

THE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL MAGAZINE

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CHELSEA CHAMPIONS!

Women's FA Cup final reactions,
Champions League final preview
and we chat with Starlets FC

Welcome

Contributors

Editor: Helen Rowe-Willcocks

Articles:

Jessica Pratt
Dan Pentland
Marrisa Thomas

Pictures:

Daniela Porcelli
GOTB

Graphic Designer:

Phil Brooke

Website Designer:

Will Ibbetson

**Marketing
Manager:**

Anthony Summers

Twitter:

@womensfootiemag

Facebook:

thewomensfootiemag

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Welcome

Welcome to Issue 13!

We are coming to the end of another amazing season of women's football here in the UK. The domestic leagues have been fantastic and now we all anxiously wait on the news as to who will be in the WSL and the Championship next season.

We would like to congratulate and commiserate with the England U17 Lionesses. You put in some amazing performances during the Women's U17 Championship.

Next month we have lots of exciting new content which will take shape under our new "Columnists Corner" four ladies from different parts of the women's football world will be sharing their lives and thoughts with us - we cannot wait to share their stories!

Congratulations to Chelsea in the SSE Women's FA Cup final. It was a fantastic game, great atmosphere and brilliant to see the record attendance completely smashed - we hope you all enjoyed it however you were watching!

Enjoy the issue!

Helen Rowe-Willcocks
Editor



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Continental



WSL CONTINENTAL TYRES CUP



CHAMPION



About my month

I would like to start by wishing superstars and legends Claire Rafferty, Katie Chapman and Alex Scott a fantastic retirement - it is thoroughly deserved!

As many of you did, I am sure, I enjoyed a fantastic day out at Wembley for the SSE Women's FA Cup final.

Along with a colleague, we were guests of SSE so enjoyed the game in style from Club Wembley. It was a fantastic atmosphere and I loved chatting to people and young fans travelling to the game on the tube. It is great to see how much the game has improved and it always goes to see young fans with the names of our women's players on the backs of their shirts!

We have been working hard this month to work out what we would like to achieve with the magazine in the next year and along with some exciting updates to the website, we also have some brilliant new content coming in the next few months too.

If you have any ideas for the magazine, what we can do to improve or want to join us on the team, then please get in touch! Email: thewomensfootballmagazine@gmail.com

I am looking forward to the Women's Champions League final - who do you want to win? Let us know on Twitter: [@womensfootiemag](https://twitter.com/womensfootiemag)

Helen

[@womensfootiemag](https://twitter.com/womensfootiemag)



UWCL Final preview - Another win for Lyon or revenge for Wolfsburg?

By Jessica Pratt

Olympique Lyonnais and VfL Wolfsburg will meet for the third time in a Champions League final this month.

The European giants first battled it out at this stage of the competition in 2013, when the German side won their first title in a 1-0 victory at Stamford Bridge.

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The teams contested the trophy again in Italy in 2016, where a late goal from Alexandra Popp levelled the score at 1-1 and took the tie to extra time; before Lyon won a dramatic penalty shootout 4-3.

Lyon go into the game in Kyiv as defending champions and are looking to win the trophy for an unprecedented third consecutive time, which would also take them ahead of Frankfurt as the most frequent winners of the competition. Both Lyon and Wolfsburg secured their respective league titles recently, with each side also playing in domestic cup finals the weekend before they fly to Ukraine. With both teams on track for a treble, it's difficult to judge who will be victorious at the Dynamo Stadium on 24 May.

Going off their semi-final performances, Wolfsburg arguably gave the most impressive showing of the two teams – as they swept aside WSL 1 champions Chelsea 5-1 on aggregate. Lyon advanced thanks to Lucy Bronze's goal in the second leg of their tie with Manchester City – the only goal over the two games.

It is the first taste of a European final for coaches Stephan Lerch (Wolfsburg) and Reynald Pedros (Lyon), as both managers took charge at the start of the current season in their first roles as managers of senior women's sides. Pedros will have an anxious wait on the touchline if the final goes past extra time, as it has in Lyon's last two victories – which were decided in somewhat nervous penalty shootouts.



Both squads include players with experience of winning the competition, which could be crucial on the night. Perhaps the most experienced of all is Lyon midfielder Camille Abily, 33, who has played in all four of Les Lionnaises' previous triumphs and is set to hang up her boots this summer. BBC Women's Footballer of the Year nominee Dzsenifer Marozsan is another key player in midfield for Lyon and also happens to be the German national team captain. Her inside knowledge of her international teammates could be useful to the French side – although the She-wolves themselves have former Lyon player Lara Dickenmann in their ranks, who knows the French champions very well after a six-year stint in France.

