as colouring books and puzzles.

They always help to pass a bit of time! In more recent weeks, with the restrictions being

lifted, I have been meeting up with some of my teammates to do technical sessions which has been really good, as I was starting to miss the girls!

What's been your happiest footballing moment?

I have many happy football memories, with Birmingham City Women FC and England, but I have to say one of the happiest moments of my career was winning the World University Games representing Great Britain in 2013. The whole experience was amazing, it was like a mini Olympics, but for University students.

It was held in Kazan in Russia and it really was a special experience to watch other countries in different sports and to meet many of the different athletes. The fact we won the Gold medal as well, and were crowned World Champions, made it that extra bit special.

We had a brilliant team, mostly made up on England U23 players, such as Fran Kirby and Mary Earps to name a few. I was very happy when we won that competition and we certainly celebrated it in style!

If you hadn't become a footballer what do you think you would be doing now?

As well as playing football, I also lecture one day a week at a University, so I guess that is what I would be doing as a full-time job. I also envisaged myself being a P.E teacher at a secondary school, but I have found myself lecturing at University level which I really enjoy.

I imagine and hope that will be my career



path after retiring from football, but who knows what is around the corner.

Which footballer did you look up to when you were growing up?

When I was younger, Kelly Smith was my idol. She played for Arsenal and England and because she was a midfielder and was left footed, she was a role model for me as I am also left footed and used to play in centre midfield. She was a fantastic footballer, technically gifted and would score some amazing goals.

I still believe now that she is the best women's footballer to have played in an England shirt.

What do you think women's football will look like in 5 years time?

I hope that we will continue to see games having sell-out crowds and that women's teams will have more opportunities to play at their men's stadiums. I imagine there will be more live coverage of games on TV, maybe on big broadcasting platforms like Sky Sports. Hopefully in that time we will see the Lionesses win a major tournament too!

Any tips for aspiring young female footballers?

The main tip I would give, is that if you want to make it as a professional footballer, you need to put in the extra work and do more than what other players are doing. The harder

you work and the more you practice, the better a player you will become.

I would also suggest training with boys as much as possible if you have that option, as I know for me it helped to develop and push me as a player when I was regularly playing against boys who were sometimes a few years older than me.

Thanks for the interview Kerys.

Stay safe everyone

Ammo



All Things Bright



By Charlotte Stacey

Reaching the semi-finals of the World Cup with the Lionesses, and with the London Blues now having won the season, it has been a year to remember for Chelsea and England centre back Millie Bright.

With a steadfast resolve and an unwavering solidarity, it is easy to see how for club and country, Millie Bright has established herself as a somewhat prominent figure at the back. She is a powerhouse of a defender. Assertive with a tackle, fearless with a block, and harbouring a physicality that imposes; Bright makes life difficult for any centre forward.

Bright plays the physical game and takes no prisoners in doing so. Never one to shy away from a challenge, she is firm in defence. The preservation of her goal is of the utmost importance, and she will go hammer and tongs

to defend it if need be. Yet, she is accountable if ever these encounters are perhaps ill-timed or ill-judged. With a loyalty that always places the team ahead of herself, Bright will hold her hands up when a mistake is made. Well in the know that reflection is an essential part of individual and collective growth.

Vigilance is key and Bright's awareness is notable. Although she is possibly not the fastest player on the pitch, her reaction times are sharp, and it is here where Bright is, well, bright.

She is quick to react in front of her own goal, clearing the line with a stamp of authority when things are looking a little touch and go. Bright seemingly becomes a keeper without gloves. A testament, not only to her winning mentality, but also her personal devotion to play her part in keeping a clean sheet.

But Bright does not just draw command on the ground. Her pairing of stature and strength means that she is also rather problematic in the air. At both ends of the pitch, she is a player to keep your eye on. When it comes to offensive corners, Bright is more than capable of nodding the ball on target, habitually testing her markers. In the defensive third, Bright will answer a set piece with a force of a header.

A warning to her opposition - not today.

Yet, where her host of defensive abilities now see her tenaciously holding the back line, this has not always been the case. Bright's experience in midfield and fullback roles are still recognisable in her instinct to get moving.

Be assured that she will make the most of a playmaking opportunity when one presents itself. Every so often Bright treats us to a thunderous run, charging the length of the field in a bid to rouse a lulling momentum.

These surges of energy often have the desired

effect and a shift can be sensed. In a similar fashion, Bright's keen eye for a long ball is dangerous. With a little look up and a simple switch of play, she is able to open doors and kick-start pockets of creativity, typically utilised by her teammates.

At her very core, Bright is a player's player and it is clear she looks after her own. She whole-heartedly throws herself into anything that comes her way; an example to those around her. With the boldness to go for it, but the receptivity to learn from it, Bright champions the characteristics of a maturing leader.

Her fierce allegiance to her team, and to her cause, means that supporters of Chelsea and England certainly have plenty to invest in.

As long as Millie is around, you can always look on the bright side.





West Ham United women's team supporting victims of domestic abuse



Sadly, as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown measures, the UK has seen a sharp rise in domestic abuse incidents in recent weeks. According to Refuge, the number of calls and contacts to its National Domestic Abuse Helpline were 49% higher than normal after three weeks and in the last three weeks demand has risen to around 66%.

Because of this, West Ham United women's team are teaming up with Hestia and Refuge in order to support their urgent appeals to raise funds for the thousands of people they support across London and the South East.

COVID-19 is hitting the most vulnerable in our society hardest. These charities have prioritised the immediate safety and

well-being of vulnerable women, children and men across Newham and Barking & Dagenham, who are often in unsafe accommodation and unable to safely isolate, as well as campaigning to raise awareness of the issues affecting them.

Hestia's urgent COVID-19 appeal will help to provide packages which include essential items including food, nappies, cleaning equipment and entertainment, so that individuals and families can stay safe and well during the lockdown.

The Club has pledged to run a bucket collection at a future West Ham women's fixture when fans are in attendance, in support of both charities.

West Ham women's captain, Gilly Flaherty, said: "Domestic abuse is one of the lesser known knock-on effects of the COVID-19 lockdown and it's really scary to think that some women, men and children don't even feel safe in their own homes."

"We need to highlight the options out there for people when they feel like they have nowhere to turn. So, I'm proud that the Club, and Rainer Hughes, are supporting Hestia and Refuge - charities that are giving victims across East London a lifeline, at a time when they need one the most."

Hestia's refuges have remained open and continue to provide lifesaving support and Tamara White, Area Manager for Hestia's East and South London Domestic Abuse Services, added: "Those who arrive at our domestic abuse refuges often have just the clothes on their backs. Britain's lockdown period is making it even more difficult for the people we support to access essential items, like food and nappies, as they self-isolate."

"We are really grateful to have the support of West Ham United in accessing these items, so the families in our refuges can keep safe during this difficult period."

In October of last year, Refuge launched a domestic and sexual violence service. Since its opening, this specialist service has received a higher number of referrals than the charity had initially expected, reaching the annual target for received referrals within the first six months.

Sandra Horley, CBE, Refuge Chief Executive says: "Refuge is enormously thankful to West Ham United for supporting its life-saving work through this joint fundraising initiative."

"It is critical that we continue to provide urgent support and safety for women and children trapped with their abusers, and we rely on public donations to do this."

"With this support, we can provide essential items for families arriving in our refuges and help our staff to continue doing their life-saving work remotely during this challenging time."

Club sponsors Rainer Hughes have donated the rights to their dedicated West Ham United women's matchday for the benefit of the charities, and Senior Partner Sanjay Panesar added: "Our Family & Child Law department are acutely aware of just how vulnerable clients have felt during this COVID-19 outbreak, so we are delighted to be able to help assist these lifesaving charities, who are going the extra mile in these uncertain times."

"Please just pick up the phone and call us if you are a victim of domestic abuse and want legal advice about the options available to you. We are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week."

If you would like more information on Rainer Hughes support services, please visit: <http://www.rainerhughes.com/>. The Rainer Hughes team can also be contacted on 01277 226644 or by email at info@rainerhughes.com.

If you would like to support Hestia's COVID-19 appeal please visit: <https://www.hestia.org/appeal/coronavirus-urgent-appeal>

If you would like to support Refuge, please visit: <https://donate.refuge.org.uk/page/51133/donate/1>



Schillaci announces retirement



Tottenham Hotspur captain Jenna Schillaci has announced her retirement at the age of 36.

The defender has been with the club since 2009, her second spell with the Women's Super League side.

Schillaci was part of the Spurs side who won promotion to the WSL in 2019.

She had helped Spurs work their way up the pyramid, lifting eight lower-level trophies.

She was earlier part of the team that won the South East Combination League title in 2010-11 and then the third-tier Premier League Southern Division in 2016-17.

The Spurs fan made her debut for the club as a 16-year-old before spells with Queens Park Rangers and Enfield Town.

On her return to the club in 2009, she made over 200 appearances, scoring 10 goals.

Schillaci told the club: “It’s been a difficult decision for me to make and it doesn’t feel real, but the time feels right for me now to hang up my boots.

“I feel unbelievably proud of what I have achieved while at Spurs and my journey has felt like a dream.

“Being a Spurs fan, from going to watch the team when I was a young girl and dreaming of playing at White Hart Lane, which I got to do, I am very

grateful and honoured to have been given so many amazing opportunities at the Club and to have captained the team for all these years.

“There’s been so many stand-out moments for me during my time here including winning the league at The Lane, securing promotion to the WSL and leading the team out against Chelsea at Stamford Bridge for our first game in the top flight.

“My family have been on this amazing journey with me and I know they are extremely proud of me too, I wouldn’t be here without their support. I feel very grateful that I got to live my dream at the Club, and I hope that my journey can inspire the next generation.”

Head Coach Karen Hills said: “I want to say a massive thank you to Jenna for everything she has done for the

team and congratulate her on all the success she’s had in her career.

“Jenna has been a true leader for us on and off the pitch and she is an inspiration to many. We have been able to create so many truly amazing memories together that will stay with us forever. I wish her the very best in her new adventure and her retirement.”

Head Coach Juan Amorós added: “Jenna has grown with the club and has not only led the team to glory and dreams, but also during the difficult times, when we really needed the team to step up and show character and commitment.

“She represents all the values we stand for and has always put the team first and made sacrifices to get to where we are. No words can describe my appreciation for her effort and support during the last 10 years.”





Villa Women to play at Walsall from 2020/21 season



Aston Villa Women have announced a two-year deal with Walsall Football Club to play all their home league games at the Banks' Stadium.

The side were awarded the Women's Championship title and subsequently promoted to the Women's Super League.

Gemma Davies' side will play at the Banks' Stadium on either Saturdays or Sundays from the 2020-21 season, with all kick-offs set for 5.30pm.

Sporting Director Eniola Aluko expressed her excitement at the team moving into a bigger stadium from next season.

She said: "Having secured promotion to the WSL we are delighted to have agreed a two-year agreement with Walsall to play all of our home matches at the Banks's Stadium.

"At 11,000 Banks's Stadium will be one of the largest capacity stadiums in the WSL league which is exciting and promising for the future of our club, the players, and the loyal support of our local fanbase.

"Walsall have hosted England women's national team games in the past, so we are excited to work alongside the club to host regular women's football fixtures in women's professional football."

