

THE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL MAGAZINE

ISSUE 55—Jan 2022



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THE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL MAGAZINE



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Welcome

Hello and welcome to Issue 55!

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Company number: 12839197



Firstly, Happy New Year, wishing you all a fabulous and healthy 2022.

It is (finally!) the year of the European Championships and we are already getting excited for the summer.

However, there is a lot of football to be played before then and some really exciting games to be had.

We know the stadium for the Continental Tyres Cup, the FA Cup has already had some brilliant games and we have a brand new international competition to look forward to!

The Fifa The Best awards were this week, what are your thoughts on the players in the World XI? Let us know and you might be included next issue!

Enjoy the issue!

Helen Rowe-Willcocks

Editor-in-Chief

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THE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL MAGAZINE

CALENDAR 2022

The Rising Stars Changing the Game

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and packaging)



The 1921 Football Association ban on women's football as its members' grounds



By Tony Killilea

On Boxing Day 1920 a capacity crowd of 53,000 packed into Goodison Park in Liverpool.

Such was the demand to see the biggest football match of the year that an estimated 14,000 people were locked out, disappointed that they couldn't get to watch the finest players of their era.

The sense of occasion was enhanced by the fact that the match was started by Ella Retford, one of the biggest music hall stars of the age, and the Lord Mayor of Liverpool was in attendance.

But the huge crowd hadn't shoehorned themselves into the stadium to admire

Everton or Liverpool's men's teams, rather they'd come to witness St Helens Ladies take on Dick, Kerr Ladies from Preston in what was billed as the unofficial women's cup final.

The two teams treated the Goodison crowd to a feast of attacking football, with Dick, Kerr running out 4-0 winners. Two of their outstanding players, Lily Parr and Alice Woods, had recently been transferred from St Helens. Lily, an openly gay, chain smoking left winger, was renowned for her caustic wit as well as the accuracy of her long passing and the power of her shooting.

She is reputed to have broken the arm of a goalkeeper who was unwise enough to get in the way of one of her shots and scored almost a thousand goals in an astonishing career. Dick, Kerr Ladies, was the works team of an engineering company, which had most notably manufactured trams, before turning its factory over to producing weapons to support the war effort. Encouraged by Albert Frankland who managed the team, they sought to take their game beyond the status of a pastime and put it on a par with the men's game.

Albert was empowered to offer employment to any

player who was deemed good enough to join the team and Lily moved to Preston as a Dick, Kerr worker.

Alice's mother, however, insisted that her daughter remain at home to help care for her younger siblings. Although she played for Dick, Kerr, she returned after the matches to St Helens where all her male relatives worked in the coal mines.

Women's football had started in the latter part of the nineteenth century; the first recorded women's match took place in 1888 in Inverness, but it really established itself during the first world war. With the men's leagues suspended there was an opportunity for the women's game to gain status.

In working class communities, young women and girls were employed in munitions factories to help the war effort. Bolstered by the camaraderie of the workplace, the women sought an outlet for pleasure after long hours of drudgery in the factories; and they found this in football.

At first seen as a novelty, the commitment and skill of the teams ensured that women's football soon gained credibility and

enormous popularity. But when it seemed that the women's game was building an unstoppable momentum it was dealt a devastating blow.

Just under a year after the Boxing Day match the Football Association took steps to ensure that such a huge event couldn't take place again in the women's game. On 5th December 1921 the FA issued an edict banning women's football from being played at its members' grounds.

This did not end women's football in England, but the ban did mean that women's football was now banished to recreation grounds and public parks where attendances were far more limited.

In its edict the FA gave two reasons for barring women from playing football at its grounds.

Firstly, that women were physically unsuited to such a game and, secondly, that "an inadequate percentage (of the takings were) devoted to Charitable Objects."

So, were women physically unsuited to playing football?

There was certainly a body of opinion in the early decades of the twentieth century that competitive sport and in particular,

football, could be damaging to women's health.

Baron Pierre de Coubertin, founder of the modern Olympics, said, "no matter how toughened a sportswoman may be, her organism is not cut out to sustain certain shocks".

This view was echoed by an FA doctor called Eustace Miles, who said, "the kicking is too jerky a movement for women and the strain is likely to be severe."

Of course, these were male views and there was an overriding belief at the all-male FA that football was unfeminine and that a woman's place was in the home. Two female doctors also claimed that football was potentially damaging to women, in particular it could cause damage to their reproductive organs, but their approach was no more scientific than that of Dr Miles, and no actual evidence of this was ever forthcoming.

Of course, those doctors didn't make any claims for any damaging effects from doing heavy, not to mention extremely dangerous, work in munitions factories.

A medic with a different perspective was Dr Mary Lowry who, after watching Dick, Kerr Ladies play a

match said, “football is no more likely to cause injuries to women than a heavy day’s washing.”

At the same time factory welfare officers were encouraging football for women as a means of improving their physical wellbeing. As for the supposed sterilising effects of playing football on women, these were belied by the fecundity of Dick, Kerr’s players. Alice was typical of the team in going on to have four children.

What of the FA’s claim that women’s football clubs were diverting too much money by way of expenses from charity donations?

Unlike the professional men’s game, women’s matches were played for charity. During, and in the period following, the first world war, funds were raised for wounded soldiers and their families.

In part, the enthusiasm for women’s football stemmed from a patriotic desire to help the war effort by contributing to servicemen’s charities.

The Boxing Day game raised £3,115 (well over half a million pounds in today’s money) for the Unemployed Ex Servicemen’s Distress Fund.

The Derby Daily Telegraph stated that “the strongest argument in its (women’s football’s) favour appears to be the large amount of money that has been raised for charity.”

Expenses were indeed taken from match takings to pay for travel, laundry and time in lieu (players often had to miss shifts in order to play the matches).

This was done transparently, with meticulous records being kept by Dick, Kerr’s secretary, Herbert Stanley.

Figures for fixtures where his club were responsible for the finances show that between £28 and £38 of the takings for each match were used for expenses.

So, indeed, not all of the match takings went directly to the charities for which the matches were staged. But the £120,000 raised for charities by women’s football between 1918 and 1921 was £120,000 more than the FA raised for charitable causes.

A direct effect of the FA ban was to drastically reduce the amount of money that could be raised for ‘Charitable Objects’ as now the attendances for women’s matches could only be measured in hundreds rather than tens of thousands.

The FA’s ban was infinitely more effective at reducing the amount of money going to charities than the expenses extracted from the takings of matches.

Many ex-servicemen protested to the FA against the ban on behalf of their injured comrades who, in the years before the welfare state, depended hugely on these charity donations, but to no avail.

If the two reasons that the FA gave for banning women’s football from its grounds were unfounded, were there other, hidden, reasons for the ban?

It may be that the FA saw the success of women’s football as a threat to the men’s game, both in terms of its reputation as a masculine activity and in terms of the income it generated.

Perhaps the FA’s decision related to views on changing gender roles in the social upheaval following the first world war.

While some women’s sport historians have argued that sport was opened up to women following the war, men held the power and controlled the resources of sport.

And in this case, they used that power to the severe detriment of women. Jean

Williams, in her 2003 book, "A Game for Rough Girls," says that the FA wanted to reclaim football as a male domain.

She states that the FA ban 'could be interpreted as a rather clumsy attempt...to reinforce the masculine image of football.' There seems little doubt that the FA feared the impact that women's football was having on the professional men's game.

In terms of attendances women's football had become more popular than the men's game and, consequently, could generate more money.

The 67,000 who tried to get in to Goodison Park on Boxing Day 1920 compares with an average home attendance for Everton that season of 37,215.

According to Barbara Jacobs, money was the main reason for the FA ban. In her 2004 book, "The Dick, Kerr's Ladies," she argues that women were showing up the men's game by raising huge sums for charity, 'demonstrating how easy it was to make money out of the professional game.'

But why did a year pass between the high watermark of the Goodison Park game and the ban? There is a school



of thought that the government intervened to persuade the FA to take action against women's football for political reasons, and it is worth looking at what occurred in the year leading up to the ban.

In March 1921, mine owners reduced pay by 50% and when workers refused to accept this they were locked out.

Inspired by Dick, Kerr and St Helens many more teams were formed, in part to provide financial support for mining communities.

According to Jacobs the miners' lockout politicised women's football.

This was a working class game, based in industrial heartlands, and it shifted easily from patriotic support for the war wounded to politically motivated fund raising.

Fixtures were arranged to provide relief for the families of striking workers: in Swansea, where 25,000 people attended, Cardiff (18,000) and Kilmarnock (15,000).

In St Helens and other South Lancashire mining towns "pea soup" matches were played by women's teams to raise money for the soup kitchens which fed miners' children.

Alice's own family as well as her wider community was benefitting from the welfare generated by the sport that she had helped to popularise.

Did these demonstrations of solidarity with their suffering neighbours persuade the coalition government to act to end this means of supporting industrial action?

Although there is no written evidence for any government intervention, it is not hard to see that the government would have been irritated by a women's game which was now aligning itself with the Labour movement.

And there is no doubt that the FA's ban on women staging matches in large stadiums drastically reduced the amount of relief that miners and their families could receive.

The FA ban did not stop women playing football, indeed, they carried on playing with as much enthusiasm and skill as before, but without the ability to attract large crowds and the significant press coverage that playing at major stadiums brought, women's football was marginalised.

The FA ban was revoked in 1972, but it is only now that women's football is starting to recover the

level of media coverage and status that it enjoyed a century ago.

It is still not clear exactly what motivated the FA to prevent women from enjoying their chosen sport at its grounds; but it was hugely effective at diminishing the status of the women's game, as well as having a severely detrimental effect on the welfare of ex-servicemen and striking miners.

The ban was also disturbing to others who loved the game and hated to see it belittled.

Major Cecil Kent, a former football club secretary from Liverpool, wrote to the FA in 1921, asking, "Why have the FA got their knife into girls' football?"

"What have the girls done except raise large sums for charity and play the game?"

Are their feet heavier on the turf than men's feet?"



WOMEN'S SUPER LEAGUE



Blackstenius is a Gunner



By Charlotte Stacey

The 25-year-old striker joins the Gunners from Swedish top-flight club BK Häcken where she has netted 25 goals in 40 appearances.

Blackstenius is also a regular fixture in Sweden's national team and has racked up 22 goals in 72 appearances, including the seven she tallied in last summer's Olympic Games, in which Sweden placed second.

After a decline in performance over recent weeks, including last week's shock two-nil defeat to Birmingham City, Arsenal boss Jonas Eidevall has pinpointed the areas he believes Blackstenius will bolster.

"With Stina, especially when we see the way she has performed in the national team, it's her ability to score goals in really big games. That is down to a lot of factors, but I think the main factor is that she is an excellent player at running in behind.

I think it's a quality that we have missed in the squad. That ability to punish teams that are playing with such a high defending line, so she will help us with that."

The arrival of Blackstenius, however, perhaps draws more answers than questions in regard to Vivianne Miedema's

future at the club once her contract ends in the summer.

For the time being, Eidevall was keen to share his tactical thoughts when asked if there is potential in seeing both Blackstenius and Miedema on the pitch at the same time.

"I hope there is, that's one of the scenarios I'm seeing. But against some oppositions, when space gets limited in the initial phases of our possession, with a player like Viv it could be a good idea to have her playing a little bit deeper as a number 10 to get more on the ball and help us to create.

Then when we create, of course this is what we have been missing, there is no one inside the box to finish off the attack. So that's definitely something I'm seeing as a possibility. Of course, they can also both play as a number 9."

Eidevall could not comment on the direction Miedema may take come May, however he could not have been clearer in his view of how Blackstenius' entrance may impact this.

"For me, the arrival of Stina has nothing to do about the future for Viv."

Kerr commits to Chelsea

Chelsea have announced that forward Sam Kerr has signed a contract extension with the club.

Kerr's new contract will see her stay with the Women's Super League club until Summer 2024.

Speaking to the official website, Kerr said: "It's really exciting. I'm really happy at the club. We've had good success, being at a club like Chelsea is an amazing opportunity.

"The time was just right, I feel really comfortable being here. I think the club gives me every opportunity to succeed as a player.

"I can't see myself going anywhere else in the world or leaving Europe, having what I have at Chelsea.

"The time was right, honestly, I didn't feel like I wanted to rush into anything, just like signing here the first time, it just happened naturally.'

General manager Paul Green added: "We are absolutely delighted that Sam has extended her deal with the club. Sam is quite simply one of the world's best strikers and goal scorers.

"We look to continue to build on our recent successes, and Sam will play a big role in achieving those targets in the future."

Startup recalled from loan spell

Goalkeeper Katie Startup has been recalled from her loan spell with Championship club Liverpool.

The 22-year-old, who joined Brighton & Hove Albion in 2020 from Charlton Athletic, linked up with the Championship side at the start of the season.

Brighton's head coach Hope Powell told the official website:

"Arsenal recalled Fran Stenson last month so Katie is back to challenge Meg Walsh for the goalkeeper's position.

"We're pleased to have her back and I know she will work hard in training to push Meg and challenge for a place in the team."



Jones signs first professional contract

Manchester United have announced that Carrie Jones has signed her first professional contract with the club.

The contract sees the 18-year-old stay with the club until June 2023, with the option of a further year.

Jones had been part of the U21s WSL Academy side before stepping up to the first-team last season, making her senior debut for the club in a 3-0 win over Aston Villa in the Women's Super League.

Carrie Jones said: "I'm so pleased to sign my first professional contract, it's something I've dreamt of since a young age, and to sign it with a club like Manchester United really tops it off. I'd like to thank my family for the sacrifices they have made over the years and for being with me every step of the way, and all of the coaches that have helped me on my journey, with a special mention to Charlotte [Healy] and the staff in the Under-21 Academy.