Of the attacking players on display, Lyon's Norwegian striker Ada Hegerberg will undoubtedly be a threat to the Wolfsburg defence. Hegerberg has already scored a record-equalling 14 goals in this season's competition – a feat which takes her to a career total of 36 and puts her in the top ten scorers in the history of the competition at the age of 22.

It's difficult to look past 2017 Goal 50 Women's World Player of the Year Pernille Harder as the standout player for Wolfsburg. The 25-year-old has been prolific since joining from Linköping last year and is also included on the five-player shortlist for BBC Women's Footballer of the Year. Harder was the captain and catalyst in Denmark's run to the UEFA Women's EURO 2017 final and will not need an invitation to attack Sarah Bouhaddi's goal.



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Personally – as a Lyon fan, I would love to see them win it for a record fifth time. Even more so with Abily retiring and my favourite England player Bronze playing in her first European final. However, Wolfsburg have been fantastic in the competition this season and would be worthy winners if they take home the trophy. I think it will be a tight game, although with the talent on offer we could see a few goals at both ends.

May the best team win!

The UEFA Women's Champions League Final will be broadcast live on BT Sport 2 at 17:00 on Thursday 24 May.

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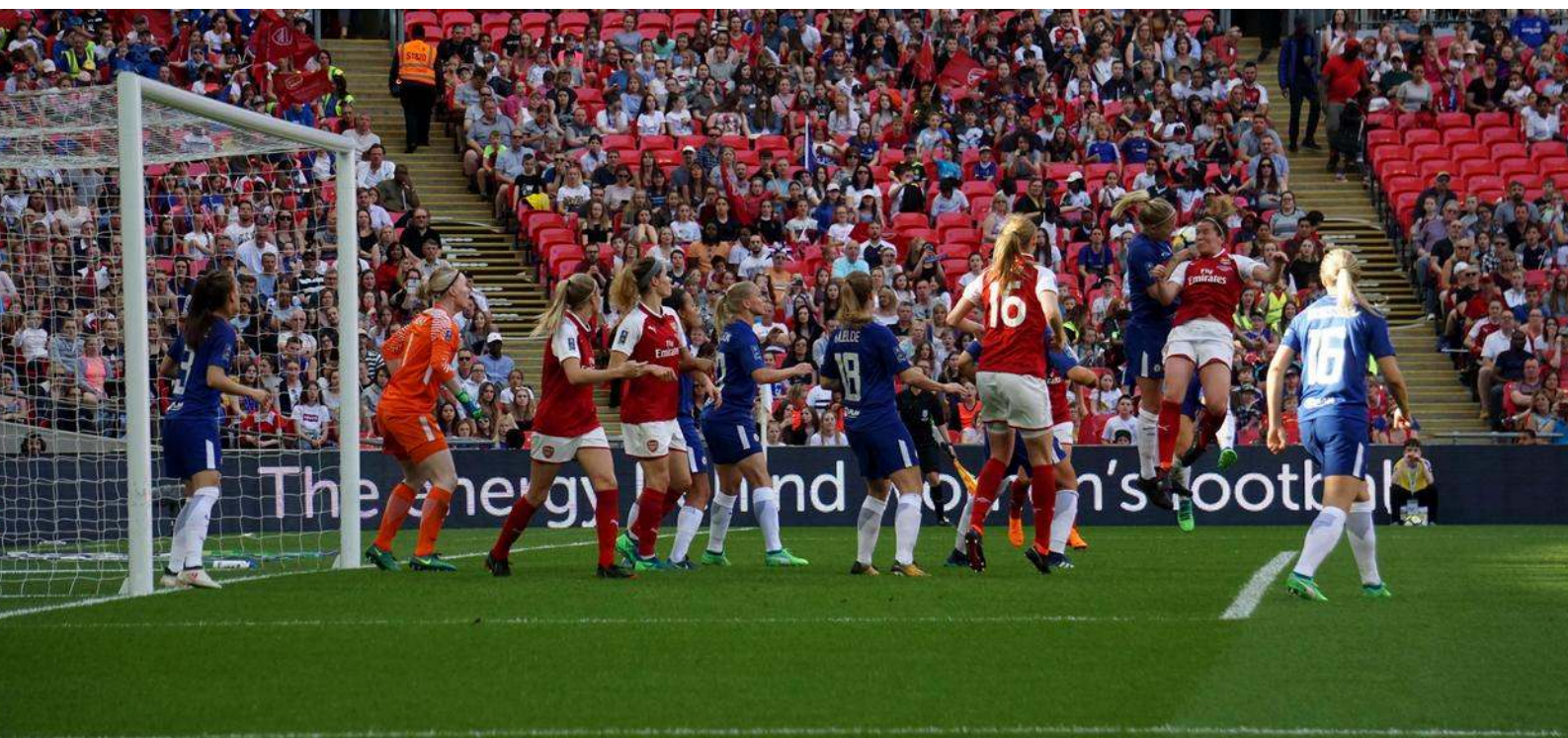