Daniel Mole, Walsall's Chief Operating Officer is also looking forward to working with Aston Villa Women.

He said: "We are delighted to welcome Aston Villa Women to the Banks's Stadium and are looking forward to working with them over the course of the next two years."

Transfer latest

Arsenal



In: Emma Mitchell (end of loan – Tottenham), Frances Stenson (end of loan – Blackburn), Steph Catley (OL Reign), Malin Gut (Grasshopper Zurich)

Extended updates: Viktoria Schnaderbeck

Out: Ruby Grant (UNC), Louise Quinn, Pauline Peyraud-Magnin (Atletico Madrid), Katrin Veje (FC Rosengard), Emma Mitchell, Danielle Carter

Aston Villa



In: Chloe Arthur (Birmingham)

Extended contracts: Asmita Ale, Elisha N'Dow, Jodie Hutton, Amy West, Shania

Hayles and Emma Follis, Sian Rogers, Nat Haigh, Ella Franklin, Nadine Hanssen, Sophie Haywood, Emily Syme, Marisa Ewers

Out: Jade Richards, Kerri Welsh, Alice Hassall, Phoebe Warner, Mel Johnson, Charlotte Greengrass, Sophie Maierhofer, Daniela Kosinska

Birmingham City



Extended contracts:

Lucy Whipp

Out: Brianna Visalli (Houston Dash), Georgia Brougham (end of loan – Everton), Adrienne Jordan (OL Reign), Alex Brooks, Lucy Staniforth, Chloe Arthur, Kerys Harrop Rachel Williams

Brighton



In: Sophie Harris (end of loan – Lewes)

Extended contracts: Danielle Bowman, Kirsty

Barton, Jodie Brett, Emily Simpkins, Laura Rafferty, Victoria Williams, Ellie Brazil, Rianna Jarrett, Fliss Gibbons, Danique Kerkdijk, Aileen Whelan, Beth Roe, Megan Connolly, Kayleigh Green

Out : Maxine Bennink (end of loan – Reading), Sophie Harris, Ini Umotong, Kate Natkiel, Fern Whelan, Amanda Nilden, Lea Le Garrec (FC Fleury), Matilde Lundorf (Juventus)

Transfer latest

Bristol City



In: Ella Rutherford (end of loan – Leicester), Ella Mastrantonio (Western Sydney Wanderers),

Ella Mastrantonio (Western Sydney Wanderers), Aimee Palmer (Man Utd)

Extended contracts: Carla Humphrey, Ebony Salmon, Gemma Evans, Florence Allen, Faye Bryson

Out: Megan Wynne (end of loan – Tottenham), Poppy Pattinson, Olivia Chance, Katie Robinson, Jeon Ga-Eul, Eartha Cumings

Chelsea



In: Melanie Leupolz (FC Bayern), Niamh Charles (Liverpool)

Out: Adelina Engman (MHSC),

Deanna Cooper, Anita Asante

Everton



In: Georgia Brougham (end of loan – Birmingham),

Tinja-Riika Korpela, Danielle Turner, Chantelle Boye-Hlorkah, Abbey Leigh-Stringer

Out: Inessa Kaagman, Hannah Cain, Kirstie Levell, Taylor Hinds, Esme Morgan (end of loan – Man City), Chloe Kelly

Manchester City



In: Esme Morgan (end of loan – Everton), Chloe Kelly (Everton)

Extended

contracts: : Megan Campbell, Jill Scott, Karima Benameur

Out: Pauline Bremer (Wolfsburg), Tessa Wullaert

Manchester United



In: Mollie Green (end of loan – Sheffield), Emily Ramsey (end of loan – Sheffield)

Extended

contracts: Kirsty Hanson, Amy Turner, Jess Sigsworth, Ella Toone

Out: Aurora Mikelsen, Aimee Palmer (Bristol City), Lizzie Arnot

Transfer latest

Reading



In: Maxine Bennink (end of loan – Brighton), Charlie Estcourt (end of loan – Charlton), Lily Woodham (end of

loan – Charlton)

Out : Jade Moore (Orlando Pride), Sophie Howard, Mayumi Pacheco, Charlie Estcourt, Millie Farrow, Jo Potter, Maxine Bennink, Remi Allen, Rachel Laws, Lisa Marie Utland (Rosenborg)



Tottenham

In: Megan Wynne (end of loan – Bristol)

Extended contracts:

Rianna Dean, Anna Filbey, Ashley Neville, Rebecca Spencer, Josie

Green, Gemma Davison

Out: Emma Mitchell (end of loan – Arsenal), Sophie McLean, Chloe Morgan, Coral-Jade Haines, Megan Wynne, Jenna Schillacci (retirement)



West Ham

Out: Katharina Banauch

(retirement), Anna Moorhouse (FC Girondins de Bordeaux), Tessel Middag, Esme De Graaf, Vyan Sampson, Ruesha Littlejohn, Olivia Smith, Julia Simic

Other rumours:

- Lucy Bronze and Alex Greenwood to Manchester City
- Noelle Maritz to Arsenal from Wolfsburg
- Poppy Pattinson to Everton from Bristol City
- Julia Simic leaving West Ham

Scottie Talks



© Joerdeli Photography | Daniela Porcelli

By Charlotte Stacey

You do not have to be a fan of women's football to have heard the name Alex Scott. The former Arsenal and England defender has made waves in raising awareness of women's football, and is vocal in advocating that women have a place in sport.

Alex Scott has proved time and time again that she will get back up after a knock back.

From a young age, her determined nature has seen her work through hardships and adversity in order to fulfil her ambitions.

On the pitch, Scott enjoyed an illustrious career for both club and country. A fast paced, quick thinking, pressing fullback, Scott was very much a player you wanted working with you, rather than against.

A Gunner through and through, Scott

enjoyed three separate spells with Arsenal across her sixteen-year senior career. Always returning to her roots, Scott helped Arsenal collect a wealth of silverware, including seven FA Cups and eight league titles.

Much like her club feats, Scott's international record is just as noteworthy as her domestic one. Having represented England on numerous occasions, as it stands, Scott is one of only four players to have worn the three lions 140 times or more.

Scott was a part of the Lionesses squad that placed second in the 2009 Euro's, as well as the team that took home the bronze medal at the 2015 World Cup. Legacy cemented; Scott has certainly set the bar high. A tough act to follow for England's future right backs.

Yet Scott's mark is stamped far beyond the confines of a football pitch. In recent times, Scott has become somewhat of a familiar figure on our screens. Her recent stint on *Strictly Come Dancing*, as well as her guest presenter spots on popular shows such as *The One Show*, have seen Scott become a household name. But underneath those nifty dance moves and natural hosting skills, Scott is constantly raising the profile of the women's game. In fact, simply by participating, she has opened the door to a whole new audience.

With an easy-going friendly manner, and a first-hand experience of the game, Scott's media presence is no accident. Taking the bull by the horns straight out of retirement, Scott made history as the first female pundit to appear regularly on Sky Sports, and to cover a major football tournament on the BBC.

Unfortunately, these achievements did not come without their ups and downs. Scott often speaks about the abusive and sexist comments she receives online. But, luckily for us, the resilience Scott demonstrated on the pitch has remained, and she continues to propel the women's game into the limelight.

Regarding this step into the mainstream, in an interview with *Hello! Magazine*, Scott rightly commented: "It shows how far the women's game has come".

Yet she is modest in her own efforts toward this. It is fair to say that Scott, herself, has had a pretty big hand in bringing the sport to the forefront of people's minds over the last couple of years. Other projects aside, women's football very much remains at the heart of Scott's media career. Her passion is there in every interview, in every punditry broadcast, and was certainly seen with every goal the Lionesses scored in last year's World Cup.

It is this down to earth, honest nature that makes Scott so easy to watch. Scott's likeability has justly gathered her a large fan base, and it is clear that the

appreciation her supporters have for her, is reciprocated. Over this lockdown period, Scott has taken it upon herself to bring a smile to the faces of her fans. *Scottie Talks*, her Instagram Live series, has been a welcome distraction to many. Scott has chatted with a number of women in sport, both about their careers, but also about their time in lockdown. These open and frank discussions have certainly helped in normalising the struggles of this time, and perhaps for some, helped in not feeling quite so alone. Many sincerely hoping that Scott herself is getting as much out of this series as her audience is.

So, both on and off of the pitch, Scott has led by example and has paved the way for others. Her work ethic and determination mean she is, simply put, the perfect role model for young girls and boys wanting to follow in her footsteps. Scott has achieved far beyond what was ever expected, and has shown that you do not need to compromise yourself in order to succeed. Since her induction to mainstream sports broadcasting, there has been a shift in the number of women seen on sporting channels. Several female pundits now feature regularly across a number of football events, and this began with Scott.

Gunner royalty. Legendary Lioness. Alex Scott is, and always will be, a piece of English women's football history. Her MBE for her "contribution to women's football" is more than deserved.

And it seems this contribution is far from over.



Miedema wins Football Writers' Player of the Year



Arsenal striker Vivianne Miedema has been voted the Football Writers' Player of the Year for 2019-20.

Miedema finished top goalscorer in the WSL with 16 goals and topped the assist charts with 10 assists before the termination of the season.

She is also the top scorer in the Champions League with 10 goals in Europe.

Miedema won by a single vote ahead of Chelsea's Beth England, with Guro Reiten and Lucy Bronze in joint third.

The Women's Footballer of the Year is decided by a two-stage poll of a panel of

experts, and although the season was suspended after the international break in March and could not be completed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the goal-grabbing form of the FAWSL's top scorers Miedema and England put them clearly ahead of their peers in the first phase.

Other players acknowledged in the voting by the panel were Steph Houghton and Lauren Hemp (both Manchester City), Erin Cuthbert and Sophie Ingle (both Chelsea), Rachel Furness (Spurs/Liverpool), Beth Mead (Arsenal), Lauren James (Manchester United), and Chloe Kelly (Everton).



WSL Award nominees announced



The Barclays Women's Super League have announced the nominees for Player of the Season and Manager of the season.

WSL Player of the Season nominees:

- Chloe Kelly (Everton)
- Lauren Hemp (Manchester City)
- Bethany England (Chelsea)
- Vivianne Miedema (Arsenal)
- Guro Reiten (Chelsea)

Manager of the Season nominees:

- Emma Hayes (Chelsea)
- Nick Ciushing (formally Manchester City)
 - Willie Kirk (Everton)
- Karen Hills and Juan Carlos Amoros (Tottenham Hotspur)
- Casey Stoney (Manchester United)

CHAMPIONSHIP



Looking back over the Championship season



By Ali Rampling

After the Championship season was curtailed on May 25 2020, the second tier followed the same process as the WSL, with league places determined via points-per-game.

Aston Villa were awarded the league title and gained promotion to the WSL for the first time in their history. Gemma Davies' side had remained unbeaten throughout the campaign, winning 13 of their 14 league fixtures.

Kelly Simmons, FA Director of the Women's Professional Game, said: "I would like to thank the clubs for their ongoing collaboration and support throughout this period. They have played a crucial role in helping to shape the decision-making process, with the welfare of the players and clubs first and foremost.

"I would also like to congratulate the players, coaches and staff of Aston Villa.