"I'm also thankful to the fans for their support and I'm really looking forward to continuing my development here for the next few years."

Graham injury update

Tottenham Hotspur have announced that forward Kit Graham will be out for the remainder of the season.

The Spurs player sustained an anterior cruciate ligament injury during their Barclays FA Women's Super League fixture against West Ham.

She has already begun her period of rehabilitation.

Match of the Month:

Birmingham City vs Arsenal



By Charlotte Stacey

Birmingham City named almost a full squad for their opening home match of 2022, missing only goalkeeper Marie Hourihan.

Emily Ramsey took stock between the sticks for this game.

Arsenal were without Lydia Williams, Steph Catley and Caitlin Foord who will be participating in the Asia Cup, as well as Nikita Parris who were not named in the matchday squad. Leah Williamson was absent through injury.

Arsenal's typical high line got them into trouble very early on as the home side, rather unexpectedly, put themselves ahead just three minutes in through an effort

from 20-year-old Libby Smith. After tussling the ball from Vivianne Miedema in her own half, Lucy Quinn slipped a through ball between the highly placed duo of Simone Boye and Jen Beattie. Gathered by Smith, she drove forward to take on Manuela Zinsberger and calmly took her shot, beating Austria's number one.

Possibly even more surprising was Arsenal's lack of response, which ultimately allowed Birmingham the opportunity to score a second just before the half time whistle.

Once again, stemmed from the midfield, Veatriki Sarri darted forward in possession before passing it out the right to Jamie Finn. Finn put

in a decent delivery which bounced off of Smith to fall the feet of Sarri who had continued her run through the middle. Sarri cleverly opened up her body to decoy Zinsberger and sank her effort in the top left corner.

Two nil up and certainly the most comfortable of the two sides, Birmingham still had an arduous task ahead of them to maintain such presence.

Arsenal have the capability to turn on its head, and once the floodgates open, they are difficult to close. But the Gunners did no such thing. Almost entirely uncharacteristically, Arsenal created next to nothing in the second half. Poor free-kicks from Katie McCabe and Beth

Mead and a booking for dissent for Miedema just about sums up the Gunners' afternoon.

This is all credit to Birmingham. What the Bluenoses did exceptionally well was to stifle any sort of accurate positive play. Consistently, as Arsenal gathered possession in the middle third, the Bluenoses immediately cut off forward passages of play through tight and compact marking, thus forcing wayward passes and hot-pot shots from the Gunners. In fact, Birmingham did this so well in the first half that Arsenal only registered one shot on target.

Particularly the efforts of Jade Pennock and Sarri made the workings of Arsenal's midfielder extremely difficult.

Their relentless pressure meant the likes of Jordan Nobbs, Mana Iwabuchi and Frida Maanum simply could not find any space or rhythm. The same can be said for centre back Louise

Quinn who was the first to any ball that infiltrated her box.

Birmingham also excelled in possession. Although Arsenal saw more of the ball, Birmingham showed far more quality and ambition here. An example of this could easily be seen in the second half when Birmingham countered after Kim Little's shot was blocked by Gemma Lawley.

Unpanicked, Birmingham gained hold of the ball and drove forward directly, making good use of the transition whilst Arsenal were out of shape. In doing this, the Bluenoses forced a 3v3 situation with Arsenal's trio having to backpedal in order to offer any sort of defence.

Although this play did not result in a goal, it clearly shows the divide between a determined Birmingham and a sluggish Arsenal.

The Gunners really did not generate anything in terms

of creation. They made little use of their wings and the lack of width played into Birmingham's hands allowing them to pack out central areas. When Arsenal did stretch play horizontally, the deliveries they mustered were lacklustre with little direction. Similarly, at times when they managed to find any joy around Birmingham's area, play often remained negative and Arsenal either passed it back or ran it into opponents, a far cry from the quick firing, positively driven style of play Jonas Eidevall has set out to impose.

Undoubtably a deserved win for Birmingham and one that should gift them confidence in this second half of the season.

For Arsenal, a stark wake-up call to remind them they cannot sleepwalk through any game. Quite the match for all, one that has shaken up both ends of the table.



Arsenal announces partnership with Lavazza

Arsenal Women have joined forces with Italian coffee maker, Lavazza.

The company has strengthened its partnership with the club by extending their partnership to become the official coffee partner of Arsenal Women.

“We are proud to be extending our partnership with Arsenal Football Club and to welcome Arsenal Women into our family”, says Pietro Mazzà, Regional Director UK & Nordics and General Manager Lavazza UK.

“Since 2017, Lavazza has been working to support the 17 goals set by the UN. This partnership showcases our commitment to supporting goal number 5, which is focused on gender equality, working to empower all women and girls. We are committed to celebrating sporting prowess and therefore this partnership is built on our shared values of excellence and the ability to innovate and inspire. We believe this will build a strong and successful partnership that celebrates football and provides both fans and players with an authentic Italian coffee experience.”

Peter Silverstone, our chief commercial officer, added: “Lavazza has been an outstanding partner for Arsenal since 2018 and we’re delighted to extend our relationship and welcome them as a partner of Arsenal Women. This presents a wonderful opportunity at a great time for both parties with Arsenal Women top of the WSL table and making good progress in the UEFA Champions League.

“We’re exceptionally proud of our heritage in women’s football and we’re excited to continue to work together with Lavazza to foster an even brighter future through our shared values of excellence, innovation and inspiration.”



Fleming named best WSL player in November

Chelsea midfielder Jessie Fleming was awarded the Barclays FA WSL Player of the Month award for November.

The Blues’ player beat off competition from Reading’s Natasha Dowie, Manchester City’s Lauren Hemp, Arsenal’s Kim Little and Tottenham Hotspur’s Ria Percival.

Chelsea won all three November fixtures, with Fleming having a key part to play in each of them. The Canadian netted the winning goal against Aston Villa and opened the scoring in the Blues’ vital 4-0 win against Manchester City.



Mead is a new player for club and country this season



By Marissa Thomas

In February, England's interim manager Hege Riise left Beth Mead out of her first squad because "the player report hasn't been that great".

Mead's omission was a shock and it was a surprise to hear a manager speak so frankly about a specific player.

Mead was left disappointed once again when she was left out of the Team GB Olympic squad in the summer.

With just 18 players to pick from four countries, this exclusion was perhaps a bit more understandable.

Nonetheless, Mead still took it hard.

Nine months later, Mead is in the form of her life for both club and country.

She has three goals and assists in the Women's Super League (WSL) for Arsenal, just one goal away from last season's tally with five games played.

In 17 games so far this season, Mead has 10 goals and 15 assists.

Proving people wrong is a powerful motivational tool as Mead is showing this term.

In the five-goal thriller against Chelsea in their

WSL season opener, Mead was at the heart of everything good.

She was lively throughout as she put in a complete no 9 performance, scoring twice to delight over 8,000 fans at the Emirates.

Proof of the work Mead had done over the summer was shown in her second goal which was a sensational finish curled into the top corner from the edge of the area with her weaker foot.

Chelsea's goalkeeper Ann-Katrin Berger was so surprised that she told Mead after the match that she didn't know she had a left foot. Mead provided an assist for Vivianne



Miedema in the 5-0 win over Manchester City.

With half over her goal involvement this season coming against Arsenal's title rivals, Mead is showing that she can be hugely influential in the season defining games.

Another explanation for Mead's upturn in form could be the competition for places that was not there last season.

Now Arsenal can call on the likes of fellow England international Nikita Parris, two-time World Cup winner Tobin Heath and Mana Iwabuchi who has also won the World Cup.

Being surrounded by world class players will only improve Mead's quality which will be beneficial for Arsenal and England.

The Lionesses have already seen a huge improvement in Mead this season.

She scored a second-half hat-trick in 14 minutes to break the deadlock against a stubborn Northern Ireland side.

The World Cup qualifier at Wembley finished 4-0 with Mead responsible for 75% of the goals.

Just three days after that superb performance, Mead scored another goal and

provided two assists for Rachel Daly against Latvia.

While it is fair to point that Latvia are bottom of the group with zero points and vastly inferior to England, Mead and the Lionesses were in no mood to go easy on their opponents in the 10-0 win.

One thing is for sure, Beth Mead's player report must look pretty good right now.

Kelly and Hemp winners at the North West Football Awards

Manchester City duo Chloe Kelly and Lauren Hemp were both named as winners at the North West Football Awards.

The ceremony, hosted at The Point, Old Trafford, saw Kelly named as Women's Player of the Season, with her teammate Hemp scooping The Athletic Women's Rising Star of the Season accolade.

Speaking about her success, Kelly told the official website: "I'm very happy to win this award and really appreciate everyone's votes – there were some amazing players nominated in my category.

"I've been loving life as a Manchester City player, but I'm hungry to achieve more. I'm working hard each day to make sure I'm in a better position than before my injury and I'll be back soon fighting!"

Hemp added: "It feels amazing to be recognised by people and it's an honour to win this award.

"We've had a number of players nominated across both the men's and women's teams which speaks volumes about the talent we have here at City.

"I know I'm not the finished product yet and I know there's so much more I can do to keep improving, but that will only come with continuing to listen to the coaches and teammates I have around me here at this amazing Club."



Williamson injured in WSL match

Arsenal's statement about Leah Williamson read as follows:

Following Saturday's match against Tottenham Hotspur, Leah Williamson experienced discomfort in her hamstring.

Subsequent assessments and scans have confirmed that Leah has suffered a significant hamstring injury. Further consultations and assessments will take place, with Leah's recovery and rehabilitation programme also being determined in the coming days.

Everyone at the club will now be supporting and working hard with Leah to get her back on the pitch as soon as possible.

Women's Super League

2021/22 Table

WSL		P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1	Arsenal	10	8	1	1	25	25
2	Chelsea	9	7	0	2	21	21
3	Manchester United	11	6	3	2	11	21
4	Tottenham Hotspur	11	6	3	2	5	21
5	Manchester City	11	6	1	4	10	19
6	Reading	10	5	1	4	0	16
7	Brighton & Hove Albion	11	5	0	6	-4	15
8	West Ham United	10	3	5	2	1	14
9	Everton	10	3	2	5	-7	11
10	Aston Villa	11	3	1	7	-19	10
11	Leicester City	12	2	0	10	-18	6
12	Birmingham City	12	1	1	10	-25	4

Top Goalscorers

1. **Sam Kerr** (Chelsea) - 9
2. **Viv Miedema** (Arsenal) - 7
3. **Fran Kirby** (Arsenal) - 6
4. **Kim Little** (Arsenal) - 6
5. **Katie McCabe** (Arsenal) - 4
6. **Beth Mead** (Arsenal) - 4
7. **Lauren Hemp** (Manchester City) - 4
8. **Rachel Williams** (Tottenham Hotspur) - 4
9. **Ella Toone** (Manchester United) - 3
10. **Jessie Fleming** (Chelsea) - 3

Brighton & Hove Albion confirm the signings of Kullberg and Zigiotti Olme



By Charlotte Stacey

The pair have signed for the Seagulls from Swedish top-flight club BC Häcken until the end of the 2022-23 season, subject to international clearance.

Defender Kullberg, 30, has played for a total of nine Swedish clubs since the inception of her professional career in 2009.

She joined BC Häcken earlier this year after a season with Gothenburg in the top division of their domestic league. She has won both the Swedish League and Cup during her career.

Kullberg won her first cap for Sweden in 2019 and

has played nine times for her country. She was part of the squad that reached the final of the Olympic Games last summer.

Midfielder Zigiotti Olme, 24, spent three seasons with BC Häcken after joining them from fellow Swedish club Hammarby in 2018.

Zigiotti Olme made her senior international debut in 2016 after representing her country at under-17 and under-19 level.

Brighton and Hove Albion head coach Hope Powell said, "We're delighted to welcome Julia and Emma to the club."

"They are both talented, athletic and versatile players with lots of experience at domestic and international level. I think they are going to be a really big asset to our squad and just as importantly they are lovely people, who I think will fit in really well in our group of players."

"They are really keen to play in England, they are ready for the challenge of competing in one of the strongest domestic leagues in the world."

"We look forward to working with them and seeing what they can bring to the team."



Broomfield Girls announced as West Ham United sister club

West Ham United have announced they have joined forces with local girls' football club Broomfield FC.

The scheme will see young players at the Chelmsford-based club receive tickets for West Ham women's home matches at the Chigwell Construction Stadium, as well as benefiting from player appearances, coaching sessions and more.

Broomfield FC is a grassroots club based in Broomfield, Chelmsford, and are the sixth team to join our Sister Club scheme.

Paul Goss, Head of Girls football at Broomfield FC told the official website:

"The phenomenal rise in girls football at our club means we now have sixty wildcats training and another hundred girls playing football.

"By linking up with West Ham United Women, we hope it provides us with our natural next step in providing role models and interaction with a professional WSL club.

"We are looking forward to meeting players, watching games, learning and growing the relationship between our two clubs."



Old Trafford to hold WSL game

Everton will face Manchester United at Old Trafford in the Women's Super League.

The game, scheduled to be played on Sunday, March 27, has been moved from United's regular home at Leigh Sports Village.

United beat West Ham United at Old Trafford last season, with the game being played behind closed doors due to Covid-19 protocols.

Tickets:

£6 Adults

£3 U16

£3 Over 65

Details of how to purchase tickets will be issued in due course.

Brighton & Hove Albion show respect for local grassroots side

Brighton & Hove Albion invited Hollingbury Hawks Youth Football Club team to get kitted up and support them as ball retrievers.

The invitation came to celebrate the U11s team winning the Sussex County Women & Girl's Football League Respect award last season.

"In a COVID-disrupted season, where the season's trophy events couldn't be completed, the SCWGFL U11 section presented Respect awards instead," Cameron explained.