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Women's SSE FA Cup Final

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Arsenal Women 1 Chelsea Ladies 3

The 2018 SSE Women's FA Cup final was a rematch of the 2016 Wembley showpiece with Arsenal Women taking on Chelsea Ladies. Reporter Dan Pentland went along to the national stadium to see whether Chelsea would get revenge for their 1-0 defeat to The Gunners two years ago.

Chelsea Ladies had very much been the ones to watch in this season's SSE Women's FA Cup leading up to the final. A sequence of 21 goals scored without response started with a 10-0 thumping of London Bees and ended with The Blues seeing off the challenge of Manchester City Women with a 2-0 victory at Kingsmeadow in the semi-finals.

Arsenal Women's route to the final had been equally as simple with The Gunners seeing off Yeovil Town Ladies (3-0), Millwall Lionesses (1-0) Charlton Athletic Women (5-0) and Everton Ladies (2-1).

Chelsea were the overwhelming favourites going into the final, however, Arsenal's recent record of one defeat in five fixtures against The Blues combined with the South West Londoners' hectic fixture schedule made for a mouth-watering meeting at Wembley.

Arsenal arguably settled the better of the two sides at Wembley and Louise Quinn headed over from a free-kick before Vivianne Miedema's effort was



deflected wide by a Chelsea defender.

Chelsea went into the match with a real chance of winning this season's FA Women's Super League 1 title and Emma Hayes' side grew into the game. Fran Kirby fired a shot at Arsenal keeper Sari van Veenendaal before Ji So-Yun wasted two good chances to score towards the end of the half as the two sides went into the break in a stalemate.

The second period brought plenty of drama and Chelsea took the lead three minutes in when Kirby played in Swiss international Ramona Bachmann to thrash the ball into the roof of the Arsenal net.

Beth Mead struck an effort at Blues keeper Hedvig Lindahl as Arsenal immediately chased an equaliser but it was Chelsea who took a massive step towards lifting the trophy on the hour mark when Bachmann's strike took a deflection off Quinn and looped into the far corner of the net.

Arsenal's moment in the tie came 17 minutes from time when Mead got the better of Chelsea full-back Hannah Blundell and played the ball across the box to Miedema who tapped home to make it 2-1.

The Gunners' fightback was short-lived and three minutes later, Kirby scored the goal of the game when she rifled a stunning effort from the edge of the box beyond van Veenendaal who was at full stretch.

Chelsea substitutes Erin Cuthbert and Eni Aluko had chances to add to their side's lead but the scoreline remained at 3-1 as Hayes' side went on to lift their second SSE Women's FA Cup.

Speaking to The Women's Football Magazine after the match, Chelsea manager Hayes was delighted to see her side lift the trophy three years on from their maiden success.

"This is more enjoyable than first time around" said Hayes. "That was such a dominant performance. We dominated from the first whistle, we created chances, we were fluid and we looked like a team which have been building for a period of time. The goals came at the perfect time and the quality of the two goals showed the difference between the two sides. That's what happens when you've got leaders on the biggest occasions, they show up."

Arsenal coach Joe Montemurro admitted that his side were deservedly beaten by a Chelsea outfit which were simply too strong for The Gunners on the day.

"We are disappointed but let's speak frankly and truthfully, they're a powerful team who have players who



can unlock games” Montemurro analysed. “The big game players play on the big stages and they did that. We’ve come a long way in the 20 weeks which I’ve been here and we are starting to find a little bit of rhythm and a little bit of base that is synonymous with Arsenal. We still think that there is some work to do structurally and as a collective, the more we play these big games and big teams, the more we will learn and we will become better.”

A record SSE Women’s FA Cup attendance of 45,423 was recorded at Wembley on an occasion which highlighted the growth of the women’s game both on and off the pitch over the past 12 months.





Chelsea Win Second SSE Women's FA Cup - Player Reaction

Reporter Dan Pentland caught up with several members of the Chelsea squad after the match to gather their views on a successful afternoon for the club.