"Although the 2019-20 season has been prematurely curtailed, it has been a hard-fought campaign and their success is well deserved, with the outcome based on sporting merit."

After leading her side to promotion, Aston Villa head coach Davies said: "We wanted to finish the season on the pitch and win the league by showcasing the work that players and staff had put in to get us to this point.

"We put so many hours, so much hard graft and so much passion into this season that it's fantastic to have been rewarded for that.

"For every player, staff member and supporter, promotion to the Super League is the realisation of a dream that we've all worked so hard to achieve."

Just five days after their promotion was confirmed, Villa released eight first team players, including club captain Kerri Welsh, top scorer Mel Johnson and 2018/19 players' player of the year Alice Hassall.

Jade Richards, Phoebe Warner, Charlotte Greengrass, Sophie Maierhofer and Daniela Kosinska also departed.

Sheffield United and Durham both narrowly missed out on promotion, despite the pair losing just twice all season. United had sat six points behind leaders Aston Villa, with Durham a further two points adrift.

Shortly after the league standings were announced, United's top scorer Katie Wilkinson put pen to paper on a new deal with the club. Wilkinson finished as the Championship's top scorer, hitting 15 goals in 14 appearances.

The forward already has her sights set on going one better next year. After committing her future to the club, Wilkinson said: "Last season we fell short and to me it feels like unfinished business.

"I want to be banging in goals for this club with nothing but promotion in sight."

Jade Pennock, Maddy Cusack, Kasia Lipka, Alethea Paul and Rhema Lord-Mears also all signed new deals with United.

Unlike the WSL, there was no relegation from the Championship, meaning Charlton maintained their second tier status despite failing to register a league win all season.

The Addicks finished rock bottom of the league on seven points, but had played two games fewer than second bottom Coventry, two points above. Lewes leapfrogged Crystal Palace into eighth in the division's only points-per-game enforced change, while seventh place Blackburn completed the bottom half of the table.

Leicester City finished sixth and London Bees recorded their best ever Championship finish in fifth. London City Lionesses finished fourth in their maiden Championship campaign, having broken away from Millwall Lionesses in May 2019.



Blackburn Rovers Ladies launch bespoke player pathway



Blackburn Rovers have launched a new development scheme for talented female footballers.

The decision has been taken to address the growing gulf in standards between the club's development squad and the first team, following Rovers' promotion to the FA Women's Championship last summer.

As a result, Rovers will not be entering a team into the FAWNL Reserve North Division 1 for the forthcoming 2020-21 campaign.

Rovers have dominated the division over recent years, lifting the league title in 2017-18 and 2018-19, and when the current campaign was ended due to the outbreak of COVID-19, the development squad were second in the table, with three games in hand on the leaders.

Rovers' new approach will see the most promising Reserve team players retained by the club, for training and personal development purposes, whilst also providing them with the opportunity to experience first team football out on loan.

“Whilst we have enjoyed many seasons of success in the FAWNLI (Reserves), this has also likely been of detriment to the players’ development,” said Ladies manager Gemma Donnelly.

“With the first team now competing in the FA Women’s Championship, the gulf in standards between the development team and first team has widened and it is apparent we need to adopt a new strategy.

“For the forthcoming season, we will be delivering a bespoke development player pathway, whereby some existing players and some new talent will be recruited to train alongside the first team and be offered loan agreements to play competitive football at alternative clubs, in a league we feel will be more suitable and more beneficial.

“We will monitor each player and measure their outcomes against our own key performance indicators, as well as working closely with them in our first team training environment.

“This is something new and exciting that we wish to try and will replace the rigid old style of the development team.”

For players that are interested in joining the new development scheme, please contact Gemma Donnelly at gdonnelly@rovers.co.uk for more information.



Transfer latest

Blackburn Rovers



Out: Frances Stenson (end of loan – Arsenal), Missy Bo Kearns (end of loan – Liverpool), Natasha

Flint

Charlton Athletic



Out: Charlie Estcourt (end of loan – Reading), Lily Woodham (end of loan – Reading)

Coventry United



Extended contracts: Katy Morris, Helen Dermody, Amber Hughes

Out: Ffion Morgan

Crystal Palace



Extended contracts: Cherelle Khassal, Amy Goddard, Leeta Rutherford, Amber Stobbs, Amber Gaylor

Out: Hannah McKenzie, Freya Holdaway, Lucy Gillett, Magda Mosengo

Durham Women



Extended contracts: Emily Roberts

Leicester City



Out: Ella Rutherford (end of loan – Bristol), Lucy Johnson (Arizone Sun Devils), Scarlett Field

Lewes



Out: Sophie Harris (end of loan- Brighton), Faye Baker, Caitlin Hayes, Ella

Powell, Annie Timoney

Liverpool



In: Missy Bo Kearns (end of loan – Blackburn Rovers)

Extended contracts:

Rihannon Roberts, Niamh Fahey, Rinsola Babajide, Leigh-Anne Robe, Kirsty Linnett, Amy Rodgers

Out: Courtney Sweetman-Kirk, Anke Preuss, Christie Murray, Fran Kitching, Niamh Charles (Chelsea), Jemma Purfield

Transfer latest

London Bees



Out: Nikita Whinnett

London City Lionesses



Extended contracts: Juliette Kempf, Freda Ayisi, Leanne Cowan, Kallie Balfour, Hannah Short

Out: Vyan Sampson (West Ham – end of loan), Vanessa Susanna, Charlotte Gurr

Sheffield United



Extended contracts: Katie Wilkinson, Jade Pennock, Maddy Cusack, Kasia Lipka, Alethea Paul and Rhema Lord-Mears

Out: Mollie Green (end of loan – Manchester United), Emily Ramsey (end of loan – Manchester United), Sophie Barker, Ali Johnson, Izzy Ford (South Alabama)



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Barclays to sponsor series four of The Game Changers Inspirational podcast



Barclays, the biggest corporate supporter of women's sport in the UK, has announced it will sponsor The Game Changers, the highly acclaimed podcast that features extraordinary women in sport.

This will be the second series supported by Barclays, and once again, it will focus on fearless women in football, reinforcing Barclays support for the beautiful game.

Recently shortlisted for 'Best Sports Podcast' in the British Podcast Awards 2020, The Game Changers features trailblazing women who are knocking down barriers and challenging the status quo for women and girls everywhere.

High profile guests in previous series include Clare Balding, Eni Aluko, Denise Lewis, Kelly Smith, Casey Stoney, Jacqui Oatley, Kate Richardson-Walsh and Dame Katherine Grainger.

The Game Changers is hosted by Sue Anstiss MBE, a founding trustee of the Women's Sport Trust charity and the founder of Fearless Women, a company with a powerful ambition to drive positive change for women's sport.

The new Barclays series launches on Tuesday July 7, 2020 and will feature:

- Steph Houghton MBE – Captain of the Lionesses and Man City with over 100 caps for England
- Moya Dodd – One global sport's most influential women and former member of the FIFA Council
- Stacey Copeland – Former England footballer turned professional boxer
- Ebru Koksall – Former CEO at Galatasaray, now Chair of Women in Football
- Rose Reilly MBE – legendary World Cup winner, who played professionally in Italy and France
- Rimla Akhtar MBE – former Chair of the Muslim Women's Sports Foundation and a champion for diversity in sport
- Emma Hayes MBE – the hugely successful Manager at Chelsea Women
- Dame Heather Rabbatts – former Chair of Millwall and the first woman to sit on the FA Board

Last year, Barclays announced the biggest ever sponsorship of women's sport in the UK, as the Barclays FA Women's Super League became Europe's first fully professional women's football league. Along with this ground-breaking support for professional women's sport, Barclays also invested in establishing the Girls' Football School Partnerships, with the aim of ensuring all girls in England have equal access to football in schools by 2024.

Tom Corbett, Barclays' Group Head of Sponsorships and Media, said: "We had such a positive response to our support of the first series of The Game Changers - it's great to be back with eight more influential women in the world of football.

"We particularly hope that the stories of these inspiring women will help fill the gap for those currently missing watching live women's sport."

Commenting on the launch of the fourth series, Anstiss says: "The continued popularity of the podcasts has been a bit overwhelming, with the number of downloads doubling with each new season. I'm so grateful to Barclays for commissioning this second series on women in football. There are so many extraordinary women working in the sport – it's great to be able to tell the stories of eight more.

"By supporting The Game Changers, Barclays is helping to take the stories of these extraordinary, trailblazing women in football to a huge new audience and in the process inspire women of all ages."

The Game Changers is free to download wherever you stream podcasts including apple podcasts, Google podcasts, Spotify, ACast and Libsyn.

You can find out more about all the inspiring guests at:

www.fearlesswomen.co.uk



Scholarships boosts push for women to take on top sports roles



Manchester Metropolitan University's renowned Masters of Sport Directorship (MSD) course is continuing to champion women's progression to the top jobs in sport with the launch of a £9,000 women's scholarship programme for the next intake of the course in September.

The award is aimed at nurturing strong female talent in UK sport and has been extended for a fourth year.

The MSD, which equips its graduates for sporting director and other sports leadership roles, has attracted some high-profile names including Manchester City and England goalkeeper Karen Bardsley.

Earlier this month Bardsley became the first professional footballer to be appointed to the board of a county FA and is tasked with

overseeing the development of women and girls' participation in the sport in Manchester.

Two Women in Sport Leadership scholarships of £6,000 and £3,000 have been made available to women working in sport who are applying for a place on this year's intake of the two-year part-time MSD course.

Manchester Metropolitan University's Mark Batey, who heads the course, said: "Despite the welcome surge in interest in women's sport, with record numbers of spectators for the women's world cup last year, the progress of women into the top jobs in sport has been disappointingly slow.

"Women make up just 21 per cent of national sport governing body chief executives, which has actually dropped from 26 per cent in 2018, and only 4 per cent of Premier League

clubs are led by women.”

He added: “The MSD has become the go-to qualification for the sporting director role and the Women in Sport Leadership scholarship takes the revolutionary approach that’s needed right now. The course directly helps to equip capable women working in sport with the leadership skills they need for the top jobs.”

The scholarships provide much reduced fees for two female MSD students and were launched in 2017 in response to a survey by the Women in Sport organisation, which found that the number of women in top jobs at UK sporting bodies was falling.

Under UK Sport and Sport England’s Code for Sports Governance, which came into effect in 2017, national sports bodies must ensure their boards are made up of at least 30% women in order to receive public funding.

The Women in Sport organisation, which campaigns for gender equality in sport, has called for a further push to promote equal representation of women in senior leadership roles and on boards in the sector.

The Women in Sport Leadership scholarships are open to any woman who meets the MSD criteria and consist of a first prize of £6,000 and second prize of £3,000 reduction in the course fees. Applicants should send a CV and a 500-word pitch describing why they would benefit from the scholarship to donna.ward@mmu.ac.uk by 10 July.

The winners will be selected by a panel.

For more information on the Masters of Sport Directorship course at Manchester Metropolitan University go to:

www.mmu.ac.uk/master-of-sport-directorship/



WOMEN'S NATIONAL LEAGUE



Bolton Ladies split from Wanderers



Bolton Ladies have officially rebranded and redesigned.

The club, who finished eighth in the Women's National League last season, have chosen to separate from Bolton Wanderers.