"All clubs were asked to nominate the team which most embodied the principles of the FA Respect Code to create a positive matchday experience for all involved."

Women & Girls' general manager at Brighton & Hove Albion, Polly Bancroft, added, "We're really keen to engage with our local community. We recognise the power that role models have to girls and boys, and to be able to connect with them through mutually beneficial partnerships is something we're really keen to develop."

"We'd like to congratulate Hollingbury Hawks Youth FC on winning the Respect award and hope they all enjoy Sunday's match."

LCFC appoint Bedford as manager

Leicester City has appointed Lydia Bedford as the new First Team manager.

Bedford, currently England Women's Youth Team Head Coach, joins the Foxes on a contract to the end of the 2021/22 season and will commence her role with LCFC Women on 6 December.

Leicester City Chief Executive Susan Whelan told the official website: "Lydia is one of the rising stars of the women's game, whose technical coaching credentials are complemented by an incredible passion for and knowledge of women's football that can have an immediate impact on our squad."



Patten makes move to Villa



By Charlotte Stacey

Arsenal have announced the loan move of defender Anna Patten to Aston Villa for the remainder of the 2021-22 season.

Patten has a history with the Gunners having her way through the ranks after joining the club at twelve years old. She made her senior debut against Bayern Munich in 2017, aged 18, before going on to play in every match of the Women's Super League Spring Series that year.

After studying in the States for four years, in which Patten played successful stints with both the Florida State Seminoles and the South Carolina Gamecocks, she re-joined The Arsenal last January. Patten has enjoyed plenty of 'firsts' since returning to North London, including her first goal, and a break into Champions

League football against Gillingham and HB Køge respectively.

Further illustrating her ever-maturing potential, on the international stage Patten has been a regular feature of England's youth camps representing her country at under-15, under-17, under-19, under-20 and under-21 levels. Patten has secured two bronze medals during her time with the national side; the 2016 U-17 Euros and the U-20 Women's World Cup in 2018.

Patten's move to Aston Villa can perhaps be viewed as surprising. The loaning of a lifelong Gooner, the foreknown absence of their trade left back, and the injury of their staple centre-half, indicates that the Gunners are looking to reinforce their backline from elsewhere. Nevertheless,

this is not to say that in the long-term, this move will considerably benefit all parties.

A talent as distinct as Patten must be cultivated, yet such progression can only be achieved through playing consistent minutes, something that, since returning to England, Patten has not received. With a title to reclaim and a reassertion into European football, between developing players, evolving on-field relationships and rotating a dependably robust starting eleven, Jonas Eidevall has a bit of a balancing act on his hands. In saying this, one would still not be indecorous to question Patten's lack of game time.

Enter Aston Villa. Although the Villans lay within the bottom half of the table, Patten could not have secured a better move. Now under the wing of renowned defence curator Carla Ward, and playing alongside the likes of Women's Super League vets Anita Asanti and Remi Allen, she is about to have the education of her life.

The likelihood is that Patten will play with far more regularity given Villa's league position and Ward's preference to lock in defensive stability before anything else.

Yet Patten brings her own profits to her new club. She is able to adopt the profile of a centre-back, as well as a central midfielder if assigned, however when looking at her most prevalent skills, Patten is best used as a fullback.

Upon viewing, one attribute that is highlighted is Patten's inclination to push fairly high up the field. There is an obvious desire for pitch progression within her play and typically, it is well executed. Being a quality 'ball player' is not something that comes naturally to all, yet Patten shows a great deal of worth here in both carrying and releasing. Pairing this with bursts of pace and shrewd counter awareness, Patten's time on the ball is altogether valuable. Utilising Patten as such will provide Villa with an added attacking outlet, as well as the perfect complement to offset left back, Maz Pacheco.

In return, Villa will provide the opportunity for Patten to exercise and develop her defensive competence against regular competitive opponents. Developing further know-how on opportune periods to apply pressure, favourable positions to intercept and block passages of play, and heightened recognition of opponent's body shape, areas in which Patten is perhaps not quite as well versed in just yet, will serve her well in fulfilling her undeniable promise.

Come May, whether Patten returns to her childhood club or not will remain to be seen. But if this is the case, one would certainly bet on a more well-rounded, self-assured, defensively sound player returning to Meadow Park than the one who left in January.



CHAMPIONSHIP



Coventry United given 10 point deduction



Coventry United have been given a 10-point deduction by the Football Association.

It comes just a days after they were saved from liquidation.

The Football Association will impose the automatic points deduction after a breach of competition rules in the Women's Championship.

Coventry United have the right to appeal the FA's decision.

On January 4, it was announced by administrators that the club would be liquidated and contracts were terminated before a last-minute deal was verbally agreed.

Brighton manager and former England boss Hope Powell said the recent developments at Coventry United highlighted "how vulnerable the

women's game still is".

Powell has called for "protection" for players and clubs in the Women's Championship and would welcome further support from the Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) and the FA.

"While [the women's game] has shifted and moved so far very quickly - players are professional, full-time athletes now and some are on very decent contracts - but there is still a wide gap between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots,'" said Powell.

According to journalist Kathryn Batte, there will be a debate in Parliament on January 26 about the 'experience of women playing football in England.'

Durham supporting Mission Christmas

Durham Women are supporting the Cash for Kids: Mission Christmas initiative this Christmas.

The Wildcats have a long-standing history of supporting charitable causes and are once again looking to support those less fortunate this Christmas.

And this year, we're back the Mission Christmas initiative that has been championed by Metro Radio and a host of other local and national media outlets.

The statement from the club said:

All our players and club staff will be participating in the initiative – with a collection to be held at training on Thursday, December 16.

And supporters can participate by donating gifts at our home game against Blackburn Rovers on Sunday, December 19.

If you're attending the game, please bring a gift and drop it off at the Merchandise Stall – and we'll do the rest in making sure that it goes to those less fortunate ahead of Christmas.

The gift can be of any value, shape or size, but it must be unwrapped and a new.

Gifts for all ages can be accepted, but there is a specific need for toys for those aged two and under and over nine years of age.



Palace manager Davenport named manager of the month

Crystal Palace manager Dean Davenport has been named the FA Women's Championship Manager of the Month for November.

He told the official website: "Firstly I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the LMA for being voted.

"I'm privileged to accept this award on behalf of all the staff at CPFC Women. It's important to me that everybody gets the recognition for all the hard work put in on and off the pitch.

"Everything we achieve is as a group and is a big team effort.

"Big credit must of course go to the players who have performed fantastically well week in and week out to give ourselves the opportunity to be in the position we are at present.

"The confidence is up, and the current performances are a credit to them."

London City Lionesses appoint Fluke

London City Lionesses have appointed Lizzie Fluke as Head of Performance.

Fluke joins the Championship side having worked with Malmo FF men's first team as well as the Scotland Women's youth national squads and Hibernian.

In her role at London City, she'll be responsible for the performance department, with the goal of improving player performance, both on and off the pitch.

She told the official website: "I am delighted to join London City Lionesses as Head of Performance to support the team, their ambitions and vision.

"The future is now, and I am very happy to share the best of who I am with the team."

Speaking on the appointment, Sporting Director Edward Gallagher said:

"We are excited to welcome Lizzie to our performance staff at London City Lionesses. Like many of our staff she brings a wealth of experience from different cultures, and I believe her knowledge and skills will bring vast benefits to our players.

"It's always important that our staff fit into the culture and vision of the club, and I believe that we have this with Lizzie."

Liverpool vs Charlton postponed

Liverpool and Charlton Athletic's Championship clash on Sunday, December 19 has been postponed.

The league game has been called off by the FA as it is the only viable date for Charlton's FA Cup tie with Gillingham to be played.

The fixture was originally called off due to a waterlogged pitch.

The Championship game has yet to be rescheduled but will be held in late February or March.

Clarke joins Liverpool

Liverpool have announced the signing of goalkeeper Charlotte Clarke.

The 21-year-old joins the Championship side from Derby County, who are currently top of the National League North.

Her contract with the Reds will begin formally on January 1, but she joined her new teammates in training already.

LFC Women goalkeeping coach Joe Potts told Liverpoolfc.com: “For a young ‘keeper, Charlotte has a lot of playing experience, which is obviously valuable.

“With the situation we have in the goalkeeping department, it’s important we have someone who can slot into game time if we need them but also has the potential to push on – and that’s what we get with Charlotte.

“So, I’m excited to see how she develops over the next few months.”

Clarke said: “It feels absolutely surreal to be here – it’s Liverpool, the biggest club in Europe and I’m absolutely amazed and thankful to be here. To be thought of to come here is incredible and such an honour.

“My family were ecstatic for me. I started off at Derby Women, so it holds a special place in my heart. It was a tough decision to leave but I really want to push on and get to the top and I really feel that Liverpool can do this.

“It’s a great opportunity, which I’m going to take with both hands.”

Lewes announce retirement of Charley Boswell

Charley ‘Bos’ Boswell has announced her retirement from football.

Bos has been with Lewes FC since November 2018 and in the past 3 years the full back has been instrumental in our many successes both on and off the field.

Lynne Burrell, General Manager, told the website: “We are one lucky club to have had a player with the talent and drive that Bos has. She has always pushed us to raise our standards as a team and a club and should be extremely proud of everything she has achieved, not just at Lewes, but throughout her career in football.

“It’s been absolutely wonderful to have her as part of the team and we want to thank Bos for everything she’s done.”

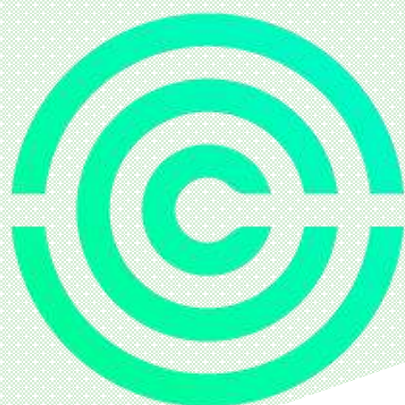
Prior to joining Lewes, Charley captained Portsmouth in 2017 and had spent 12 seasons with Brighton.

Her success included winning the league and securing promotion into the (former) WSL2 in 2106/17, something Charley considered a dream growing up.

Women's Championship

2021/22 Table

Championship		P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1	Liverpool	12	9	2	1	18	29
2	London City Lionesses	11	7	1	3	5	22
3	Crystal Palace	11	6	3	2	5	21
4	Durham	12	7	0	5	4	21
5	Bristol City	11	6	2	3	9	20
6	Charlton Athletic	12	6	2	4	6	20
7	Lewes	11	5	1	5	2	16
8	Sheffield United	12	4	3	5	-1	15
9	Sunderland	11	3	3	5	-5	12
10	Blackburn Rovers	13	3	1	9	-14	10
11	Watford	12	1	3	8	-15	6
12	Coventry United	12	1	3	8	-14	-4



TheFA Women's
Championship

Juke joins 100-club

Chelsey Jukes has become the latest player to reach 100 appearances for Rovers Ladies. The 24-year-old marked her 100th appearance with a 'Player of the Match' performance in their 1-0 win over Sheffield United in the Conti Cup.

Jukes told the official website: "It felt really good and is something I've always wanted to get to here.

"As a defender you always want to keep clean sheets and we've struggled with that recently so to keep one on my 100th appearance also made it even more special.

"You also always want to be the best you can so to be named Player of the Match on my 100th appearance was great and made it even sweeter."

Quinlan departs coaching role

Rovers Katie Quinlan has left her role with the club to start a new coaching role in the United States.

Quinlan operated as both first-team Head Coach and Regional Talent Club Technical Director after initially joining Rovers as a RTC coach.

Quinlan coached both our under-14s and under-16s teams before joining the first-team as an analyst until she took up her post as Head Coach.

Heaps recalled by Tottenham

Eleanor Heaps has been recalled from Blackburn Rovers by parent club Tottenham Hotspur.

The goalkeeper arrived on loan in the summer and made two appearances for the Championship side.

Everlast joins Rovers

Everlast Fitness Club have joined Blackburn Rovers as the side's first ever Gym Partner. Rovers will use the state-of-the-art gyms to aid in their post-match recovery, as well as to help the team prepare for upcoming fixtures.

Everlast Area Manager, Gareth Moseley told the official website: "It's great to be able to support the Ladies side this season.

"We have always looked to build close relationships with the local community, so to be able to form this relationship with the club is great."

Rovers Ladies General Manager, Jane Parker added: "We want to thank Gareth and Everlast Gyms for their support this season.

"It is key for us to have access to a gym throughout the season that we can use to help with our match recovery and preparation sessions.

"I also know the team are looking forward to being able to use the facilities at the club during the season."

Liverpool provide update on Foster

Liverpool have provided fans with an update on the condition of goalkeeper Rylee Foster.

The 23-year-old Canadian was injured in October in a road traffic incident while travelling as a passenger during a trip to visit friends abroad during the international break.

After her return to the UK, scans have confirmed that she has suffered fractures to vertebrae in her neck.

Club doctor Dr Amelia Woodhouse told the official website: "Rylee's injuries required stabilisation in an external fixation device. She will need to stay in this for a minimum of six weeks while being closely monitored by ourselves and spinal specialists.

"A number of other internal injuries have shown improvement on recent scans, while she is wearing a brace for an injury to her knee."

Foster wrote on social media: "I just wanted to say a huge thank you to everyone who is supporting me on my road to recovery and rehabilitation.

"To all the fans who have reached out, I really appreciate your kind best wishes and thoughts. I couldn't ask for better teammates and again prove what a great family we have at the club."

She also thanked 'the amazing staff who are helping me get back on my feet' and pledged: "There are some tough times ahead but better days coming up also."

Sunderland sign Burt

Sunderland have completed the signing of England youth international Daisy Burt.