From the moment which Swiss international forward Ramona Bachmann opened the scoring at Wembley early in the second half, a victory over Arsenal Women was never in doubt for SSE Women's FA Cup winners Chelsea.

The Blues took a little time to settle into the final but once they got into their groove, there was no stopping Emma Hayes' side.

Bachmann's thumping opener was soon followed up by a deflected second and while Vivianne Miedema did put one back for The Gunners, Chelsea's Player of the Year Fran Kirby added gloss to the win late on with a stunning effort from the edge of the box.

The victory ended Chelsea's wait to win back the trophy which they first lifted back in 2015. After the match, The Women's Football Magazine spoke to many of the victorious players and this is what they had to say...

"It's an amazing feeling for me, especially after losing the last final which I played in. We had a lot of confidence coming into the game and wanted to play our game and not think too much about the occasion. We've been so consistent and we knew what we had to do and that we have quality players on the ball who can create something out of nothing." (Fran Kirby)

"This club is all about winning trophies, it has been a long season and we have had a lot of big games but we are used to these occasions now. We scored three fantastic goals from two forwards which any club would want. From the team, to the bench, to the people in the stands and to the wider club we deserved that today." (Eni Aluko)

"It is an overwhelming feeling, I love these players and I love this club. I think we deserved silverware this season and I am glad we got our hands on the trophy today. We were really



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dominant on the pitch and there were individual battles which we seemed to win.” (Katie Chapman)

“I’m super proud. We executed the game exactly how we wanted to do it, we got the win in the end and we fully deserved it. I’m super happy. You couldn’t ask for more. There was a big crowd and three beautiful goals as well, the way we played the game was perfect.” (Magda Eriksson)

“We succeeded in what we set out to do, we were always confident coming into this game. I think we got a good start to the game, in the first half, chances weren’t really going our way. In the second half, we just kept on the front foot and made sure we kept the momentum in the game and obviously we got the two goals away and getting

the third as well.” (Millie Bright)

“We were very calm throughout the whole game and we showed our strength. I think we used the size of the pitch very well and I think it was a well-deserved win. I don’t think they played their best game against us to be honest. When they pulled one back, some nerves came into it but then we made another one and we were calm again.” (Hedvig Lindahl)

Chelsea’s 3-1 victory over Arsenal saw The Blues gain revenge over The Gunners following their 1-0 final defeat in 2016. The North Londoners had lost just once in five meetings going into their latest tie but were no match for Hayes’ in form side as they regained the trophy.

Kids Section

Words are either horizontal or vertical – can you find them all?

F	Y	S	E	A	F	A	T	T	E	N	D	A	N	C	E
R	I	L	O	G	C	E	G	V	E	R	T	J	F	A	D
E	G	Y	D	A	R	G	N	I	B	A	S	O	H	D	E
V	E	L	P	D	F	A	D	V	F	A	D	E	E	R	F
B	W	E	M	B	L	E	Y	I	B	A	R	M	D	D	Y
E	G	R	F	S	F	M	A	A	D	G	S	O	J	F	K
A	E	F	D	F	S	M	A	N	W	F	A	N	F	A	K
R	F	R	G	R	S	A	B	N	F	H	R	T	H	D	T
S	H	A	F	S	T	H	S	E	F	S	S	E	D	J	D
E	G	N	G	E	C	A	B	M	D	J	R	M	S	G	S
N	O	K	G	E	J	Y	G	I	L	D	E	U	G	S	B
A	R	I	E	H	R	E	G	E	F	J	R	R	H	S	F
L	A	R	E	H	S	S	L	D	G	L	D	R	N	E	H
G	W	B	H	T	F	G	L	E	Q	O	U	O	M	D	G
T	H	Y	R	L	D	J	D	M	Y	I	O	D	A	W	G
S	K	G	J	R	H	D	J	A	H	E	J	E	J	S	G
G	K	D	T	Q	G	C	H	E	L	S	E	A	A	K	S
R	R	A	M	O	N	A	B	A	C	H	M	A	N	E	W

Wembley

Arsenal

Chelsea

Fran Kirby

Ramona Bachmann

Vivianne Miedema

Attendance

Joe Montemurro

Emma Hayes

Fan of the Month: Olivia Brown

Olivia is 7 and football mad. She played for an U8 mixed team and an U9 girls team. She was recently in a video about girls playing football for Lidl and mumsnet.

Do you have any rituals or superstitions before a game?