The club have returned to an independent banner and have already secured a new shirt sponsorship with community benefit society, Bolton At Home, for the 2020/21 campaign.

The team will continue to play at Atherton Colls' Skuna Stadium.

Club captain Rebecca Foster told the Bolton News: "I don't think last season went according to plan.

"It was my first year, so I can't really talk about what happened before.

"They had success and got promotion to the league we are in now but there was a bit of a

restructure.

"We lost our captain, who had been here for a long time, and there were quite a few new players, so everything takes time to settle.

"I think I had been top of the league and everything was going great, people might have seen the decision to rebrand as a bit of a gamble. But I think we needed a change.

"I'd played in the league below and thought I'd be fine stepping up but the levels of fitness are higher, the standards are improving and we have to move with it."

A new badge was launched online last week and a new kit is in the offing.

If you are interested in playing for the club through the different teams go to their Twitter page @BoltonLadies for more information on recruitment.

Gillingham ditch Ladies team



On June 19, Gillingham announced that it would be restructuring the club and would “no longer operate” the senior ladies football team.

In a shock statement, the club wrote: “In line with other measures taken, or in the process of being taken due to current circumstances, and in regards to the restructuring of the football club, it is with great regret we have decided to no longer operate our senior ladies football team with immediate effect, and for the foreseeable future.

I would like to thank the ladies, management and staff for their hard work and efforts over the past few years and wish them well for the future.

We understand the team will continue under an independent structure, managed by Mr Josh Oatham, and of course we will follow their progress with interest and wish them continued success.

The Women's National League have been advised of our decision and have sanctioned the new structure/team, which will retain its current league status.

The news comes after the club also got rid of the RTC for Kent and West Ham skipper Gilly Flaherty took to Twitter to voice her views.

She wrote: “What is this?? Statement going on like they actually pumped money in the women’s team.

“Dumped their girls RTC now dumped their women’s side too. Gillingham FC you should be ashamed.

“I actually feel so fuming over what Gillingham have done. It’s disgusting and shouldn’t be allowed to happen. It’s time for a club in Kent to really step up and be the game changer for Girls/Women’s football.”

Latest News

Barnsley announce new coach

Barnsley Women have announced Nick Dingwall will be their new Goalkeeper coach.

Dingwall, who is currently part of the Barnsley Academy has worked in women's football with Sheffield United and Doncaster Belles.

Brighouse Town receive grant

Brighouse Town have announced they have been awarded a Pitch Preparation Fund grant from the Premier League, FA and Football Foundation.

In a statement they wrote: "This will go a long way to ensuring our EDS pitch is in tip top condition when we can return to football."

Liverpool Feds sign goalkeeper

Liverpool Feds have announced they have made a pre-agreement to sign goalkeeper Rachel Darbyshire from Chorley Women.

The agreement became official on 1 July.

Newcastle goalkeeper surgery

Newcastle United goalkeeper Grace Donnelly has undergone an operation on her knee.

We wish Grace a speedy recovery.

Stockport County unveil new badge

Stockport County Ladies have unveiled their new badge.

The new badge lines up with the Stockport County artwork and will be used by the Ladies team going forward.

Bradford City announce new reserve coaches

Bradford City Women have revealed that Mannaan Mehmood has joined James Wright in managing the reserve side for the 2020/21 season.

The reserves play in the FA Women's National League Reserve North Division One.

Wolves pair earn scholarships

Goalkeeper Maddie Elbro and midfielder Nyah Edwards, who came up through the Wolves RTC to reach the first-team, will now leave Wolves to start scholarships courses stateside at the start of the upcoming American academic year in August.

Elbro and Edwards will study occupational therapy at Mercyhurst University, Pennsylvania and sports science at Queens University, North Carolina, respectively.

Latest News

Lincoln resign Leslie

Olivia Leslie has resigned for Lincoln City Ladies.

Speaking to confirm the announcement, Leslie said: "I'm happy to be resigning and cannot wait to get playing and putting into action the work I've done during these last few months off. Ready to smash this league with a great bunch of girls, management team and of course the fans!"

Atkins joins Long Eaton United

Former Burton Albion and Nottingham Forest Women's player Jordan Atkin has joined Long Eaton United Women.

The attacker, who won the FA WPL Division One Midlands top goalscorer award for Burton Albion during the 2017/2018 season, is John Bennett's first signing of the summer.

Just4Keepers sponsors Solihull Moors

Solihull Moors have announced Just4Keepers as their new sponsor.

Just4Keepers will sponsor the goalkeepers for the 2020/21 season and will provide them with free equipment.

Allen signs with Ipswich Town

England U21 midfielder Georgia Allen has signed with Ipswich Town.

The 21-year-old joins the club from Syracuse University in New York.

Carter joins AFC Wimbledon

AFC Wimbledon have signed Rebecca "Chewy" Carter from Crawley Wasps.

Wasps said: "We thank Chewy for her service during her third spell at the club and wish her well with the Dons."

Kent Football United announce retained list

Ami Burham, Amy Russ and Tash Moloney have been retained by Kent.

Burnham wrote: "Very happy to be retained for the 2020/21 season. Enjoying the training and looking forward to getting back on the pitch again. The team will work hard off and on the pitch to make a difference this season."

New secretary for Exeter City

Ian Barber has joined Exeter City Women as the new club secretary.

The club wrote: "Ian brings a wealth of experience and knowledge we are delighted to have secured his services."

Latest News

Larkhall Athletic receive funding

Larkhall Athletic have been awarded a £2500 Pitch Preparation Fund grant from the Premier League, FA and Football Foundation.

Chairman Paul Rankin wrote: "We are delighted to receive this help. The grant will ensure that the playing surfaces at Plain Ham are in the best condition possible."

Richards leaves Buckland Athletic

Jana Richards has left Buckland Athletic as she signs for MAPLFC.

On the new signing, they said: "Jana will bring versatility and attacking flair to our ever improving young squad."

Poole Town Ladies announce new third team

Poole Town have announced they will launch a new women's third team.

The team is currently looking for a manager and coach, if you are interested then visit their website.





Hitting between the Stix

with Georgia Stevens

@Stix_Official_9

Before I jump into regular scheduling, I feel it's only right that this message sits atop the page.

Black Lives Matters

It's been an eye-opening past month for some and the world we're living in has shifted dramatically over just a few weeks.

It's so important that this movement doesn't just become a hashtag, or a trend, or something to fill ad space between the football matches.

This something that is so important and that our black peers, colleagues, family members have been vocal about for many many years now.

It's time for people who have a choice to join this movement do so, because those who it affects hardest don't have one.

Use your voice, be actively anti-racist, call things out when you see it, sign the petitions, write to your MP. Most importantly, amplify black voices, listen to what's being said and reflect yourself.

This is an uncomfortable conversation that we all have to have. So get uncomfortable.

JUNE

So I'm going to get this out of the way with now, Liverpool men won the league. I'm a massive Liverpool fan. This is the first time they've won it in my life time.

If you follow me on social media, I'd apologise for the Liverpool overload but honestly I'm really not sorry for it.

This past week has been one of celebrations for the city, flags hanging out of cars, houses fully decorated and everyone who's a fan walking around in any/all of the Liverpool gear they own.

Again, I'm just going to apologise in advance that this is something I'm probably not going to shut up about any time soon, so best just get used to it now.

Now that's been dealt with, June! The month kicked off with my 20th which was surreal in the lockdown circumstances, but I am grateful to celebrate nonetheless.

On the same day it was also announced that I was a finalist in the Football Content Awards for Best Young Creator! It was a very good birthday.

There's actually some football news this month! As much as I was enjoying the zoom workouts, there's nothing that can replicate kicking a ball with your teammates.

As the lockdown restrictions were eased, we were allowed to resume small group training. It was very restrictive in terms of making sure we were following government guidelines and being as safe as possible, but to be able to get back to some sort of training is brilliant.

What isn't brilliant is the fact that we're now in this weird pre-season phase, which means running. Lots of it. But I think it helps give some form of normality for a footballer to know they're in a pre-season.

It definitely feels good to be able to be talking tactics with our coach and teammates and getting back on the same page with everyone.

It's been great for everyone that football is back on television too. Like I mentioned before, I'm going to be biased about how great it is to watch the Reds dominate again, but it's also brilliant to enjoy the league again.

I hope that the semi-routine of a match to watch has helped people in lockdown, I know it's certainly given me something else to look forward to in the week.

As always, be sure to follow me over on social media @stix_official_9 on Twitter and @georgia.stevo on Instagram.

If you're also a Liverpool fan (congrats!) check out some of the A4 posters that I designed and am selling on Twitter!

Stay safe everyone!

Georgia



GRASSROOTS



Millwall Lionesses appoint Whitmore as First Team Manager



Millwall Lionesses announce the appointment of Katie Whitmore as First Team Manager for the upcoming ERWFL Division One South 2020/21 season.

Whitmore joins the Lionesses with plenty of experience, having successfully accrued her UEFA B Licence and coached at clubs such as Maidstone Magpies, Castle Colts and has also spent time in both Chicago and Detroit whilst helping to grow the women's game in the United States.

Whitmore has also worked closely with Natalie Curtis, who is the Football Development Officer for women's and girls' football at the Kent FA, and is already familiar with Millwall Football Club, as she previously featured as a player for Millwall Lionesses at youth level and currently has the role of

Designated Safeguarding Officer for the Millwall Community Trust, Academy and the club itself.

"I am absolutely over the moon to have been given the opportunity of First Team Manager at such a prestigious football club, and I cannot wait to get started." Whitmore commented after her appointment.

"After working with Sam Fisher, who was my coach during my time at Leyton Orient, I knew I wanted to get into coaching and one day hopefully be seen as a positive influence on young players' careers, just like Sam was with me.

"To be able to do this with a club like the Lionesses is just an incredible feeling. Everyone who knows the women's game knows just how historic and admired the

the Millwall Lionesses are, and to follow some of the great names of the past is a huge honour.

"I am thrilled to soon be working with such an exciting and hungry bunch of players and we hope to build on last season, where we showed just how much potential we have as a team."

Millwall Community Trust CEO, Sean Daly, expressed his excitement on Whitmore's appointment and his desire to see the Lionesses prosper in the forthcoming campaign.

"I am delighted to have appointed Katie as First Team Manager and to have such a positive role model for the girls to look up to is just one of the many reasons that she was chosen for the role. Under her leadership, guidance and with her philosophy to learn from, this continues to be an exciting journey for all those connected to the Millwall Lionesses."

Working alongside Whitmore this season will be Nick Farrell, who returns to the club

in a combined role of both Assistant Manager and Head of Recruitment after coaching in previous seasons with Millwall Lionesses' youth teams.

Speaking of his return, Farrell commented, "When the call came to return my services to the Lionesses, there was only one answer. I am a lifelong Millwall fan, like Katie, and the pride I feel representing this team is immense. I will work tirelessly to support Katie in her role and ensure that we recruit players who embody what it takes to represent this amazing football club and it's fans."

All Millwall Lionesses' home games will continue to be played at St Paul's Sports Ground in Rotherhithe - and throughout 2020/21 entry to all fixtures there will be free of charge.

You can keep up to date with Millwall Lionesses' 2020/21 season on social media by following @Millwall_LFC on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.