The 16-year-old full-back has joined Mel Reay's squad having represented the club's Regional Talent Centre eight times this season.

Burt told the official website: "I'm very happy to join the senior squad and I believe the RTC is a great place to help push you on as a player.

"I feel I'm definitely ready for women's football, and that I've progressed from the RTC well enough to show what I can do.

"I believe I can bring a defensive aggression to the side, and also a creative side in that I can get forward, get the ball down and play over the top."

Bramall Lane to host Championship game

Sheffield United's upcoming Championship game against Sunderland will be held at Bramall Lane.

Neil Redfearn's side face the Black Cats on:

Sunday, December 19 at 3pm.

Tickets

Adults £5

Concessions £3

WOMEN'S NATIONAL LEAGUE



FANWL Constitution and Reserve Season teams

Constitution

Northern Premier

AFC Fylde
Brighouse Town
Burnley
Derby County
Huddersfield Town
Hull City
Loughborough Lightning
Middlesbrough
Nottingham Forest
Sheffield
Stoke City
West Bromwich Albion
Wolverhampton Wanderers

Southern Premier

Bridgewater United
Cardiff City
Chichester & Selsey
Crawley Wasps
Gillingham
Hounslow
Ipswich Town
Keynsham Town
London Bees
Milton Keynes Dons
Oxford United
Plymouth Argyle
Portsmouth
Southampton

Division One North

Alnwick Town
Barnsley
Bolton
Bradford City AFC
Chester-le-Street Town
Chorley
Durham Cestria
FC United of Manchester
Leeds United
Liverpool Feds
Newcastle United
Norton & Stockton
Stockport County

Division One Mids

Bedworth United
Boldmere St Michaels
Burton Albion
Doncaster Rovers Belles
Holwell Sports
Leafield Athletic
Leek Town
Lincoln City
Long Eaton United
Peterborough United
Solihull Moors
Sporting Khalsa
Wem Town

Division One SE

Actonians
AFC Wimbledon
Billericay Town
Cambridge City
Cambridge United
Enfield Town
Harlow Town
Hashtag United
Kent Football United
London Seaward
Norwich City
QPR
Stevenage

Division One SW

AFC Bournemouth
Buckland Athletic
Cheltenham Town
Chesham United
Exeter City
Larkhall Athletic
Maidenhead United
Poole Town
Portishead Town
Southampton Women
Swindon Town

Reserve Section

North Division

Barnsley
Bradford City
Brighouse Town
Chorley
Durham Cestria

Huddersfield Town
Hull City
Leeds United
Liverpool Feds
Middlesbrough
Sheffield
Stockport County

Midlands Division

Bedworth United
Doncaster Rovers Belles
Leicester City
Long Eaton United
Lincoln City
Loughborough Lightning
Nottingham Forest
Solihull Moors
Sporting Khalsa
Stoke City
West Bromwich Albion
Wolverhampton Wanderers

South East Division

Cambridge City
Cambridge United
Hashtag United
Ipswich Town
MK Dons
Norwich City
Stevenage
Watford
West Ham United

South Central Division

Actonians
AFC Wimbledon
Billericay Town
Charlton Athletic
Crawley Wasps
Crystal Palace
Enfield Town
London Bees
London Seaward

South West Division

Bridgewater United
Chichester & Selsey
Keynsham Town
Lewes
London City Lionesses
Oxford United
Portsmouth
Southampton

AstroPay strengthens partnership with Burnley FC



AstroPay, the global leader in online payment solutions, has further strengthened its partnership with Burnley Football Club by becoming Burnley FC Women's front of shirt sponsor for the remainder of the 2021/22 season and sponsoring the newly installed dugouts at Turf Moor.

The strategic partnership was established at the beginning of the 2021 Premier League campaign, with AstroPay becoming Burnley FC's official sleeve sponsor.

The new partnership with the women's team further strengthens the company's positive relationship with the club.

As sponsor of the women's team, the AstroPay logo will be displayed on the front of Burnley FC Women's home and away shirts, with the range available to purchase in the Clarets Store soon.

In addition, Turf Moor has undergone a range of stadium developments and AstroPay have committed to sponsoring the newly installed dugouts, with their branding visible on headrests and in the technical area.

Mikael Lijtenstein, AstroPay CEO said: "We are pleased to strengthen our partnership with Burnley Football Club, through these new sponsorship deals.

"As two innovative organisations, we share a similar ethos of being forward thinking and creative, which is why the prospect of becoming Burnley FC Women's front of shirt sponsor was so appealing.

"The club are making great strides in women's football, and we wanted to be a part of the journey.

"We very much look forward to continuing to develop our partnership

with the club and achieving great things together.”

AstroPay, which is also the Official Payment Solution Partner to Burnley Football Club, was founded in 2009 and since then has been successful in providing efficient, secure and reliable digital payment solutions for business and individual customers across Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Europe.

Carl Sanderson Head of Business Partnerships at Burnley FC said: “We are thrilled that AstroPay have further strengthened their support by becoming front of shirt sponsor for the women’s team and by sponsoring the new dugouts.

“The club are committed to growing the women’s game, as is demonstrated through exciting partnership and sponsorships such as this. Women’s football is on the rise and is reaching more people than ever before, it’s an incredibly exciting area to be a part of which is why we are pleased to collaborate with AstroPay on this deal.

“We’re also incredibly proud of the developments within the stadium in recent months and are pleased AstroPay, as a valued partner of Burnley FC, have committed to sponsoring the dugouts too. We look forward to continuing to work closely with them throughout the season.”





Northern Premier News

Brighthouse Town launch development centre

Brighthouse Town have launched their Girls Football Development Centre. The Academy will run every Monday starting on January, 10, 2022.

Information:

Girls aged 6-10

Lightcliffe Academy, HX3 8TL



Bee leaves Burnley

Burnley have announced the departure of first team manager Matt Bee.

The statement said: "As Burnley FC Women continue transitioning to a more professional level, Matt Bee will be leaving his post as first team manager.

We are grateful for Matt's time and achievements at Burnley and wish him the best for the future.

The Club will not be commenting further at this time but will communicate additional details in due course."

Greenhalgh re-signs for Burnley

Striker Sarah Greenhalgh has re-signed for Burnley as a dual registration with AFC Darwn.

Greenhalgh, was top goal scorer for the Clarets in their title-winning promotions in 2017/18 and 2018/19.

Sarah Greenhalgh said: "I'm really excited about being back at Burnley. There are lots of new talented players who I'm looking forward to playing with.

"I'm looking forward to being back at this standard. I'm happy to pick up where I'm left off, after enjoying the promotion into this league with the girls, I'm happy to experience playing at this level and hopefully continuing to enjoy success with Burnley."

Derby and University launch scholarship

Derby County Football Club Women and the University of Derby are today launching their football journalism scholarship programme for 2022, with successful candidates having the chance to report on the UEFA Women's Euro 2022.

Three scholarships are available for students wishing to play football



for Derby County Football Club Women while studying on Europe's only dedicated Football Journalism BA (Hons) degree course.

Duncan Gibb, Chief Executive of Derby County Football Club Women, told the official website: "This is a fantastic opportunity for talented football players to join an ambitious club with facilities that are second to none while continuing their studies for a career in the media.

"There really is no offer like this anywhere else in the UK."

Punjabi Rams and Mitchell Promotions support Women's team

Derby County Football Club Women's CEO, Duncan Gibb has praised the recent support shown by long term partners, the Punjabi Rams and Mitchell Promotions, whilst also acknowledging the commitment shown by all of the clubs' partners during pre-season.

"The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the UK business sector has been widely documented and has led to companies that would normally look to invest finances on brand awareness having to cut their cloth accordingly. I've spoken to my equivalent at several National League clubs, and what has become apparent is that Derby County Football Club Women somewhat bucked the trend in reporting a record pre-season in terms of sponsorship revenues through our club partners.

"The Punjabi Rams not only held a major fundraising raffle that seemed to capture the Derby County supporter network imagination, three of their members (who also own businesses) provided added investment to help towards the final total."



Preston returns as manager of Huddersfield

Huddersfield Town have confirmed the departure of first team manager Steve Appleton.

Glen Preston, former manager of Guiseley Vixens, as he returns for his second stint in the role at Huddersfield.

Preston says he is ready to take up the challenge:

"It feels great to be back! It's been a crazy few days where everything has happened so fast. But ultimately, it's a great feeling for me and a big honour to be here.

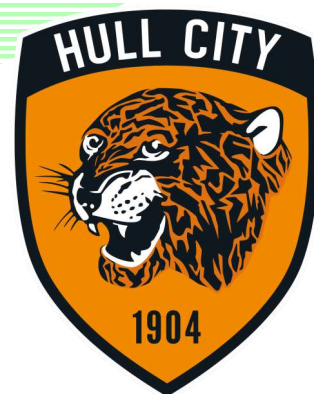
The first time I managed Huddersfield Town Ladies it was one of the best moments of my career, we had great success over two years and so it was not a difficult decision at all to come back and take on this great challenge."

Hull City ambassador inducted into Hall of Fame

Carol Thomas has been inducted into the National Football Museum Hall of Fame.

Hull City Ladies was announced in 2019 that Carol Thomas was the Tigress first club ambassador. The former England international women's defender succeeded Sheila Parker as captain in 1976, holding that position until her retirement in 1985.

In her time as captain she set some exceptional milestones; she became the first England captain to surpass 50 caps and also captained her side to their inaugural trophy.





Northern Premier News



Stewart departs Middlesbrough

Middlesbrough have confirmed defender Courtney Stewart has left the club.

The former Sunderland defender joined the club in the summer but has been advised to take a break from football on medical advice.

The statement said: "Everyone at the club wants to respect that and wish her the very best in the future."

"While Courtney has sadly been unable to make an appearance for the club, we have loved having her around the club and want to wish her the very best of luck in her future."

Sheffield FC team up with Her Game Too

Sheffield FC have announced a new partnership with Her Game Too to raise awareness of sexist abuse within the realms of football.

"It's brilliant to partner up with Sheffield FC, showing that the oldest club in the World is one of the most forward-thinking," said Victoria Wood of HerGameToo. "They are a club who do so much for equality in the community already so they match the values of HerGameToo perfectly."

"Discrimination has no place in football and we can't thank Sheffield FC enough for backing our movement and for helping us to stamp sexism out of the game."

"As the World's First Football Club we support the hergametoo initiative .



Walklett signs for Albion

Albion Women have completed the signing of Kerry Walklett from Southern Premier Division side Keynsham Town.

"We are delighted to add Kerry to the squad," said Head Coach Jenny Sugarman.

"She brings bags of experience both at this level and the level above, which will no doubt help us on our journey."

"I can already see the attitude and work ethic she possesses and we hope that she can also add to our attacking threat with goals and assists but also helping to bring the best out in her team-mates."





Southern Premier News



Bridgwater United announce new partnership

Bridgwater United has announced a new partnership with Body Mechanics.

Body Mechanics are a Bridgwater based pain and movement specialists providing injury care and performance improvement training to both the general public and sporting teams.

CEO Adam Murry remarked, "This is yet another partnership with a brilliant local company that provides further support to our First Teams in reaching our collective ambitions as a club.

"I'm really excited to be working alongside Laurence, Spence and

the team."

Chichester & Selsey defender in hospital

After a collision with a player during a Southern Premier Division game with Hashtag United, Emma Alexandre was sent to hospital.

The Chichester & Selsey defender had to have a second procedure on Tuesday, December 14.

Wishing her a speedy recovery.



Crawley Wasps partner with Crawley Town

Crawley Town have formed a 'long-awaited' partnership with Crawley Wasps.

Speaking on behalf of the partnership, Revenue Manager Alex Watts said: "We want football to be accessible for both men and women of Crawley and with the support of Jack and the team at Crawley Wasps we will be able to make this happen.

"As a club we are engaging with the key stakeholders in the area through initiatives such as our Crawley Town Gratitude Scheme. It is encouraging to see the response from people like Jack who want to become involved with the club for the benefit of the community.

"We plan to reciprocate the support to be in a situation where fans are coming to watch Crawley Town on the Saturday and then Crawley Wasps on the Sunday."



Peskett to undergo surgery

Ipswich Town winger Sophie Peskett has been ruled out indefinitely.

The 19-year-old winger, who became Ipswich's first ever professional player back in the summer, suffered a knee-injury in September.

After waiting for the results, it has now been confirmed that she has torn her ACL in addition to further damage to her knee.

Speaking to the club website, Sophie said: 'After suffering a knee-injury a few weeks ago, unfortunately it has been confirmed that I have ruptured my ACL and will require surgery.

"Obviously I'm absolutely gutted as this is a massive season for me, my teammates and the club as a whole, and I didn't see my season ending like this.

"I'm so grateful for the support I've received from the girls, the staff and everyone else at Ipswich Town - it's meant the absolute world to me.

"I'm ready to work as hard as I possibly can throughout my recovery so I can be back playing alongside my teammates as soon as possible.

"Finally, I'd like to say a massive thank you to everyone who has wished me well and supported me throughout this injury process. I honestly can't wait to be back playing in front of our incredible fans."



Bell joins London Bees

Jade Bell has joined London Bees in a new deal.

The experienced winger comes to the Bees after spending three seasons with MK Dons.

Whilst at Stadium MK, she played against the Bees as Sian Osmond's side ran out 5-1 winners last month.

Bell previously spent time at Cambridge United and also won back-to-back Championship titles whilst playing for Texas A&M University Commerce FC.

During her time in the States, the 28-year-old also turned out for FC Dallas.

Jade will wear the No. 20 shirt.

Oxford United call up women's player

Oxford United men currently have 13 first team players unavailable which has left an opening for one of the women's team.