A quick Q&A with Katie Whitmore

How does it feel to be in charge of Millwall Lionesses being a fan yourself?

Yeah, really good. I think obviously being part of Millwall in the sense of being a fan all my life and being part of the RTC and now taking on this role as well. I am very excited to see what this season has in store for us.

What are the aims for this season?

Obviously we did well in the league last year and in the cup competitions. So same as last year in the sense of we always want to head for that promotion. It's going to be the exact same this year, we want to have a successful season, the girls did really well last year. The aim is to obviously make it player centred as well. I want to make sure that the girls feel part of the team not just on the pitch but off the pitch.

This season is going to have some new things off the pitch in terms of the academy set up compared to the RTC, it's really important for you to have a pathway for girls. Can you expand on that a little more for us?

One of the main things for me is making sure that these ladies are role models for the next generation, so all the way from Wildcats under sevens all the way through to our senior team making sure that they're role models to just inspire those to come forward and come through the pathway to eventually be a first team player.



UPTON PARK LADIES

A club on a serious recruitment drive for the next season, Upton Park Ladies have a lot of exciting plans.

We caught up with First Team Manager and Chairman Daniel Merrix to find out about the club and their plans for the season ahead.

Firstly, when and how was Upton Park Ladies founded?

The foundation of the club being created was based on a few things, firstly as the chairman and first-team manager I personally have coached for a number of years and have been inspired by the growth of women's football even before the success, England had at the previous world cup finals.

Why Upton Park specifically? funny story but I have a personal connection to the old Upton Park ground formerly of West Ham United. It was where I and my wife met for the very first time. Unfortunately, it wasn't at a football game but a work conference however she was raised in the local area and this brought me to East London.

Having studied the history of Upton Park I was pleasantly surprised to find it's original history was linked to Upton Park FC rather than the club most people associated it with (West Ham United).

Upton Park FC was a men's side founded in 1866 and appeared in the first edition of the FA Cup.

The history of this sold me on the idea of the name of our club and the values and culture I want this newly founded club to stand upon. We are all about the community, its diversity, rich history, and its need for hope with it being one of the lowest income boroughs in London.

It is my hope for the long term future to build upon that hope and offer people not just a way of engaging with their community but supplying opportunities to the

“Women deserve all the resources found by us as a club”

community to lead to their individual success and progression to higher-income careers through sport and education in some capacity.

You will be starting preparations for next season, what are your hopes for the season ahead?

I understand despite our ambitions as a club that we need to secure the future of the side and so our main goal is to compete for the season consistently and not fall into the bracket a lot of new clubs see themselves in as (The Folders) for local grassroots clubs sponsorship and funding has never been harder to obtain due to the pandemic we have all had to endure.

This has meant despite the increase in facility costs from the private hire of pitches for games and training a lot of teams especially female teams supported by Male clubs have already folded during the lockdown and this is one of the sole reasons we are dedicated to solely female football.

We feel women deserve all of the resources found by us as a club including time, finances, excellent coaching staff with

development and progression for players into key club roles to help sustain women's football across London. So to answer your question we aim to compete in both the league and cup whilst also understanding the importance of simply being in a position to go again next year.

How many teams are part of the Ladies team and what are the age ranges?

Of course, as a new club, this period of lockdown has come with its challenges especially with recruitment due to financial pressures for players and also more and more options available to them and more time to choose.

However Sunday 28th June we held our first open trials with around eighteen players in attendance across the day. With FA Guidelines obviously taken into account, these were split groups.

We are thrilled that out of those eighteen players we have found more than half will have a place within the squad this season. We will continue every Sunday from now until our official pre-season starts the first week of August to trial players to add quality and steel to this already growing side. So if your reading and fancy dusting off the boots get in touch with us today.

What do you think makes Upton Park Ladies special?

We care about the development of the person before the player. Our values as individuals within this club full of diversity are reflected not just in our teaching style but the sponsors we have onboard and the way we are growing through social media and personal relationships and contacts with other clubs and foundations.

We know the difficulty life brings and so we offer extra activities outside of football with our partners to offer further support to our players, community, and its members. As well as this, we are fortunate to have the backing of such great partners that we will be able to offer players personal training kit as part of their sign up along with 3/4G training and match facilities for the season.

You have recently launched your new kit with sponsorship, is this a big step forward for the club?

A massive step for us as a club. We are delighted with the work Hope & Glory sportswear have done for us in these last two months and are now excited to get the kits delivered. The response to our kit launch was overwhelmingly positive and it has seen us acquire pre-orders from various locations including one of our supporters is LA recently placing an order. That is massive for the future growth of Upton Park Ladies.

Not only does it support us financially but above that, it

creates global reach which is such a benefit when negotiations start again next season with sponsors allowing us to further secure our future and develop new kits for our club and its supporters out there.

Thanks to the increased support for the Lionesses, grassroots teams seem to be on the rise, do you think the leagues have increased in competition in recent years?

I think it has definitely increased the standard of football on the pitch I just hope that the rise on the pitch is matched by the ambition of those working off the field to develop clubs and facilities for women. Football is sometimes a strange game and made even more strange by the decisions high-level members take when it comes to the female game specifically.

If people like myself in privileged and high influential positions look to develop themselves both as people and as football officials then the game will go from strength to strength.

I believe we need to humble ourselves and give room for feedback and reflection in order to make the right decisions by our ladies. We forget how much responsibility being in football we can have. These women are often the people raising the children of a new generation so we must leave a positive impact on them

so the next generation of footballers and people, in general, are raised within positivity and encourage equality. I get excited for the future of Women's football the more women I see having in lead roles within the game.

With WSL and the rest of women's football being concluded away from the pitch due to Covid19 but men's leagues being completed in various forms, do you think there is still a 'men's over women's' attitude in the UK?

I have had this discussion on podcasts I have recently been invited on and my answer will remain consistent.

Unfortunately, the perception of importance that organisations like Fifa, FA, and Uefa give to the leaders of Women's football clubs is ultimately what swayed the vote when it came to whether WSL continued or not. That is my belief, that if the perspective was given that they had as much importance by these leaders as the men's game has then the vote would have ended with a different result.

The problem we have also is for a few clubs (not all) they still have people operating in the age of dinosaurs at the top and their subconscious beliefs through many years of old generational conditioning will keep discriminating against



Terence Meghani Official

The Big Interview

women in the game. I think we either need a new generation to come through who have a "modern-day" belief system (this has pitfalls too of course) or we need to somehow regulate how easy it has become for Clubs at national league levels, for example, to just cut their female sides and leave many women jobless.

I know women all over with continue to fight for equality in the game and myself as a male leader of my club will take a stand with them for this to come about.

What changes would you like to see made at grassroots levels for women's teams?

We need to make higher-quality facilities made available at a lower cost even if that is through a government fund that pays half of the cost for the year after a simple application and checks.

This could quite easily be developed into the offerings for charter standard clubs and those who meet the criteria of that. I would also like to see more female coaching staff at female clubs but I must

say we have seen great development in that area and so I just hope that continues.

Lastly, I just want the pathway to pro clubs from the grassroots level to be clearer for women in the game and I think that will come when we address the above so it encourages more women to become coaches because they feel its more obtainable to them.

Anything else you would like to mention?

I would like to say a massive thank you for allowing us to take part in this interview and expressing our thoughts on the development of the game and also encourage anyone reading this to come and support our club in some capacity in whatever area you can whether it is as a fan of women's football, becoming a player in the squad and or volunteering in some way to contribute to the week to week running of the club.

You can email us at uptonparkladies@gmail.com

for further information on trial dates and club vacancies.

Trials are every Sunday:

- Session one - 10.30am till 12.00pm
- Session two 12.30 - 2.00pm

Please get behind our most recent club competition where for £5 donation towards Mind In Tower Hamlets And Newham. You are put into a prize draw for one of our beautiful new club matchday shirts of your choice.

Simply use this link to enter.....

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/uptonparkladies>

If you want to guarantee yourself one of our beautiful kits they are now available to pre-order:

- <https://store.hopeandglorysports-wear.co.uk/upton-park-ladies>
- www.twitter.com/uptonparkladies
- www.facebook.com/uptonparkladiesfc



North Leigh blame scrap of ladies side on 'lack of commitment'



North Leigh launched an extraordinary attack on their Ladies' team after they decided to scrap the team for the 2020./21 season.

The Millers came under fire for the decision to pull the team out of the Thames Valley Counties Women's Football League.

Members of the squad were informed on the morning of the announcement, with some saying it came out of the blue.

The Millers denied the decision was to make room for a new men's team in the Witney & District FA league, adding that the formation of an Under 12 girls' side last year showed it was an area they 'hope to expand'.

Instead, they pointed to 'a collective lack of club commitment from the team', claiming that no members of the ladies set-up had attended a pitch maintenance session in the two years they had existed.

"We have had several reports over the two seasons of new players feeling alienated and made upset when joining the team, which has developed a very poor reputation," the statement added.

"During the 2018/19 season, the decision was taken to fold the men's Hellenic League side for similar reasons."

Millers ladies player Zoe Greenway denied the claims and revealed the team received no warning of the move.

She said: "There's a whole ring of people that weren't expecting it.

"The courteous thing to do would have been to speak to the team to let them know it might happen.

"There's plenty of things that could have been done to overcome this, so it's a complete lack of respect."

The statement said the club had received "several reports" of new recruits feeling "upset" after joining the team, which had "developed a very poor reputation".

Greenway, 27, said: "We've never had anyone who has left for emotional reasons. We're a really close team, so there's no alienation there.

"I can't think of us as anything but really good friends."

Simon Says

This month I interviewed a young goalkeeper Kacee Leigh Davies who I saw at an open trials day I attended as part of my role as a Football Talent Scout.



How old were you when you first became interested in football?

I first became interested in football when I was seven-years-old.

Many players prefer to play outfield, why did you choose to become a goalkeeper?

I made the choice to become a goal keeper because I was driven by the challenge of the score ultimately coming down to me at the end of the game if the other team got past our defence. My team trusts me in goal.

When did you start to play in organised football teams?

I was nine-years-old when I first started to play in a organised football team called SJB. We are the bees!

Are your family supportive of you wanting to play football?

Yes, my family are very supportive of me playing as part of a team in football. They are extremely proud of what I have achieved so far.

What was the reaction to your friends when you wanted to play football?

They guessed I was playing football from when I said "I've joined a team" as I would always be playing football in my free time.

Do you play for the same club now as when you first become interested in football? If not which other teams have you played for?

Yes I am still with SJB. We are a good team. I would only leave if I got scouted to join Blues women's team.

What is it about being a goalkeeper that you like?

I love the adrenaline when the ball is coming towards the goal and how proud the team are of me when I save the ball and on the odd occasion when the ball slips past! Practice makes perfect.

Is there a particular professional women's team you support?

I love Birmingham City FC

Who is the player in the women's game you most admire?

The woman I admire is Kerys Harrop.

Are you aiming to be a professional footballer when you leave school?

My dream would be to become a professional footballer. Hopefully with practice this will become reality.