Manager Karl Robinson asked Beth Lumsden, from the women's team, to train with the men's side.

The midfielder has been taking part in training sessions for the past few weeks.

"It's been such a good experience. I've done it for about three or four weeks now, once a week, there's a session in the morning, followed by a gym session and an evening training session with the women as well," Lumsden told The Mirror.

"We were talking and Karl was there and he was really encouraging, he's been brilliant. The men are a lot quicker, it's not so much physically but it pushes you mentally to make decisions quicker and then I take that into games."





Division One News



Walker earns 100 appearances

Chorley Women captain Laura Walker has made 100 appearances for the Division One North side.

The achievement came in their league game against Liverpool Feds on Sunday, November 7.

Debuting on August 6th 2017 in the away Friendly at Bury Development, these figures do not include 30 Friendly Appearances, with 6 Goals scored.

A statement from the club read: "Well Done to Laura, who works so hard for our club, both on and off the football field."

Surgery for Durham Cestria player

Durham Cestria reserve team player Cassie Donald has undergone knee surgery.

Donald ruptured her ACL in a recent game.

The statement from the club read: "Everyone at the club wishes you all the best of luck with your recovery, we're with you every step of the way."

Double knee fracture for Kennerley

FC United of Manchester's Eve Kennerley suffered a double leg fracture in their Vitality Women's FA Cup first round match against Brighouse Town.

Eve had successful surgery on the 16th November and is now beginning her recovery period.

She will be out for the rest of the season.



Nelson joins Newcastle United

Newcastle United have announced the signing of Erin Nelson from Durham Cestria.

The 20-year-old winger started her career at the Magpies and told the official website that she was happy to be back.

"I was in the academy when I was very young. It feels good to be back. I am excited to get started.

"I will bring pace to the side, and get at players and try to take them on. I will try to link up well with my other forwards."



Belles RTC sign Powell

Alexis Powell has joined Doncaster Rovers Belles Regional talent centre after a successful period in the Belles training centre.

Powell is the first player to make the switch from the Training Centre to the RTC after being identified as having elite potential.

RTC club manager Chantelle Haigh added: "Alexis has settled in really well and we're delighted to have her with us. We hope she's the first of many young players from across the borough that are able to find their way to Doncaster Rovers Belles via the Training Centre."



Vacancies at Leek Town

Leek Town Ladies are looking for a first team coach and a reserve team manager/coach.

Both roles require a certain level of qualification.

For more information contact leektownfcgirls@yahoo.co.uk

Bournemouth sign Bradley

Bournemouth have announced the signing of Jade Bradley to the club.

The experienced midfielder joins the Cherries from Portsmouth, having spent four years with the club.

Bradley told afcb.co.uk: "I had a good chat with Steve and he wants to see the club progress. The players have brought in to that and they know what we want as a club.

"Steve knows what we want, as do the backroom staff, so it's nice for all of us to be aligned with our goals and ambitions."





FANWNL

2021/22 Tables

Northern Premier Division

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Derby County	11	8	2	1	17	26
2 Fylde	11	7	2	2	15	23
3 Wolverhampton Wanderers	9	7	2	0	12	23
4 Huddersfield Town	11	6	2	3	14	20
5 Nottingham Forest	10	6	2	2	14	20
6 Burnley	11	5	1	5	8	16
7 Brighouse Town	9	4	3	2	5	15
8 West Bromwich Albion	11	3	4	4	-4	13
9 Stoke City	10	3	1	6	-5	10
10 Middlesbrough	10	3	0	7	-11	9
11 Sheffield	9	2	0	7	-18	6
12 Loughborough Lightning	10	1	1	8	-22	4
13 Hull City	10	0	2	8	-25	2

Southern Premier Division

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Ipswich Town	11	11	0	0	37	33
2 Oxford United	11	8	1	2	25	25
3 Southampton	9	8	0	1	40	24
4 Bridgewater United	11	7	2	2	20	23
5 Gillingham	12	7	1	4	-5	22
6 Crawley Wasps	12	7	0	5	8	21
7 Portsmouth	10	6	1	3	20	16
8 London Bees	12	5	1	6	-4	16
9 Keynsham Town	13	5	0	8	-38	15
10 Cardiff City	11	4	1	6	0	12
11 Chichester & Selsey	10	1	1	8	-21	4
12 Plymouth Argle	9	1	0	8	-24	3
13 Milton Keynes Dons	10	0	2	8	-18	2
14 Hounslow	9	0	0	9	-40	0



TheFA Women's
National League

FANWNL

2021/22 Tables

Division One North

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Liverpool Feds	10	9	0	1	23	27
2 Newcastle United	8	6	1	1	23	19
3 Leeds United	9	6	1	2	13	19
4 Norton & Stockton Ancients	9	4	1	4	3	13
5 Stockport County	9	3	3	3	3	12
6 Chorley	7	3	3	1	0	12
7 FC United of Manchester	10	4	0	6	-10	12
8 Durham Cestria	8	3	2	3	0	11
9 Barnsley	7	2	1	4	-3	7
10 Bradford City	8	2	1	5	-6	7
11 Chester-le-Street Town	9	1	2	6	-16	5
12 Alnwick Town	8	0	1	7	-30	1

Division One Midlands

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Doncaster Rovers Belles	12	9	1	2	13	28
2 Lincoln City	9	8	0	1	18	24
3 Boldmere St Michaels	10	7	1	2	13	22
4 Long Eaton United	10	6	3	1	18	21
5 Sporting Khalsa	11	4	3	4	0	15
6 Solihull Moors	11	4	1	6	1	13
7 Leek Town	12	4	1	7	-16	13
8 Peterborough United	10	3	2	5	-6	11
9 Burton Albion	11	3	2	6	-6	11
10 Wem Town	8	3	2	3	-6	11
11 Leaffield Athletic	7	3	1	3	-4	10
12 Holwell Sports	12	3	1	8	-5	10
13 Bedworth United	11	1	0	10	-20	3



TheFA Women's
National League

FANWNL

2021/22 Tables

Division One South East

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Hashtag United	11	10	1	0	41	31
2 Billericay Town	11	10	1	0	30	31
3 Actonians	13	6	5	2	17	23
4 Cambridge United	13	6	1	6	-4	19
5 London Seaward	12	4	6	2	2	18
6 AFC Wimbledon	9	5	2	2	15	17
7 Queens Park Rangers	8	4	1	3	4	13
8 Cambridge City	11	3	2	6	-2	11
9 Enfield Town	12	2	4	6	-5	10
10 Harlow Town	11	3	1	7	-27	10
11 Norwich City	11	2	1	8	-18	7
12 Stevenage	11	2	1	8	-35	7
13 Kent Football United	9	0	2	7	-18	2

Division One South West

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Cheltenham Town	9	6	2	1	16	20
2 AFC Bournemouth	8	5	3	0	19	18
3 Southampton	9	5	2	2	13	17
4 Exeter City	6	3	2	1	10	11
5 Maidenhead United	8	3	2	3	5	11
6 Chesham United	6	3	2	1	1	11
7 Portishead	10	2	4	4	-8	10
8 Swindon Town	9	2	3	4	1	9
9 Larkhill Athletic	9	1	3	5	-17	6
10 Poole Town	10	0	1	9	-40	1



TheFA Women's
National League

GRASSROOTS



Luton achieve funding goal



Luton Ladies have netted a funding boost from a local power company to help cover the cost of training venues during the winter months.

The football club has received a £250 Team Sport award from UK Power Networks, the company which distributes electricity across the East of England.

The money will go towards securing the use of training facilities for the Eastern Region Premier Division club who have expanded hugely since their formation in 1997.

Employee Jeff Stewart, a field engineer at UK Power Networks, applied for the award as his daughter, Grace, 20, plays for the club's reserve side in the Greater London League, while he helps as a volunteer first aider.

Jeff said: "The women's game has grown significantly in the past decade and it's

been fantastic to support Grace in her own part of that journey.

"I've always been a fan of the Luton Town men's team so when Grace joined up with the youth section of Luton Ladies seven years ago I was more than happy to help out myself as a volunteer.

"This funding will be put towards the cost of hiring winter training facilities which is by far the biggest overhead for the club at this time of year so it's great to receive."

The Team Sport Award scheme encourages UK Power Networks staff to volunteer in the community and is aimed at promoting healthy living, teamwork and developing sporting opportunities.

Hundreds of community and sports groups have benefited from grants since the scheme was set up. During 2021, 77 teams benefitted to a combined sum of £19,250.

Simon Says

By Simon O'Neill

This month I spoke to match official

How has the lockdown affected your training as a match official?

Lockdown meant that there were no matches to officiate at so my general match fitness was compromised. As the local leisure centre was also closed I was unable to access the gym, outdoor running track or swimming pool to exercise in, as I would normally do, especially during the closed season or periods of bad weather.

During the last 12/18 months have you managed to do officiate in any matches prior to the start of the 2021/22 season?

I was fortunate in that I was able to officiate at a number of pre-season friendly games for local teams prior to the season starting properly – both running the line and in the middle. This helped me get up to match fitness prior to the season proper starting.

Have you been able to continue your training or has that suffered as well?

Despite the local leisure centre being closed, I was able to continue my training and general fitness regime in other ways. I started to do a lot more cycling and jogging. I am lucky in that I live opposite a park and I made a conscious effort to go out every day whatever the weather – even if it was only for a short brisk walk. I also discovered the nearby canal

network and spent a lot of time cycling along the towpaths.

Do you receive support to help on the mental health side of fitness as a match official, especially in the lockdown?

I was aware that the County FA were offering mental health advice to match officials affected by the lockdown, however, personally I did not feel the need to access this service.

What does a typical week look like in training for a match official? How often do you have to do a fitness test?

Fitness tests are held every year. For match officials at level 4 and above they are compulsory and officials have to pass them to continue at that level. For me, as a level 5 official, it is not a compulsory requirement although, obviously, it is good to remain as fit as possible in order to maintain a certain amount of credibility on the field.

For me, during the season, a typical week (and this will be different for everybody) will involve commuting to work on my bike every day, plus swimming or going to the gym once or twice a week in the evening (depending whether or not I have a midweek appointment). In the close season, I will also go for a run or longer cycle ride at the weekend.

Do you do anything specific in preparing for a match?

I always check the league tables to see where the teams are, as well as the fixtures to see if they have played recently, so I know if there is anything on the match or if there might be potential confrontations. For some of the leagues, where the information is available, I also check to see if there are any players who are suspended so I can check for their names on the team sheet. I will look to see what colours the teams are playing in too, so I am aware of any possible clash. I ensure that all my kit, including boots, is clean and double check that I have everything I need in my bag (kit, whistles, cards, note pad, pencil etc.)

Are you looking to gain promotion to the next level of officials this season?

No, I am at the age now where I am not looking to gain promotion. I am happy at the level I have reached (Level 5).

What do you like about your role as a match official?

It is a good way to be actively involved in football – after all, without match officials there is no game. Over the years I have made many good friends – not only amongst the refereeing community but players and club officials too. It is a good way to keep fit and the banter can be entertaining, plus you get to earn a few pounds as your match fee. What I don't enjoy is the abuse which as an official I so often get - from players, spectators (including parents) and club officials. Over the years, I have been spat at, pushed over, threatened and called some disgusting names but, overall, these serious incidents are, fortunately, the exception rather than the rule.

Would you recommend being a match official?

Yes, generally speaking. If you enjoy football

and want to get actively involved in the beautiful game it can be a good route to take. However, you will need to be pretty thick skinned and prepared to take criticism – not always justified and which often comes more in the form of abuse. You also need to be a confident person and have good man management skills, as well as knowing the rules of the game. Nowadays with the growth of the women's game it is important that we get more female officials involved – it is far better to have a women's match officiated by a female crew rather than men. Also, if you show an aptitude for refereeing the financial incentives are much greater now than when I started and the opportunities are there for young up and coming female officials to progress right to the very top of the game.

What are your ambitions this season and longer term?

For this season, my ambitions are to stay fit, do the best I can, continue to enjoy officiating and possibly be rewarded with a Cup Final appointment. Long term, I know I will not be able to carry on officiating too much longer so I have begun to make preparations for life after active refereeing. I have undertaken a Mentoring course at the County FA with a view to offering support to newly qualified referees (especially female officials) and this is something I am keen to do more of in the future.



IWS welcomes first young ambassador



Pro Meam, Pro Tuam, Pro Nobis

The Institute for Wellbeing in Sports is continuing to grow and prosper as they look to become a stronghold in girl's grassroots football in the UK.

As they continue to engage with coaches, volunteers, organisations and partners, they have turned to young players to help in their development.

Kayla Johnson, 13, has become the IWS' first Young Ambassador.

The youngster started playing football in 2018 and has already had a number of successes during her time in grassroots football.

In 2019, she won the Soccerena Tournament and Manager's Player of the Year for Easington AFC Under 11s girls and she also joined the Improtech Elite Soccer Academy.

In August 2020 she joined Durham Deerness Valley Tigers Under 13s and in July

2021 received Players' Player, Parents' Player and most committed team member in the RFYL Premier Division.

Speaking about the announcement, Johnson said: I was so happy to be approached to become a Young Ambassador for The Institute for Wellbeing in Sports.

"I am thrilled to be able to represent young people currently in sport and those thinking of joining.

"Since starting football in late 2018 I have had great experiences within the sport and it has become more acceptable for girls to play especially since England women's team made girls football more popular. It has made people take girls more seriously and help us get some of the opportunities boys get.

"Since joining a football team I have made new friends all over the North East, can

communicate with all team members on and off the pitch and I know the importance of team work.

"The positive experiences for me so far has been joining the first girls Improtech Elite Soccer Academy, getting parents player, players player and most committed team member which made me excited and happy about my future in football.