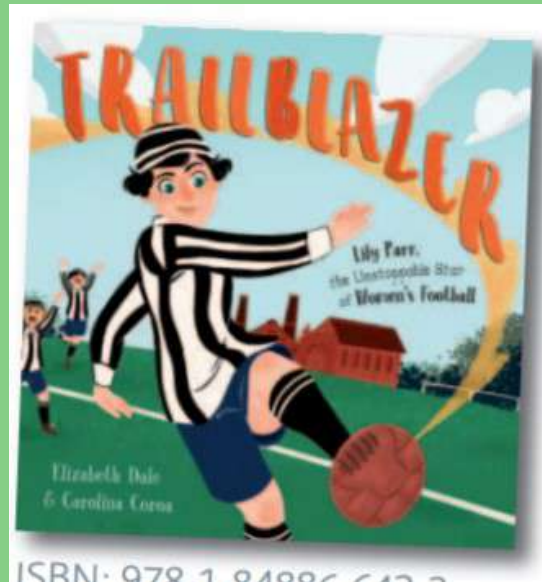
What advice would you give to any other young girls who want to play football?

My advice to other young girls who want to play football would be to get stuck in, play as a team and most of all have fun!

Finally, if you could pick your best five women's players who would they be?

I would pick would be Kerys Harrop, Sarah Mayling, Hannah Hampton, Alexandra Brooks and Chloe Author.

Maverick unveils non-fiction children's book 'Trailblazer'



With over 1.2 million women players today, it's hard to believe that women's football was banned by the FA for fifty years! But in 1921 that's exactly what happened.

Trailblazer is based on the true story of Lily Parr and the Dick, Kerr Ladies, a team that was first formed in World War I whilst many men were off fighting. Football was a way some factory workers escaped the horrible working conditions and it grew in popularity. However, after the war, the sport was deemed by some as 'unsuitable for women'. Lily Parr challenged this prejudice as she not only scored over 900 goals in her 31-year career, but once broke a goalie's arm with her legendary powerful kick.

Trailblazer explores the difficulties women's football faced in the 1920's. A modern day reader may be shocked by the illustration of three men commenting that football 'is too much for a woman's body'. However, women players fought this prejudice by continuing to play on village greens and fitting games around their long hours at the factory. Lily's battle to play the game she loved is an inspiring story of how, if you never give up, you can

achieve your dream no matter who you are.

This narrative non-fiction not only has an inspiring story, but also includes many facts about Lily, her team and how female football has grown despite the ban. In fact, in 2014 England women played in the new Wembley Stadium for the first time – their match attracted 45,619 spectators.

Steve Wilson, BBC Sports Commentator on Match of the Day comments, "A truly inspiring story. What an incredible talent Lily was!"

Author, Elizabeth Dale has had over 70 books published and is particularly excited to share with the world this little-told story. When Dale first learnt about the popularity of women's football in the 1920's and then the subsequent 50-year ban, she was 'absolutely stunned' but found herself intrigued by the story of Lily Parr and felt the story 'just had to be told'.

Dale has teamed up with Brazilian illustrator Carolina Coroa, whose attractive and historically accurate illustrations provide a modern take on a vintage style. This picture book is set to have everyone cheering from the side-lines!

CUPS



Women's Champions League to be completed in August



The Women's Champions League will recommence and conclude in August Uefa have confirmed.

The eight-team knockout event will run from 21 to 30 August in Bilbao and San Sebastian.

it was confirmed that the rest of the postponed competition would be played as an eight-team, straight knockout tournament with one-off ties. The quarter-final ties set in November stand, with a draw having now decided the venues and dates for those matches.

Quarter-finals

Friday 21 August

Glasgow City vs Wolfsburg (18:00 CET: Anoeta Stadium, San Sebastian)

Atlético Madrid vs Barcelona (18:00 CET: San Mamés Stadium, Bilbao)

Saturday 22 August

Arsenal vs Paris Saint-Germain (20:00 CET: Anoeta Stadium, San Sebastián)

Lyon vs Bayern München (20:00 CET: San Mamés Stadium, Bilbao)

Semi-finals

Tuesday 25 August

2: Glasgow City/Wolfsburg vs Atlético/Barcelona (20:00 CET: Anoeta Stadium, San Sebastián)

Wednesday 26 August

1: Arsenal/Paris vs Lyon/Bayern (20:00 CET: San Mamés Stadium, Bilbao)

Final

Sunday 30 August

Winner semi-final 2 vs Winner semi-final 1 (KO time tbc: Anoeta Stadium, San Sebastian)



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CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE



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HOME NATIONS



THE **WOMEN'S**
FOOTBALL
MAGAZINE

The FA backs plans to create online English Women's football archive



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The history of the women's game in England is set to be brought to life for the first time thanks to an innovative digital archive project which will create a new virtual exhibition, celebrating historic moments in the development of women's football.

The English Women's Football Archive project (EWFA), which has the backing of The FA, will catalogue artefacts, photographs and memorabilia in digital format and use video and audio voiceovers to bring to life to the history and stories behind each item.

The virtual exhibition will be housed entirely online and free to access, allowing the EWFA to tell the story of the women's game on a greater scale and to a wider audience than ever before.

The EWFA and The FA are now asking fans, players, coaches and administrators of the game to contact the archiving team if they have any items which could be of interest for

the project.

Dave Bowler, the EWFA's coordinator, said: "This is not only a very exciting project it is essential, ensuring the development of the women's game in England is comprehensively recorded as an integral part of this country's incredible footballing and cultural heritage.

"As we are all currently spending considerably more time at home, now is the perfect time for fans, current and former players, coaches and administrators to check their attics, cupboards and storage for anything they think may make an important contribution to our archive.

"Rest assured that as this project will create a virtual museum we are not asking anyone to relinquish their treasured items. In the first instance, all we ask is that we receive a photo or video of items that could be of historical interest.

“Whilst not every item will necessarily be included in the archive, even those items that may appear humble could, in fact, be vital in helping us chart the history of women’s football. All items selected for inclusion in the project will be professionally photographed or filmed by our archiving team in due course.

“We are also equally keen to hear contributor’s anecdotes, memories and opinions which can help breathe life and meaning into the items we display and we look forward to unearthing some fascinating, insightful stories.”

Sue Campbell, The FA’s director of women’s football said: “This is a vitally important project that we are proud to support. A public archive celebrating the development of the women’s game and the incredible change and growth it has witnessed is of immense cultural and sporting value.

“We know that many people have dedicated considerable time and effort over the years to record the history of the women’s game in England, but to have a centralised digital resource such as this, charting women’s

football from its roots right through to the present day will be invaluable.”

Gail Newsham, author of ‘In a League of Their Own’, a history of Dick, Kerr Ladies team, backed the project, saying: “This is a fantastic and exciting initiative. I am delighted to be able to support The FA and the England Women’s Football Archive by sharing some of the incredibly rich history of the early years of women’s football.

“It will give me the opportunity to share - for the very first time - some rare items relating to the Dick, Kerr Ladies, arguably one of the most important teams in the history of our game. I can’t wait for everyone to see them!”

If you would like to contribute items or memories for consideration for the museum, or would like some further information please contact: dave.bowler@ewfa.org.uk.

The closing date for initial submissions is 30 June 2020.



£250,000 boost for Scottish Women's Football



James Anderson, the Edinburgh philanthropist and fund manager, has donated £250,000 to the Scottish Football Partnership Trust.

The money is to help sustain the women's game through the Covid-19 crisis.

The donation to the SFP Trust, who have supported Scottish Women's Football (SWF) with grants and sponsorship over the last decade, follows on from James Anderson's backing for the Scottish professional men's game .

It is hoped that following the processing of Gift Aid, the donation will increase to £312,500 with 100% of the funds going to support SWF and Member clubs.

James Clydesdale, chair of the SFP Trust, said: "We are delighted James Anderson has also chosen to help Scottish Women's Football. The women's game has been making great progress in the last five years and we don't want to see this momentum lost due to the COVID-19 crisis."

Vivienne MacLaren, Chair of Scottish Women's Football, said: "This support will help provide an incredibly powerful message to all girls and women in Scotland that their sport matters and has not been forgotten in the midst of this pandemic. We are very grateful to James Anderson for recognising this. We are delighted that we are able to deliver this funding via the SFP Trust and thank them for their support."



James Anderson said: “Football for girls and women in Scotland continues to make incredible progress across every level and this has really inspired me to support SWF through this partnership approach with The SFP Trust. Football is at the heart of communities across Scotland and the women’s game is a key part of this.”

This initial phase of funding will be distributed by the SFP Trust to SWPL 1 and SWPL 2 clubs as well as SWF to sustain non-playing staff and key club infrastructure, dealing with the operational challenges brought about by Covid-19.

Benefits will also filter down to other SWF member clubs, including those at grassroots level.

James Clydesdale, chair of SFPT, added: “Women’s football faces extra challenges as its league season was stopped in its tracks almost as soon as it was under way and with it, normal sources of revenues. The grant will be used to fund the sustainability of the women’s game to help the return to training and play and bolster the organisational set up.”

SWF is also expected to nominate to UEFA by May next year the nominee(s) for the 2021/2022 competition.

Glasgow City are currently in the quarter finals of this season’s UEFA Women’s Champions League.

There are over 200 clubs involved in women’s and girls’ football in Scotland and SWF operates two premier leagues, with 2 regionalised championship divisions making up the performance pyramid. Most clubs recruit only amateur players and are still largely volunteer- driven, with only three employing a small number of players on a full-time basis.



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Rangers joint head coach departs



Gregory Vignal has left his role as Joint Head Coach of Rangers Women.

Vignal took up the position last year when the team turned full-time.

Vignal told rangers.co.uk: “Following discussion with the club we have reached the mutual decision not to extend my contract which is due to expire.”

Sporting Director, Ross Wilson commented: “Our Women’s programme is important and an integral part of the football department, evidenced in our pioneering and innovative approach in

our move to become a full-time professional team.

“Gregory has contributed significantly in this transition and since I joined the club he has shown enormous enthusiasm throughout.

“We introduced Malky Thomson to the women’s programme in January and Malky will ensure a seamless transition for the squad.

“I wish Gregory the very best of luck in his next chapter and I am pleased that our paths have crossed at Rangers and we have been able to contribute to his journey.”

Berwick Rangers launch Women's & Girls programme



Berwick Rangers Football Club have announced their intention to launch a Women's and Girls football programme upon the resumption of the game.

The programme will initially comprise of Open Days – such as the one cancelled in May due to the COVID-19 pandemic – in order to gauge what interest there is in the local community for women's and girls football.

From there, the goal will then be to form teams that will compete in regional leagues.

Berwick Rangers Juniors Chairman Steven Ingram, Andy Thorpe has accepted the role as the Head of the Women's & Girls Programme.

He joins the club immediately and will work alongside the Berwick Rangers Juniors committee and Berwick Rangers FC Director Dave Buglass, who is also Head of Football Operations at Glasgow City FC.

Speaking about the intention to launch the Women's & Girls programme, Buglass said: "Women's and girls football continues to grow at a rapid pace following the recent Women's World Cup and, in 2020, we saw the number of players in Scotland rise to 17,000 and in England 2.63 million.

"It's clear to see there's an appetite there for girls football in the area and we will look to

take advantage of relationships I have in the Scottish game, as well as Andy's from his years of coaching, to produce an excellent offering.

"We're delighted that Andy has decided to head up this operation and we look forward to working with him closely over the coming months."