"My current coach treats everyone equally which creates a positive and safe environment for kids. She also gives girl of the game to people who have the most personal improvement from the last time they played making it equal.

"In 2019 I was on BBC news for joining the first girl's elite football academy in school."

CUPS



Ovdiychuk lob wins Women's Champions League Goal of the Group Stage



Olha Ovdiychuk's first-time long-range lob for WFC Kharkiv at Breidablik has been named UEFA Women's Champions League Goal of the Group Stage after topping the poll, presented by Heineken.

The goal helped seal a 2-0 win for Kharkiv and finished ahead of the runner-up, Lieke Martens's outrageous Matchday 6 effort in Barcelona's victory against HB Køge. Another strike for the holders, by Fridolina Rolfö in the 4-0 triumph at Arsenal, came third.

Ovdiychuk's goal received more than half of the total vote, having also previously received the highest tally of the round in any of the six individual matchday polls, which produced the overall nominees. Fans were able to vote for Goal of the Group Stage from 10:00 CET on Monday 20 December

until 15:00 CET on Thursday 23 December.

UEFA Women's Champions League Goal of the Group Stage

The Goal of the Group Stage top six

1. Olha Ovdiychuk, Breidablik 0-2 WFC Kharkiv (Matchday 4)
2. Lieke Martens, Barcelona 5-0 HB Køge (Matchday 6)
3. Fridolina Rolfö, Arsenal 0-4 Barcelona (Matchday 5)
4. Steph Catley, HB Køge 1-5 Arsenal (Matchday 3)
5. Sam Kerr, Chelsea 3-3 Wolfsburg (Matchday 1)
6. Caroline Møller, Real Madrid 5-0 Breidablik (Matchday 2)

Women's Champions League

Group Stage Results and Tables

Group Stage Match Five

Zhytlobud-1	0-6	PSG
Servette FCCF	0-3	Wolfsburg
Breidablik	0-3	Real Madrid
Chelsea	0-0	Juventus
HB Koge	1-2	Hoffenheim
hacken	1-5	Bayern
Arsenal	0-4	Barcelona
Benfica	0-5	Lyon

Group Stage Match Six

Lyon	4-0	Hacken
Bayern	4-0	Benfica
Barcelona	5-0	HB Koge
Hoffenheim	4-1	Arsenal
PSG	6-0	Breidablik
Real Madrid	3-0	Zhytlobud-1
Juventus	4-0	Servette FCCF
Wolfsburg	4-0	Cheslea

Quarter-Finalists:

Group winners: Barcelona (ESP, holders), Lyon (FRA), Paris Saint-Germain (FRA), Wolfsburg (GER)

Group runners-up: **Arsenal (ENG)**, Bayern München (GER), Juventus (ITA), Real Madrid (ESP)

GROUP A		MP	W	D	L	GD	PTS
1	Wolfsburg	6	3	2	1	10	11
2	Juventus	6	3	2	1	8	11
3	Chelsea	6	3	2	1	5	11
4	Servette	6	0	0	6	-23	0

GROUP B		MP	W	D	L	GD	PTS
1	Paris	6	6	0	0	25	18
2	Real Madrid	6	4	0	2	12	12
3	Zhytlobud-1	6	1	1	4	2	4
4	Breidabilk	6	0	1	5	0	1

GROUP C		MP	W	D	L	GD	PTS
1	Barcelona	6	6	0	0	23	18
2	Arsenal	6	3	0	3	1	9
3	Hoffenheim	6	3	0	3	-4	9
4	HB Koge	6	0	0	6	-20	0

GROUP D		MP	W	D	L	GD	PTS
1	Lyon	6	5	1	1	17	15
2	Bayern	6	4	1	1	21	13
3	Benfica	6	1	4	4	-14	4
4	Hacken	6	1	5	5	-15	3



Cherry Records Stadium announced as Continental Tyres League Cup final host



The FA have announced that AFC Wimbledon's Cherry Red Records Stadium will host The FA Women's Continental Tyres League Cup Final on Saturday 5 March.

The news was confirmed this evening on talkSPORT2 during the Quarter-Final draw of the competition, with the eleventh Final due to be broadcast live on the BBC. Kick-off time will be announced in due course

and tickets are now on sale.

Home to The Dons since November 2020, the Final will be played in front of a crowd of potentially up to 9,000 spectators, with fans due back after the conclusion of last season's competition was played behind closed doors.

Kelly Simmons, FA Director of The Women's Professional Game, said: "We are delighted to confirm The Cherry Red Records Stadium as the host of the FA Women's

Continental Tyres League Cup Final.

"We wanted a really intimate stadium that could potentially generate a really good atmosphere.

"We feel we have that in AFC Wimbledon and we are really looking forward to welcoming fans for this Final, who I am sure will create a really good buzz within the stadium.."

AFC Wimbledon Chief Executive Joe Palmer said: "There's

been a great response to the homecoming campaign for our AFC Wimbledon Ladies with good attendances so far and we are proud to be

selected to host one of the most prestigious fixtures in the women's football calendar.

“This is another example of the interest in our new stadium, both as a venue for hosting sporting events, and as a valuable asset for the community.”

Holders Chelsea and Arsenal enter at the Quarter-Final round following their UEFA Women's Champions League commitments during the Group Stages, and they join the five group winners and best runner-up. There is still one place to be confirmed with Leicester City v Manchester City to be rescheduled following the postponement of their Group Stage fixture last week.

The draw was made on talkSPORT2 by former Tottenham Hotspur

defender, Jenna Schillaci, with the result being as follows:

West Ham United

v

Chelsea

Tottenham Hotspur

v

Liverpool

Manchester City

v

Bristol City

Arsenal

v

Manchester United

Ties will be played on 19-20 January 2022.

Tickets for the Final at The Cherry Red Records Stadium are now on sale priced at £10 for adults and £2.50 for Under-16s and can be purchased at

www.afcwimbledon.co.uk/tickets.



2021/22 Vitality Women's FA Cup fixtures, key dates & information

Third Round Results

Stourbridge	0-3	Sheffield United	Burnley	0-4	Liverpool
Plymouth Argyle	5-0	Clapton Comm.	Brighouse Town	0-1	Sunderland
Stoke City	1-2	Nottingham Forest	West Bromwich Albion	5-1	Long Eaton United
Leeds	0-6	Durham	Huddersfield Town	3-1	Loughborough Lightning
Chesham United	0-10	Billericay Town	Nettleham	4-2	Northampton
Chorley	0-3	Newcastle	Bridgwater United	1-0	Crystal Palace
AFC Wimbledon	0-2	Ipswich Town	Liverpool Feds	0-1	Blackburn Rovers
Portsmouth	1-2	Southampton	Ashford Town	1--6	London City Lionesses
Bristol City	5-0	Lewes	Watford	0-4	Coventry United
Gillingham	TBC	Charlton	Southampton	TBC	Exeter City





The 2021/22 Vitality Women's FA Cup Fourth Round draw was made on talkSPORT2's Women's Football Weekly show earlier this evening and it can be seen in full below:

Southampton v. Bristol City

Newcastle United v. Ipswich Town

Plymouth Argyle v. Gillingham or Charlton Athletic

Liverpool v. Lincoln City

Brighton & Hove Albion v. Reading

Nottingham Forest v. Manchester City

Aston Villa v. Chelsea

Billerica Town v. Coventry United

Durham v. Blackburn Rovers

West Bromwich Albion v. Southampton Women's or Exeter City

Sheffield United v. West Ham United

Birmingham City v. Sunderland

Bridgwater United v. Manchester United

Huddersfield Town v. Everton

Tottenham Hotspur v. Leicester City

Arsenal v. London City Lionesses

All 16 ties in the Fourth Round will be played on Sunday 30 January 2022 and further details will be announced at the earliest opportunity.

HOME NATIONS



Tournament unveiled as Arnold Clark Cup



The Arnold Clark Cup will see four of the world's top 10 teams clash this February, with Canada, joining England, Germany and Spain in the inaugural tournament.

Each team will play a round-robin match in Middlesbrough, Norwich, and Wolverhampton.

England begin their tournament on February 17 at Riverside Stadium against reigning Olympic champions, Canada, before taking on Spain three days later at Carrow Road.

The home side's final fixture will be world number three Germany at Molineux on February 23.

Speaking about the tournament Fran Kirby said, "As a team, you want to test yourself against the best in the world and win trophies. That's our clear goal for the tournament."

"Canada are reigning Olympic Champions, Spain have some outstanding players in their squad, and obviously it doesn't get much bigger an occasion than England v Germany.

"It's a special opportunity to play world-class opposition in front of our supporters, so we'll be determined to be firing on all cylinders."

With over half of the tickets priced at £10 or less and the opportunity to see competitive, elite football at its very best, tournament organisers are expecting bumper crowds at each of the venues.

One of the sides looking to spoil England's ambitions is Spain. Spain Coach, Jorge Vilda, said it was a challenge his side would be up for, "For Spain it is a great honour to participate in the first edition of the Arnold Clark Cup alongside world-class teams such as England, Germany and Canada."

"In addition, visiting England in the year of the EURO will give us the opportunity to better prepare our participation in the tournament."

Throwing their support behind the tournament is Arnold Clark, who have agreed to a multi-year title partnership.

Eddie Hawthorne, Arnold Clark Chief Executive and Group Managing Director, said: "We're delighted to launch the inaugural Arnold Clark Cup, and it's been a real pleasure to work with Pitch International on this project. It's a bold and exciting event and we believe that this will become a highlight of the sporting calendar for years to come.

"Football is something that brings the whole community together. We're delighted to give fans the opportunity to see these great international players and inspire future stars live in their hometowns for a great price."

England fans will be able to watch every match live on ITV, and can follow tournament updates at: @arnoldclarkcup / #arnoldclarkcup

Tickets are now available to purchase via www.arnoldclarkcup.com.

SPAR Scotland to continue partnership with Scottish FA



SPAR Scotland have pledged their commitment to continue to support the women's and girls' game for the next two years.

The partnership, which began in 2019 with the launch of the SPAR Future Stars Cup, has grown since it's inaugural year in Scotland.

olin McLean, CEO of SPAR Scotland, said: "Our continued partnership with the Scottish FA and our sponsorship of the Scotland Women's National Team allows us to encourage more girls to play football and increase participation numbers.

"The tournament gained momentum prior to the pandemic and we were experiencing a lot of promising engagement.

"It was frustrating to see it come to an abrupt halt but to have the tournament return will hopefully give all of the participants a great lift and we are looking forward to seeing the 2021/22 Future Stars Tournament begin early next year."

Fiona McIntyre, Scottish FA Head of Girls' and Women's Football said: "As part of the Scottish FA's Girls' and Women's Strategy

which was launched earlier this year, we want to increase participation in Scotland and inspire the next generation.

"The Future Stars Tournament allows us to help facilitate these goals by providing a platform for young girls to compete in a safe, competitive and enjoyable environment.

"We are extremely grateful to SPAR for their support following the disappointment of last year's competition being cancelled due to the pandemic.

"We are now looking forward to seeing the competition become a springboard for the girls' and women's game in not only increasing participation but also improving their awareness of women's football in the country.

"Our national team are aiming to return to their second consecutive World Cup and we hope they can act as inspiration for everyone who takes part in the competition."

New exhibition celebrates trailblazers

**SCOTTISH
FOOTBALL
MUSEUM**
HAMPDEN



A new major exhibition celebrating a major part of women's football history in Scotland has opened at the Scottish Football Museum.

Celebrating the interwar team, Rutherglen Ladies, who defied the ban on women's football to inspire future generations.

The new exhibition, which will be at the Hampden museum for six months, opens to the public ahead of the 100th anniversary of The FA's ban on women's football.

Funded by Museums Galleries Scotland, it is based on research by women's sports historian Dr Fiona Skillen, of Glasgow Caledonian University, and football historian Steve Bolton.

The ban, which was enforced on December 5, 1921, was brought in because it was deemed the game 'quite unsuitable for females.'

Rutherglen Ladies chose to tour Ireland and played in exhibition games in front of thousands as well as raising money for charity.

Dr Skillen, senior lecturer in history at Glasgow Caledonian University, said: "There's a perception that women's football didn't happen in Scotland between the Victorian period and the mid-1950s. This research shows that it did. We are rewriting the history books with our discoveries.

"Rutherglen Ladies showed incredible resolve and resilience and had to overcome significant barriers just to play the game. They deserve recognition for their unique place in history."

Steve Bolton added: "In many ways the 1920s were the darkest decade for women's football and yet this pioneering team of Scottish women footballers toured England, Scotland and Ireland.

"They survived the pernicious effects of the 1921 English F.A. ban and prospered; beating the 'World Champion' Dick Kerr Ladies and securing their place in history. They were magnificent."

Rose Reilly MBE, a Scottish Sports Hall of Fame inductee and a World Cup winner, who attended the exhibition preview, said: "Rutherglen Ladies are the true pioneers of women's football, hats off to them.

"I am so proud of them. They paved the way but their story got buried."

Richard McBrearty, Curator of the Scottish Football Museum, said: "To host this fantastic exhibition is a real coup for the Museum, we're delighted to be open after the pandemic and we look forward to welcoming visitors to find out more about the trailblazing ladies of Rutherglen F.C.

"The national stadium is now the rightful home of the Scotland Women's National Team, and the female players of the 1920s and 30s paved the way for the progress we've seen since then."

To book your visit to the Scottish Football Museum to see the Rutherglen Ladies F.C. exhibition, visit:

scottishfootballmuseum.org.uk

Wales promises equal pay within next five years



The Football Association of Wales has pledged to introduce equal pay for its men and women international players by the end of 2026.

Recently Jess Fishlock called the lack of equal pay 'unacceptable'.

The FAW responded by saying it is committed to achieving equal pay within its current strategic cycle, which lasts from 2021-2026.

Fishlock said: "Equal pay is an interesting conversation.

"If we go to a major tournament and they [men] go to a major tournament, they [UEFA/FIFA] will give, for example, the women £10million [of prize money] and they'll give the men £250million.

"They're still not really investing in it like they decided to invest in men's football 20, 30 years ago. No I don't think we deserve from the men's pot.

"But if you take that out of it, when you just come to the FAW and Wales and the men's side and the women's side, we do the exact same thing for our country. The

difference in pay for that is just unacceptable."

FAW chief executive Noel Mooney said: "The FAW are taking positive steps forward towards equality, including a substantial and far reaching agreement following discussions with the Women's National Team players.

"As acknowledged by UEFA, we now invest more as a percentage of our turnover into our Women's National Team programme than any other nation in Europe and are committed to achieving equal pay within this strategic cycle.

"The current priority for the team is the upcoming matches against Greece and France with the aim of reaching a major tournament for the first time."

In comparison, England have been paying their men's and women's teams equally in terms of match fees and bonuses since January 2020 - with the fee reported to be around £1,000 per game - while in September 2020, Brazil announced it would do the same, emulating Australia, Norway and New Zealand.

Fishlock wins MVP award



Wales and OL Reign midfielder Jess Fishlock has been named the National Women's Soccer League's (NWSL) most valuable player.

The midfielder, 34, scored five goals and got four assists in 24 appearances during the season.

Fishlock was one of five finalists for the award along with Angela Salem (Portland Thorns FC), Mallory Pugh (Chicago Red Stars), Ashely Hatch (Washington Spirit), and Margaret Purce (NJ/NY Gotham FC).

Pugh earned second place in the voting, followed by Purce, Hatch and Salem.

The list of finalists was decided after a preliminary round of voting by owners, general managers, coaches, players and media.

The finalists were then voted on by fans (10%), owners, general managers, coaches (20%), media (20%), and players (50%).

She has been in the NWSL since 2013 and her head coach Laura Harvey also won the 2021 NWSL coach of the year award.

Speaking about Fishlock, Harvey said: "I think that's just a compliment of what she's always brought to this team.

"The journey that she's been on to get to this point has been phenomenal.

"I'm glad that she's getting some recognition that she deserves."

Taking to Twitter, Fishlock wrote: "I'm not going to say much. Still smiling.

"Best thing about this year was this award could've gone to any of those nominated.

"Everyone was a worthy winner.

"This league is just going to get better and better.

"Feel very proud to be amongst the players in this league."

Furness named 2021 NI Sports Personality of the Year

Northern Ireland midfielder Rachel Furness has been named as the 2021 BBC Northern Ireland Sports Personality of the Year.

The 33-year-old played a starring role as the Northern Ireland senior women's team defied the odds and qualified for next summer's Women's European Championship finals.

In November the Liverpool Ladies midfielder made history by becoming Northern Ireland's all-time top goalscorer, netting twice against North Macedonia to take her overall career tally to 38 senior international goals.

Furness was presented with the BBC award by Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp at the Merseyside club's training ground.

Speaking about winning BBC Northern Ireland Sports Personality of the Year, Furness told the Irish FA: "It is a fantastic moment for me to be only the second woman to ever win this award, but it isn't just about me, it is about my team.

"I want to dedicate this award to my team-mates in the Northern Ireland squad. Over the past 12 months we have achieved so much and hopefully this is just the start of something really special."

The judging panel featured Olympic gold medallist Lady Mary Peters, Kenny Archer (Irish News), Neil Brittain (BBC Sport NI), Darren Fullerton (Daily Mirror), Jim Gracey (Belfast Telegraph Sports Editor) and chair Thomas Kane (BBC Sport NI).



Electric Ireland Girls' Challenge Cup last four line-up confirmed

The semi-finals of a new cup competition for girls' teams in Northern Ireland have been confirmed.

South Belfast sides Linfield Ladies and Rosario Ladies, Carnmoney Ladies from Newtownabbey and Portadown-based Ambassadors Girls have reached the last four of the inaugural Electric Ireland Girls' Challenge Cup.

The new U15/U16 competition - it was open to all women's/girls' clubs in membership of the Irish Football Association - builds on Electric Ireland's partnership with the association and its Game Changers NI campaign which aims to increase the opportunities for girls and women across Northern Ireland to be able to play and watch football.

The draw for the last four has pitted Linfield against Rosario, while Ambassadors Girls will meet Carnmoney Ladies.

Disney Playmakers programme gets girls on the ball

More than 1600 young girls across Northern Ireland have been introduced to football through the Playmakers programme from Uefa and Disney.

Using Disney's world famous storytelling and inspired by research showing the positive role of storytelling in helping children take up sport, Playmakers aims to increase the number of girls taking part in physical activity and to kickstart a lifelong love of football.

The Irish FA Foundation has been rolling out the programme to kids aged five to eight – primary one to primary four (Year 1 to Year 4) - across Northern Ireland since April.

Unlike traditional football programmes, each of Playmakers' 10 initial training sessions follow the narrative of billion-dollar global box office smash hits like Disney's Frozen II and Disney and Pixar's Incredibles 2.

Equipped with footballs, bibs and cones, trained coaches encourage participants to play the roles of popular characters, such as Elastigirl and Elsa and Anna, bringing the films' action scenes to life through movement, teamwork and their imagination.

The Irish FA Foundation now has 30 trained Disney coaches and is hoping to add to this number next year.

Women's U17 and U19 draw made

Northern Ireland have discovered who they will face next spring after the 2021-2022 UEFA Euro Women's Under 19 and U17 Championship qualifying round 2 draws were made.

The U19s have been drawn against Azerbaijan, Faroe Islands and Malta in Group 1. These games are set to be played in April 2022 and a host nation for the group is still to be confirmed.

The U17s, meanwhile, have been pitted against Luxembourg, Faroe Islands and hosts Israel - also in Group 1. The three matches are scheduled for March 2022.



UEFA WOMEN'S EURO 2022 ENGLAND



Travel Solutions offers Women's Euro travel packages

Travel Solutions, the official Northern Ireland Supporters Travel Partner, is offering packages to Uefa Women's Euro 2022 in England.

Northern Ireland's senior women's team are set to take on Norway on 7 July, Austria on 11 July and England on 15 July in the group stages of the tournament, with all three matches being played at St Mary's Stadium in Southampton.

Belfast-based Travel Solutions has put together travel packages which cover return flights from Belfast City Airport to London Heathrow with Aer Lingus (one 10kg checked-in bag included), airport taxes and security charges, executive coach transfers to/from Southampton, one night's accommodation in the three-star St Giles Hotel at Heathrow and breakfast.

Prices start at £219 per person sharing (adults and children).

A £50 pp deposit is required at the time of booking. Match tickets are not included in the price.

Book online now by clicking here or call Travel Solutions on 028 90455030.



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IRISH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION
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History of women's football to be revealed and celebrated by UEFA Women's EURO 2022 Heritage Programme



- The Heritage programme funded by The FA, UEFA Women's EURO 2022 host cities and The National Lottery will share 141 years of women's football
- Summer long celebration across the nine UEFA Women's EURO host cities
- Stories of pioneering women and girls will be recorded for the first time

The National Lottery Heritage Fund has awarded £500,000 to a programme which will record the hidden history of women's football and launch a celebration of the

game, its players, and communities, alongside the UEFA Women's EURO this summer.

It's an important year for women's football, as England hosts the UEFA Women's EURO and England Women mark their 50th anniversary.

However, the history of the game goes back a lot further than many might think. This year also marks 141 years since women's football was first played professionally.

In partnership with The FA and led by Rotherham Council and Milton Keynes Council, the National Lottery funded

programme aims to challenge the common perception of women's football being 'new' and change the nation's understanding of 'the English game'. In addition to the National Lottery funding, The FA and host cities have contributed nearly £600,000 to the project, making a total of £1,060,580.

For the very first time, information about every England player, captain, goal scorer and match score since 1972 will be researched, recorded and shared alongside the information that already exists about men's football. Hosted on England Foot-

ball's website, the record will continue to be updated, ensuring future female players are part of the footballing story. The project will particularly explore the role of the LGBTQ+ community.

The nine UEFA Women's EURO 2022 host cities (Brighton & Hove, London, Manchester, Milton Keynes, Rotherham, Sheffield, Southampton, Trafford and Wigan & Leigh) will take part in a summer of exhibitions, memory films, oral histories and community activities.

Professor Jean Williams, who will be leading the historical research to support the programme, said: 'This National Lottery funded programme is of enormous significance as the first nationally coordinated project of its kind to, firstly collect the history of women's football in England, and secondly to share that unique heritage with the widest possible public audience.

"We are finding new artefacts and stories all the time, and are excited to share how women, and girls have historically pioneered football."

Eilish McGuinness, CEO of The National Lottery Heritage Fund, said: "Thanks to money raised by National Lottery players, the hidden history and unheard voices of women's football will be shared for the first time, capturing the full story of the beloved sport.

"We're delighted to support this project which will give fans and players the chance to celebrate the history of women's football and communities to discover their connections to the game."

Baroness Sue Campbell, UEFA Women's EURO 2022 Board Member and Director of Women's Football, The FA, said: "We are thrilled to be working with our UEFA Women's EURO Host City partners and The National Lottery Heritage Fund on this unique programme.

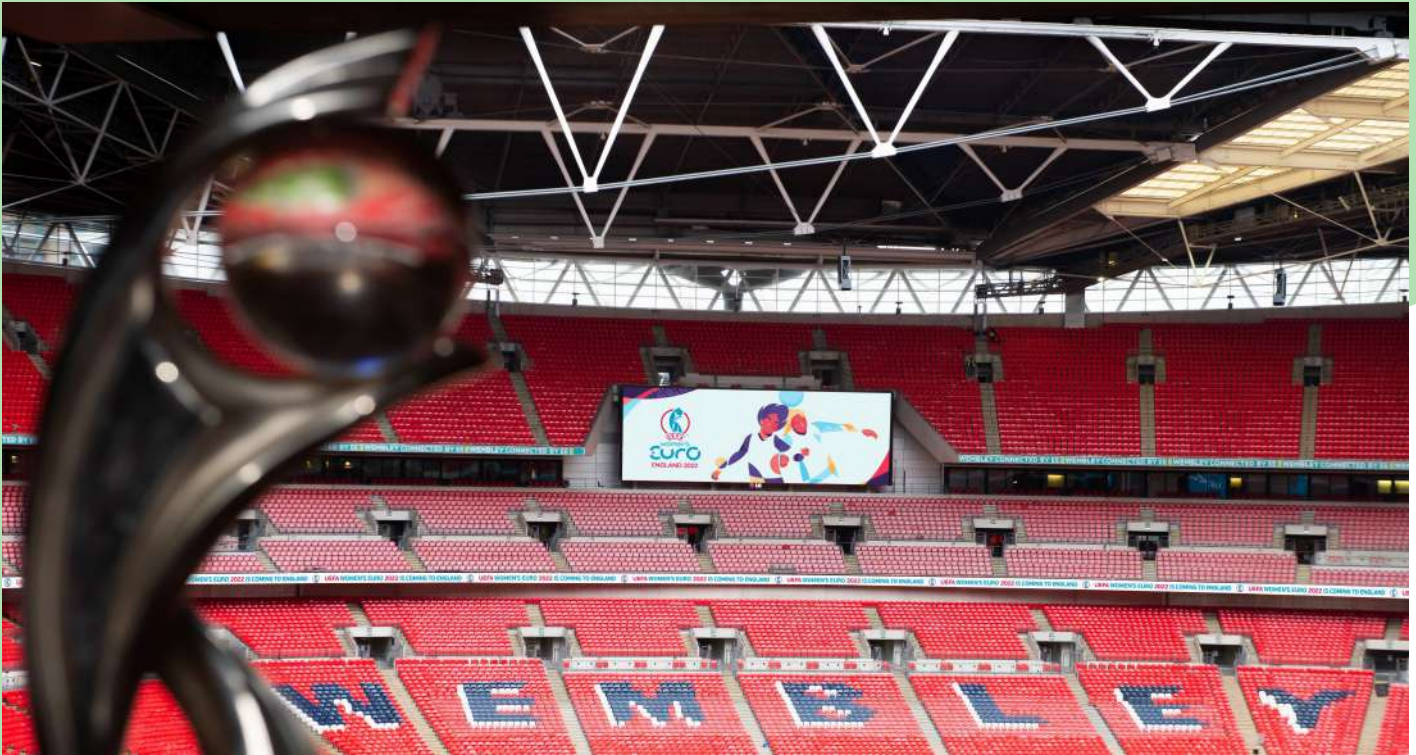
"Together we will bring to the fore incredible stories of the pioneers of women's football who have helped shape the women's game we have today.

"The programme will also capture and tell, for generations to come, the profiles and stories of current and future England players, ensuring fans are better informed than ever before. With the UEFA Women's EURO

coming to England this summer, this really is the time to celebrate our past and look forward to a very exciting future."



Women's Euro 2022 finals draw made



The finals draw for the Euro 2022 competition, which will be held in England, has been made.

Hosts England will open the tournament against Austria at Old Trafford and also meet Norway and Northern Ireland in Group A after the draw was made at Victoria Warehouse in Greater Manchester.

The draw was made by Camille Abily, Karen Carney, Rúben Dias, Juan Mata, Anja Mittag, Katrine Pedersen, Lotta Schelin and Kelly Smith.

Germany, whose 22-year reign as champions was ended in 2017, will start

their bid to regain the trophy against the team that beat them in that quarter-final, Denmark, in Group B, which also contains Spain and Finland.