Thorpe added: "I'm honoured to accept the offer to become the Head of Women's & Girls Programme.

"Having been involved with Lowick Utd for the past nine years, I know first-hand the enthusiasm and talent we have locally for girls and women's football.

"My ambition is to create a fun learning environment where the girls and women can enjoy playing the game, whilst developing the technical and tactical skills necessary to play winning football.

"We are starting from scratch but we do have short, medium and long-term plans to develop a sustainable model, which allows the club to challenge at the highest levels in junior and women's football.

"With the support of our local community, I really believe that we can achieve something special here."





Welsh Premier Women's League: Cascade Ladies promoted



Cascade Ladies have been promoted to the Welsh Premier Women's League.

The Hengoed based side won the Welsh Women's League title after the 2019/20 Welsh domestic campaign was curtailed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Despite Barry Town United and Caldicot Town Ladies also securing the necessary licence to compete in the WPWL, the National Game Board has opted to promote just Cascade Ladies.

Cascade Ladies will take their place in the Welsh Premier Women's League next season after they were promoted.

The Hengoed based side won the Welsh Women's League title after the 2019/20 Welsh domestic campaign was curtailed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Despite Barry Town United and Caldicot Town Ladies also securing the necessary licence to compete in the WPWL, the National Game Board has opted to promote just Cascade Ladies.

There was no application from any side from the North Wales Women's Football League, despite Llanfair United finishing top.

It will see the division run as nine teams for the 2020/21 season after Llandudno's withdrawal left a gap within the league.

Abergavenny Women appoint new manager



Abergavenny Women have appointed Craig Morgan-Hill as their new first team manager.

Her replaces Laura Davies who stood down from her role after four years at the club.

Morgan-Hill moves into the top job of the women's team having previously been assistant manager to the men's senior side.

Tweeting his delight after the appointment, the newly appointed boss said: "I'm absolutely delighted to be given an opportunity to help continue the clubs' progression on and off the field. Exciting times ahead."

A former youth player of Swansea City and Manchester City, as well as playing reserve level football at Mansfield Town, Morgan-Hill has spent a majority of his playing career at local level in Wales.



INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENTS



**THE WOMEN'S
FOOTBALL
MAGAZINE**

Australia and NZ win 2023 Women's World Cup win

AsOne

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**AUNZ
2023**

Australia and New Zealand have won the bid to host the 2023 Women's World Cup.

The final vote was not as close as anticipated, with the joint bid receiving 22 votes to Colombia's 13.

The news comes despite Uefa backing the Colombia bid.

Just days before the vote, Japan pulled out of the race to host the 2023 event.

Australia and New Zealand had received public backing from the Asian Football Confederation, which has seven votes, and won support from all members of the council from the Confederation of African Football and Concacaf, which represents North and Central America and the Caribbean.

The president of New Zealand Football, Johanna Wood, said: "We believe we have been given a treasure and we will look after that treasure. We will work towards putting women's football even more front and centre on the world stage."

On the eve of the vote a meeting of Uefa delegates to the Fifa council appeared to have swung the odds in favour of Colombia after two members criticised the Fifa technical reports into the bids and argued that because the Women's World Cup was a "development tournament" representatives should back Colombia.

Fifa's technical reports gave the Australia and New Zealand bid a score of 4.1 out of five and Colombia a score of 2.8.

Uefa explained its decision to back Colombia by saying: “Even though the Colombian bid was not the one rated highest technically by Fifa, European members of the Fifa council felt it represented a strategic opportunity for the development of women’s football in South America thanks to the legacy and increase of attention for the women’s game that the tournament would bring to the continent.

“It was a choice between two countries – Australia and New Zealand – where women’s football is already strongly established, and a continent where it still has to be firmly implanted and has a huge development potential. It’s important to add that European members of the Fifa council agreed to vote together on major issues as a matter of solidarity.”

What is the proposed dates?

The 2023 tournament will be expanded from 24 to 32 teams for the first time and is provisionally scheduled between July 10 and August 20.

Where are the proposed venues?

Australia and New Zealand proposed 13 possible venues across 12 host cities for the tournament in the Bid Book.

The final selection of venues will be decided by Fifa.

Eden Park in Auckland was suggested to host the opening game.

Stadium Australia has been put forward as the suggestion for the final.

- **Sydney:** Stadium Australia (70,000 cap)
Sydney Football Stadium (42,512 cap) - under construction)
- **Brisbane:** Brisbane Stadium (52, 263 cap)
- **Melbourne:** Melbourne Rectangular Stadium (30,052 cap)
- **Newcastle:** Newcastle Stadium (25, 945 cap)
- **Perth:** Perth Rectangular Stadium (22,225 cap)
- **Launceston:** York Park (22,065 cap)
- **Adelaide:** Hindmarsh Stadium (18,435 cap)
- **Auckland:** Eden Park (48,276 cap)
- **Wellington:** Wellington Stadium (39,000 cap)
- **Dunedin:** Dunedin Stadium (28,744 cap)
- **Hamilton:** Waikato Stadium (25,111 cap)
- **Christchurch:** Christchurch Stadium (22, 556 cap)





Around the World



Latest from the NWSL Challenge Cup



Three USA international pull out of the tournament

Megan Rapinoe, Christen Press and Tobin Heath have opted out of playing in the NWSL Challenge Cup.

The trio cited “uncertainty” caused by Covid-19 as their reasoning.

The tournament is the first team-sport league to resume in the USA.

Press said in a statement: "It is deeply painful not to be able to play the game I love, and to watch the broader effects of the global pandemic on our league, sports and our world.

"Regrettably, given the uncertainty created by Covid-19, I must elect not to participate in this tournament."

Orlando Pride withdraw

Orlando Pride have withdrawn from the competition after six of their players and four staff members tested positive for Covid-19.

"This was obviously a difficult and disappointing outcome," said the club.

"However this is a decision that was made in order to protect the health of all involved in the Challenge Cup."

However just days later the club were forced to confirm inconsistent coronavirus test results.

In a new statement they wrote: "On Thursday, Orlando Pride received test results for the second round of COVID-19 testing for the team's players and staff, which indicated inconsistencies from previous tests.

"The club will conduct a third round of testing as soon as possible in order to come to conclusive results for all members of the team, both staff and players."

Players take the knee

Players have been seen taking the knee during the national anthem as part of their commitment to the 'Black Lives Matter' campaign.

Chicago Red Star team-mates Julie Ertz and Casey Short were seen sharing a tearful embrace before the start of their game with many players across the games joining in.

NWSL Challenge Cup Rosters

Chicago Red Stars



Opted Out: N/A

Goalkeepers: Emily Boyd, Cassie Miller, Alyssa Naeher

Defenders: Camryn Biegalski, Julia Bingham, Tierna Davidson, Hannah

Davison, Julie Ertz, Zoey Goralski, Sarah Gorden, Zoe Morse, Kayla Sharples, Casey Short, Bianca St. Georges

Midfielders: Morgan Brian, Danielle Colaprico, Vanessa DiBernardo, Savannah McCaskill, Yuki Nagasato, Cassie Rohan, Ella Stevens

Forwards: Makenzy Doniak, Rachel Hill, Katie Johnson, Sarah Luebbert, Zoe Redei, Michele Vasconcelos, Kealia Watt

Houston Dash



Opted Out: N/A

Goalkeepers: Jane Campbell, Amanda Dennis, Lindsey Harris

Defenders: Allysha Chapman, Katie Naughton,

Megan Oyster, Ally Prisock, Erin Simon

Midfielders: Shea Groom, Haley Hanson, Cece Kizer, Kristie Mewis, Christine Nairn, Cami Privett, Sophie Schmidt, Bri Visalli

Forwards: Bridgette Andrzejewski, Rachel Daly, Jamia Fields, Veronica Latsko, Maegan Kelly, Kayla McCoy, Nichelle Prince, Katie Stengel

North Carolina Courage



Opted Out: N/A

Goalkeepers: Stephanie Labbe, Samantha Murphy, Katelyn Rowland

Defenders: Lindsay Agnew,

Abby Dahlkemper, Jaelene Daniels, Abby Erceg, Hailey Harbison, Kaleigh Kurtz, Hailie Mace, Merritt Mathias, Addisyn Merrick, Sinclaire Miramontez, Ryan Williams

Midfielders: Debinha, Crystal Dunn, Samantha Mewis, Lauren Milliet, Denise O'Sullivan, Cari Roccaro, Meredith Speck

Forwards: Kristen Hamilton, Jessica McDonald, McKenzie Meehan, Ally Watt, Lynn Williams

OL Reign



Opted Out: Megan Rapinoe

Goalkeepers: Michelle Betos, Casey Murphy, Carly Nelson

Defenders: Lauren Barnes, Amber Brooks, Alana Cook,

Steph Cox, Machaela George, Madison Hammond, Celia Jimenez Delgado, Adrienne Jordan, Kristen McNabb, Taylor Smith

Midfielders: Morgan Andrews, Shirley Cruz, Jess Fishlock, Kelcie Hedge, Allie Long, Rebecca Quinn, Dani Weatherholt, Rosie White

Forwards: Bethany Balcer, Sofia Huerta, Darian Jenkins, Mariah Lee, Nicole Momiki, Jasmyne Spencer, Jodie Taylor

Portland Thorns



Opted Out: Tobin Heath

Goalkeepers: Bella Bixby, Britt Eckerstrom, Adrianna Franch

Defenders: Kelli Hubly, Meghan Klingenberg, Emily

Menges, Meaghan Nally, Madison Pogarch, Katherine Reynolds, Becky Sauerbrunn, Autumn Smithers, Christen Westphal

NWSL Challenge Cup Rosters

Midfielders: Celeste Boureille, Lindsey Horan, Emily Ogle, Rocky Rodriguez, Angela Salem, Gabby Seiler

Forwards: Simone Charley, Marissa Everett, Tyler Lussi, Anika Rodriguez, Christine Sinclair, Sophia Smith, Morgan Weaver

Sky Blue FC



Opted Out: Carli Lloyd (knee), Caprice Dydasco (ACL), Mallory Pugh (hip)

Goalkeepers: Didi Haracic, Megan Hinz, Amanda McGlynn, Kailen Sheridan

Defenders: Sabrina Flores, Mandy Freeman, Estelle Johnson, Gina Lewandowski, Kaleigh Riehl, Erica Skroski, Chantelle Swaby

Midfielders: Cassidy Benintente, Nicole Baxter, Jennifer Cudjoe, Elizabeth Eddy, Naho Kawasumi, Margaret Purce, Domi Richardson, Madison Tiernan, Sarah Woldmoe, Kenie Wright, McCall Zerboni

Forwards: Imani Dorsey, Paige Monaghan, Ifeoma Onumonu, Evelyne Viens

Utah Royals FC



Opted Out: Christen Press

Goalkeepers: Nicole Barnhart, Abby Smith, Melissa Lowder

Defenders: Elizabeth Ball, Rachel Corsie, Taylor Leach, Gaby Vincent, Katie Bowen, Kelley O'Hara (FED-USA), Mallory Weber, Marissa Sheva, Michelle Maemone, Maddie Nolf



Midfielders: Vero Boquete, Diana

Matheson, Desiree Scott, Chestley Strother, Lo'eau La-bonta, Aminata Diallo, Gunny Jonsdottir, Kate Del Fava