The Draw

Group A
England (hosts)
Austria
Norway
Northern Ireland

- England and Austria will open the tournament at Old Trafford on 6 July.

- England knocked Norway out of the last two FIFA Women's World Cups, in the 2019 quarter-finals and 2015 round of 16.
- Norway are two-time champions and beat Northern Ireland twice in qualifying.
- Austria reached the semi-finals on debut in 2017.
- Northern Ireland are in their first women's final tournament, and five days ago lost 4-0 to England in a World Cup qualifier at Wembley; Austria are also in that group.

Group B

Germany

Denmark

Spain

Finland

- Denmark ended Germany's 22-year reign as champions with victory in the 2017 quarter-finals.
- Germany beat Spain 1-0 in the 2019 World Cup group stage.
- In the last finals in England, in 2005, Finland knocked Denmark out in the group stage to reach the semi-finals on debut but then lost to Germany.

Group C

Netherlands
(holders)

Sweden

Russia

Switzerland

- The Netherlands won the last tournament in 2017; Sweden won the first in 1984.
- The Netherlands beat Sweden in the 2017 quarter-finals.

- The holders defeated Russia twice in qualifying.
- The Netherlands beat Switzerland in a 2019 World Cup qualifying play-off
- Sweden beat Russia in the group stages of 1997, 2001, 2009 and 2017.

Group D

France

Italy

Belgium

Iceland

- France beat Iceland in the group stages of 2009 and 2017.
- France beat Italy 3-1 in the group stage of the last finals in England in 2005.
- Italy are two-time runners-up
- Belgium made their finals debut in 2017.
- Iceland are in their fourth straight finals.

Match Venues

Match venues

Brighton & Hove
(Brighton & Hove
Community Stadium)

London (Brentford
Community Stadium &
Wembley Stadium – final
only)

Manchester (Manchester
City Academy Stadium)

Milton Keynes (Stadium
MK)

Rotherham (New York
Stadium)

Sheffield (Bramall Lane)

Southampton (St Mary's
Stadium)

Trafford (Old Trafford –
opening game only)

Wigan & Leigh (Leigh
Sports Village)



Euro 2022 Fixtures



*All kick-off times CET,
local time is 1 hour behind*

Group stage

Wednesday 6 July

Group A: England v
Austria (21:00, Old
Trafford)

Thursday 7 July

Group A: Norway vs
Northern Ireland (21:00,
Southampton)

Friday 8 July

Group B: Spain vs Finland
(18:00, Milton Keynes)

Group B: Germany vs
Denmark (21:00,
Brentford)

Saturday 9 July

Group C: Russia vs
Switzerland (18:00, Wigan
& Leigh)

Group C: Netherlands vs
Sweden (21:00, Sheffield)

Sunday 10 July

Group D: Belgium vs
Iceland (18:00,
Manchester)

Group D: France vs Italy
(21:00, Rotherham)

Monday 11 July

Group A: Austria vs
Northern Ireland (18:00,
Southampton)

Group A: England v
Norway (21:00, Brighton
& Hove)

Tuesday 12 July

Group B: Denmark vs
Finland (18:00, Milton
Keynes)

Group B: Germany vs
Spain (21:00, Brentford)

Wednesday 13 July

Group C: Sweden vs
Switzerland (18:00,
Sheffield)

Group C: Netherlands v
Russia (21:00, Wigan &
Leigh)

Thursday 14 July

Group D: Italy vs Iceland
(18:00, Manchester)

Group D: France vs
Belgium (21:00,
Rotherham)

Friday 15 July

Group A: Northern Ireland
v England (21:00,
Southampton)

Group A: Austria vs
Norway (21:00, Brighton
& Hove)

Saturday 16 July

Group B: Finland vs
Germany (21:00, Milton
Keynes)

Group B: Denmark vs
Spain (21:00, Brentford)

Sunday 17 July

Group C: Switzerland vs
Netherlands (18:00,
Sheffield)

Group C: Sweden vs
Russia (18:00, Wigan &
Leigh)

Monday 18 July

Group D: Iceland vs
France (21:00,
Rotherham)

Group D: Italy vs Belgium
(21:00, Manchester)

Knockout phase

Quarter-finals:

Wednesday 20 July

QF1 – Winners Group A v
Runners-up Group B
(21:00, Brighton & Hove)

Thursday 21 July

QF2 – Winners Group B v
Runners-up Group A
(21:00, Brentford)

Friday 22 July

QF3 – Winners Group C v
Runners-up Group D
(21:00, Wigan & Leigh)

Saturday 23 July

QF4 – Winners Group D v
Runners-up Group C
(21:00, Rotherham)

Semi-finals:

Tuesday 26 July

SF1 – Winners QF1 v
Winners QF3 (21:00,
Sheffield)

Wednesday 27 July

SF2 – Winners QF2 v
Winners QF4 (21:00,
Milton Keynes)

Final:

Sunday 31 July

Winners SF1 v Winners
SF2 (18:00, Wembley)



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Around the World



Is Fifa The Best really the best?



Monday evening was the night of the coveted Fifa The Best Awards which sees the best of the women's and men's game recognised by Fifa.

The winners of the Best player and Best manager cannot be argued with but there have been a lot of questions raised about the Best team of the Year selection.

Alexia Putellas was awarded the Best Women's Player of the Year, completing a superb season for the Barcelona and Spain midfielder.

Chelsea manager Emma Hayes was voted as Manager of the Year and Christiane Endler of Lyon was named as best goalkeeper.

Canada veteran Christine Sinclair also received a Special award for recognition of her international individual goalscoring record.

Whilst not many disagreed with the winners above, there were many question marks over the team of the year.

How can the best player of the year not feature in the team of the year?

How can Champions League winners Barcelona

not have a single player feature?

How is Sam Kerr not in the World XI?

So many questions—and so far not many answers!

Here is the team

FIFA FIFPRO Women's World11:

Goalkeeper: Christiane Endler (Paris Saint-Germain/Olympique Lyonnais)

Defenders: Millie Bright (Chelsea FC Women), Lucy Bronze (Manchester City WFC), Magdalena Eriksson (Chelsea FC Women) and Wendie Renard (Olympique Lyonnais)

Midfielders: Estefanía Banini (Levante UD/Atlético de Madrid Femenino), Barbara Bonansea (Juventus FC Women) and Carli Lloyd (NJ/NY Gotham FC)

Forwards: Marta (Orlando Pride), Vivianne Miedema (Arsenal WFC) and Alex Morgan (Tottenham Hotspur FC Women/Orlando Pride/San Diego Wave FC)



News from around the world

Yallop reaches 100 Australia caps

Tameka Yallop made her 100th appearance for Australia against the United States of America in Sydney.

The Matildas were defeated in front of a record crowd – 36,109 people turned out to watch the match and smashed the attendance record for a standalone Matildas match in Australia that was set way back in 2000.

Yallop captained the Australians but couldn't lead the team to victory after goals from Ashley Latch, Rose Lavelle and a penalty from Lindsey Horan secured a 3-0 win for the USA.

Swedish FA agree to equal pay

The Swedish FA have agreed to equal pay for both men and women footballers.

No more information has been released yet but it is another great step in the women's game.

USSF to no longer pay USWNT club salaries

The United States Soccer Federation issued a statement today announcing the end of the NWSL Federation Player program, where the federation agreed to pay the NWSL salaries of US Women's National Team players.

The U.S. Soccer Federation and the U.S. Women's National Team have reached a deal to end the current allocation system and to extend the no-strike/no-lockout agreement under our current collective bargaining agreement through at least March 31, 2022. While we hope and believe that CBA negotiations will be completed much sooner than March 31, 2022, we wanted to ensure we had sufficient time to reach an agreement. Under today's agreement, U.S. Soccer will no longer pay the salaries of any USWNT players to play professionally in the NWSL, which had been the case since the beginning of the league. Today's agreement demonstrates that U.S. Soccer and the USWNT can and will continue to work together for the good of the game.

Part of the announcement was an agreement to extend the current collective bargaining agreement (CBA) through the end of March next year as the player's union and the federation continue negotiations. This applies ONLY to payments for the players while they played with the NWSL. From now on, the league will pay those players while the federation will pay the players for their national team play, as to be determined by the current contract negotiations. The player's union itself issued a statement:

The decision to stop paying club salaries is a big deal for all parties involved. The original decision to pay WNT players' club salaries was motivated by a desire to prop-up the NWSL when it was first formed in 2012. However, it no longer fits the needs of the league, the players, or the federation.



News from around the world

Fifa evacuates 100 refugees

At least 20 women footballers are among 100 refugees evacuated by Fifa from Afghanistan.

The group of mainly women and girls, including some who play for the national team, left Kabul on Thursday on a flight bound for Doha, according to the Independent.

Dunn announces pregnancy

US star Crystal Dunn has announced she is expecting a baby in May 2022.

Taking to Twitter she wrote: “The biggest blessing of them all: we are so excited and happy to be adding a new member to our family in 2022.”

Congratulations!

Formiga announces her retirement

Brazil legend Formiga has announced her retirement from international football.

She has played in seven World Cups and seven Olympic tournaments and holds the world records for both.

When she was born, women playing football in Brazil was illegal.

One of the greatest players, congratulations on a stunning career.

Hamraoui to return to training

Kheira Hamraoui is set to return to training with the Paris Saint-Germain women’s team a month after she was dragged from a car and beaten on the legs with an iron bar.

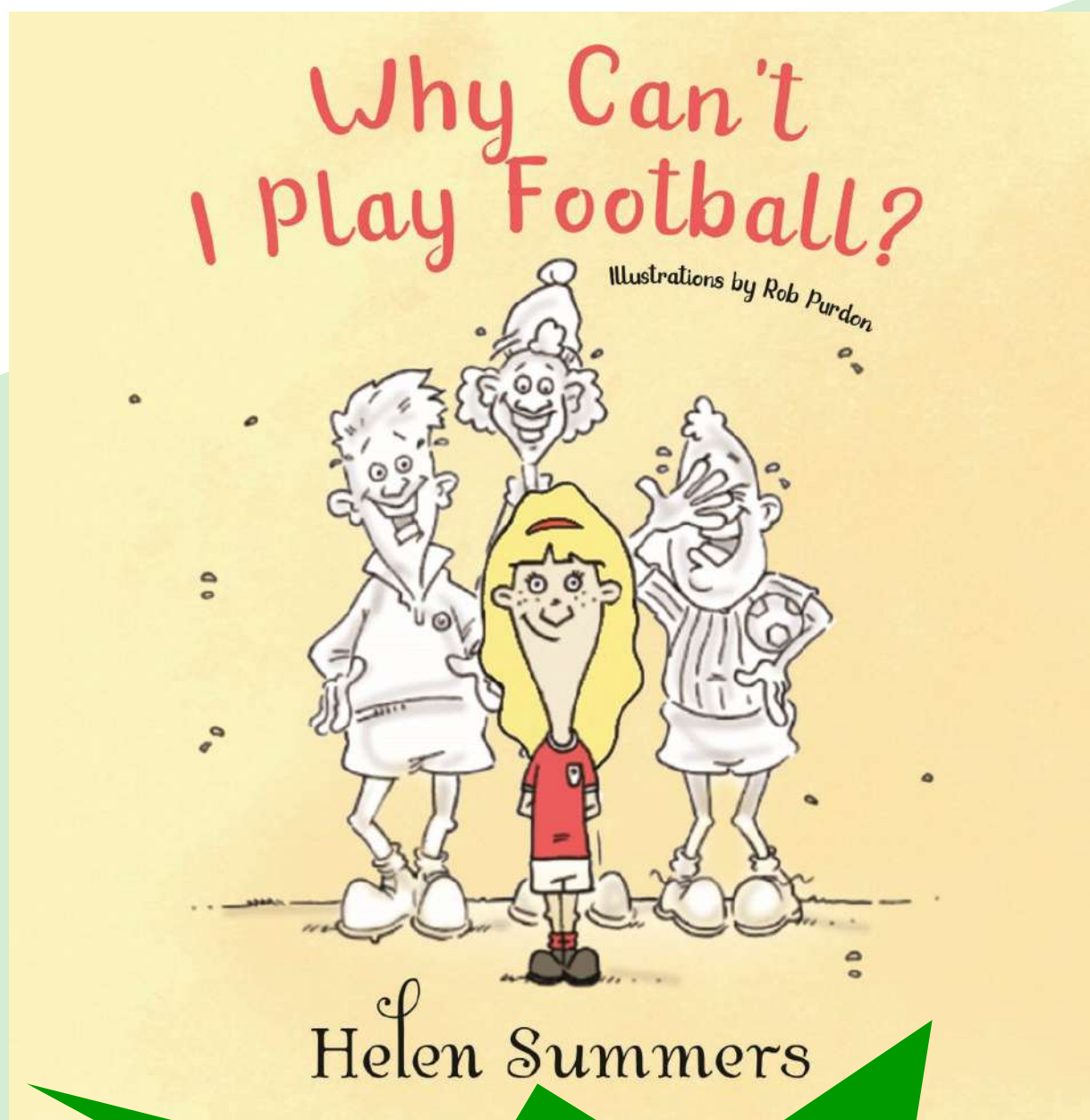
Her team-mate Aminata Diallo, who witnessed the attack and was detained for 35 hours by police before being released without charge, is also due to return to full training this week.

Hamraoui, 31, has not played a match since October 31 and has been recovering after the attack by masked men on November 4 that left her legs cut and bruised. The police investigation is still ongoing.

Diallo, 26, who was driving them home from a team meal, was arrested on suspicion of organising the assault. They play in the same midfield position and are direct rivals for a starting place.

A reconciliation meeting between the two players was held by PSG last week in which they agreed they would play together again, paving the way for this week's return to team training.

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**THE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL
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