Forwards: Brittany Ratcliffe, Amy Rodriguez, Arielle Ship, Tziarra King (CDP), Taylor Lytle, Holly Daugirda, Raisa Strom-Okimoto

Washington Spirit

Opted Out: N/A

Goalkeepers: Aubrey Bledsoe, Devon Kerr, Katie Lund

Defenders: Tegan McGrady, Sam Staab, Paige Nielsen, Jenna Hellstrom, Brooke Hendrix, Tori Huster, Kaiya McCullough, Natalie Jacobs

Midfielders: Dorian Bailey, Jaye Boissierre, Jordan DiBiasi, Meggie Dougherty Howard, Rose Lavelle, Meghan McCool, Jessie Scarpa, Andi Sullivan

Forwards: Averie Collins, Bayley Feist, Ashley Hatch, Katie McClure, Ashley Sanchez, Crystal Thomas, Kumi Yokoyama



NWSL Challenge Cup Matches



Qualification Round

North Carolina Courage	2-1	Portland Thorns
Chicago Red Stars	1-2	Washington Spirit
Orlando Pride	CANCELLED	Chicago Red Stars
Houston Dash	3-3	Utah Royals
OL Reign	0-0	Sky Blue
Portland Thorns	0-0	Chicago Red Stars
Portland Thorn	CANCELLED	Orlando Pride
Washington Spirit	0-2	North Carolina Courage
North Carolina Courage	CANCELLED	Houston Dash
Utah Royals	1-0	Sky Blue
Houston Dash	2-0	OL Reign
North Carolina Courage	05/07	Chicago Red Stars
Portland Thorns	06/07	Washington Spirit
Utah Royals	08/07	OL Reign
Sky Blue	09/07	Houston Dash
Washington Spirit	12/07	Houston Dash
Chicago Red Stars	13/07	Utah Royals
Reign	13/07	Portland Thorns
Sky Blue	14/07	North Carolina Courage



News from around the world

Japan to launch new top-flight league in 2021



The Japan Football Association (JFA) have announced plans for a new women's club competition known as the WE league, standing for 'Women's Empowerment.'

The round robin competition will begin in Autumn 2021 with participating teams to be announced later this year.

There will be between 6-10 teams competing with no relegation for 'several years' but there will be promotion from lower levels.

The WE League will become Japan's top-flight, above the already established Nadeshiko League.

AXA becomes Swiss top women's league

AXA is announced as the first partner in the history of the top Swiss women's league.

In the 50th anniversary year, the insurance company is to partner with the National League A and Swiss women's cup final for two years.

"AXA is proud to be the first partner in the history of Switzerland's top women's league", says Antonia Lepore, Head of Marketing Communication at AXA.



"As a partner of the national women's league, we will contribute our great motivation and passion, support the players above and beyond the sporting arena, and enable them to fully achieve their potential."

Spanish FA award top two tiers with professional status



The Spanish FA (RFEF) has said the top two tiers of women's football will be given professional status.

The Spanish FA added that clubs, players and coaches will need to fulfil a series of requirements to participate in the professional competitions, but said that the new status will help to promote the women's game which previously had an amateur status.

Last February, Spain's women footballers signed a historic first collective agreement over pay and conditions, after a battle for rights that had led to an unprecedented strike in November.

The new competition rules will set out budgetary requirements and labour standards.



News from around the world

Wellington to apply for W-League

New Zealand's Wellington Phoenix will seek a licence to enter a women's team in Australian soccer's W-League.

The Phoenix men's team currently compete in the Australian A-League.

The W-League has nine teams, with eight allied to men's A-League sides.

The team would probably be based in Australia due to the costs of regular trans-Tasman travel.



Serie B player Varone dies in accident



Riozzese player Arianna Varone has died at the age of 21.

Varone was killed in a road accident when riding her scooter.

The 21-year-old was a midfielder who started her career at Inter and had a spell with Milan before signing for Riozzese in 2017.

Last season, she helped the team win the Coppa Italia Serie C and gain promotion to Serie B.

The FIGC wrote: "She will leave an unbridgeable void in the lives of those who loved her and were lucky enough to be around her."

Alana Cook joins OL Reign on loan

USA defender Cook has joined OL Reign on loan for the NWSL Challenge Cup.

Cook has one year left on her contract with Paris Saint Germain but with Ligue 1 finishing due to Covid-19, she has made the temporary move across the Atlantic.

PSG remain in the Women's Champions League which starts in August, after the completion of the NWSL Challenge Cup.

OL Reign CEO Bill Predmore said: "Alana is a player we've been following for many years. We are excited to have join the squad, if only on a short-term basis.

"We very much appreciate PSG allowing Alana to join for the tournament in Utah. Alana will add both depth and quality to the squad, which will be critical given the short rest between matches in the preliminary stage of the NWSL Challenge Cup."





News from around the world

O'Reilly announces birth of first child



USA legend Heather O'Reilly has announced the birth of her first child.

The three-time Olympic gold medallist, 35, shared the news on social media.

She wrote: "William O'Reilly Werry came into this world at 5:37am on June 18th. 6lbs 10 ounces.

"Clearly a champion!

"Our little prince William.

"We are spilling out with love."

Snøeijls leaves PSV for Girondins Bordeaux

Katja Snøeijls has joined Girondins Bordeaux.

The 23-year-old forward leaves PSV Women after two years with the club having scored 39 times in 44 appearances.

Girondins Bordeaux have been busy signing players in the last few weeks.

Young forward Mickaella Cardia has signed a three-year deal with the club, joining from Marseille.

Julie Dufour, a France U20 international, joins the club from Lille on a three-year deal.

Eve Perisset has signed a two-year deal with the club whilst Ella Palis joins from Guingamp.



Italian league to get professional status



The Italian Soccer Federation (FIGC) has announced that Serie A Femminile will turn professional from 2022/2023 season.

The decision was agreed unanimously on June 25 during the Federal Council.

In a statement on FIGC website, president Gabriele Gravina described the move as an "urgent and much-needed step regarding the issue of equality" and proposed "the launch of a gradual project aimed at recognizing professionalism, starting from the 2022-23 season.



News from around the world

2020 African Women's Cup of Nations cancelled



The Confederation of African Football (CAF) has decided to cancel this year's Women's Cup of Nations.

CAF took the decision after a video-conference meeting involving its executive members due to the outbreak of coronavirus.

The qualifiers for the tournament which was initially billed to take place from November to December, was postponed three months ago.

The 2020 AWCON would have been a historic tournament after it was expanded to a 12-team championship from 8 seen at the last edition in Ghana two years ago.

However, the African body said it would launch a new Women's Champions League in 2021, as part of measures to boost the development of football on the continent.

Ghana's women's season declared null and void

The Executive Council of the Ghana Football Association (GFA) has cancelled the 2019/20 football season.

Accordingly, all records associated to the season has been expunged but fines accrued must be honoured by clubs.

There shall also be no demotion and promotion.

The League season has been on suspension after first round of the competition in March, 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The GFA has been engaging Government, CAF and FIFA and on the way forward for the season following which the Executive Council has finally taken a decision to cancel the season after considering all the key factors.

Real Madrid make women's team official

CD Tacon have officially become Real Madrid CF.

Tacon were originally created in 2014 with the aim of becoming a professional club.

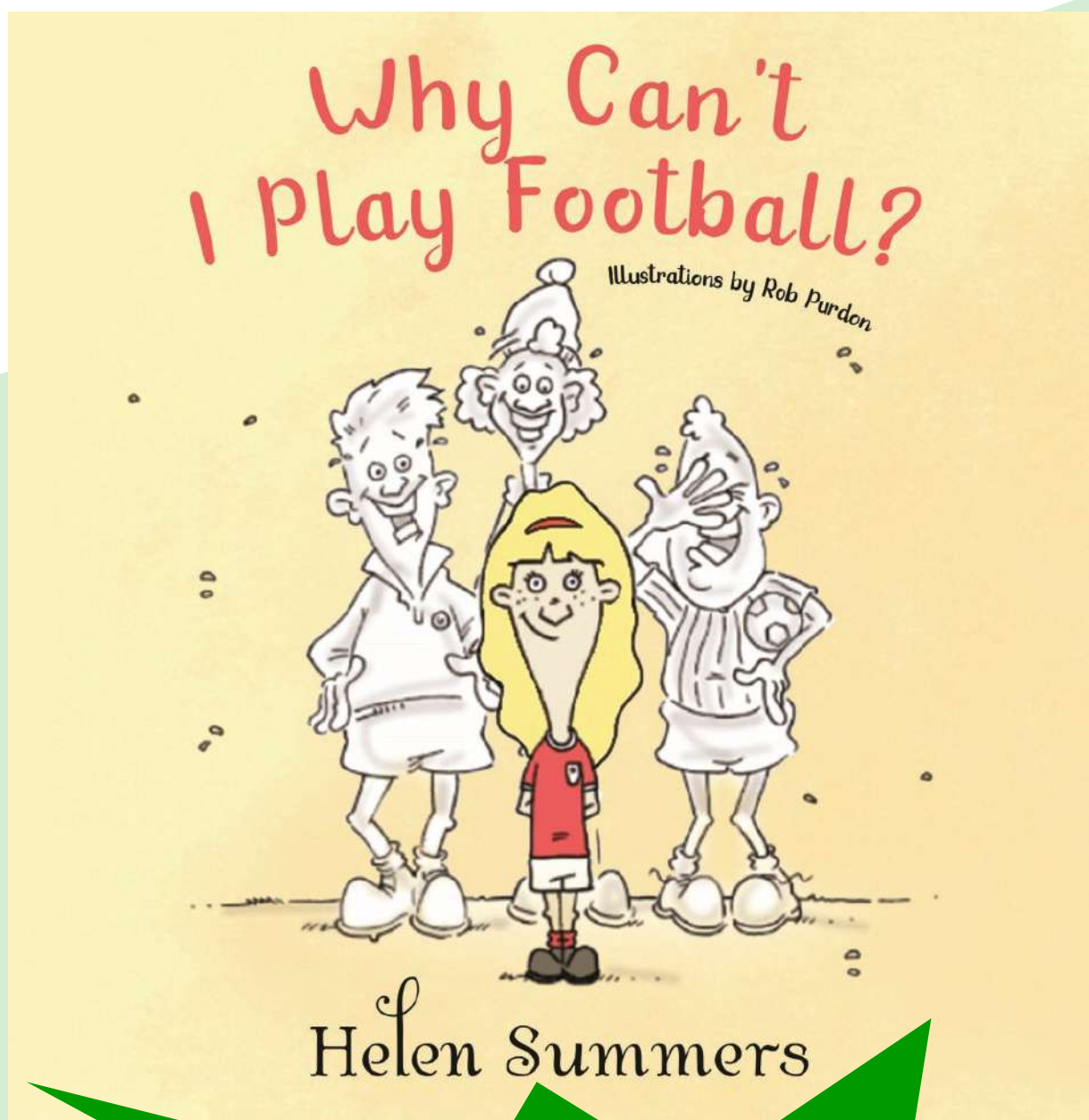
They gained promotion to the Spanish Primera Iberdrola in May 2019.

In June 2019 Real Madrid, who did not have a women's senior team, integrated the club into their women's football section.





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