Always have a cheese toastie for breakfast and we have to remember our 3 promises to listen, encourage each other and have fun!

What is your best moment since starting to play football?

The best moment easily is when I scored 5 goals away against Coalville and I got man of the match!

How did you start playing football?

I can't remember, I think I've always played.

Which team do you support?

I support Burton Albion. (My dad says Birmingham City!)

Who is your best friend in

football?

My best friend is my teammate Thomas from my Spitfires Team but also Devon who I play girls football with.

Who is your idol/ favourite footballer?

I'd like to play like Ronaldo.

What is your favourite thing about playing football?

Scoring goals makes me feel amazing.

Who is your biggest supporter?

My mum and dad.

What is the dressing room atmosphere like before games?

Excitement, fearless, noisy

How do you find it playing for a mixed team?

I love it. I have to try a bit harder because the boys are more physical but I can cope with it my nickname is Robbie Savage!



Thank you, Alex Scott:
Tribute to an Arsenal
legend



By Marissa Thomas

On October 27, 2017, Arsenal Women (formerly Arsenal Ladies) and England defender Alex Scott announced that she would retire at the end of the current FA WSL season to focus on her broadcasting career. It wasn't a huge shock as she had already announced her retirement from England a month beforehand after 140 caps.

Even so, I realised that one of my favourite players would be hanging up her boots very soon. When I became an Arsenal fan 13 years ago, I had a vague idea about the women's team. The only Arsenal Women players I knew were Alex Scott and Kelly Smith. My interest in women's football really took off just before the Women's World Cup in 2015. Fortunately, a year later, I was able to go to the Women's FA Cup Final between Arsenal Women and Chelsea Ladies at Wembley and I saw my two Arsenal Women heroes lift the FA Cup for a record 14th time. I had watched Scott on the TV before

but I was in awe when seeing her live. They say never meet your heroes but I have to disagree. I met Scott after the FA Cup win and got a selfie with her which was a dream come true.

Alex Scott has been an inspiration to me and so many others throughout her hugely successful career. She is Arsenal through and through which, of course, makes her a fan favourite. Another Arsenal legend, Vic Akers - who founded Arsenal Ladies in 1987, contacted Scott and asked her to come down for a trial aged eight and the rest is history. Scott's best season in an Arsenal shirt has to be the 2006/7 season when Arsenal won the quadruple (League Cup, Premier League, FA Cup and Champions League). They also won all of their 22 league games, conceding just 10 goals while scoring 119. Scott played a huge role in all of the trophy wins but her most significant contribution was in the Champions League final when she scored the last-minute winner. Scott started out as a striker and even though she was later converted to a right back, her attacking instincts clearly never left her. Arsenal Women are the most decorated women's side in the game, having won 44 major trophies to date, and Scott is part of that history.

Scott is loved by Arsenal fans and that was clear to see when she was honoured at the Emirates at the end of the Arsenal v Burnley match earlier in May for her 26 years as an Arsenal player. She was greeted with cheers of 'she's one of our own' which were swiftly followed by 'Tottenham Hotspur she's won more than you.' A week later, Scott was honoured again when Arsenal were 2-1 winners against Manchester City Women.



She was given a guard of honour before kick off and presented with flowers from both clubs in her final game. Scott came on in injury time with the game already won for her final appearance. She went up front, finishing where her career started.

She has endeared herself to Arsenal fans for years and now she will be endearing herself to millions more thanks to her blossoming media career. Scott's knowledge and passion for the game is clear for all to see and she has begun broadcasting with Sky Sports and the BBC. The next chapter begins as she heads to the Russia World Cup to be part of the BBC's team.

Three spells at Arsenal, 312 games, 32 goals and 21 trophies. A true pioneer of the women's game and an Arsenal legend. Thank you, Alex Scott.





Royals Bucking The Trend

Reporter Dan Pentland takes a look at this season's astonishing rise of Reading Women, a club which are threatening to gatecrash the FA Women's Super League 1 top three.

For long periods of this season, the FA Women's Super League 1 looked to be a title battle between Chelsea Ladies and Manchester City Women with Arsenal Ladies in third but one club have crept up the table into top three reckoning, that club is Reading Women.

Kelly Chambers' side only gained promotion to the top flight in 2015 and were expected to finish in the bottom half of the league table this term.

The Royals recorded just one win in their debut campaign in the top flight while they won two fixtures in the 2017 FA Women's Super League 1 Spring Series. Fast forward almost 12 months and Chambers' side have 28 points on the board at the time of writing and have a chance of beating Arsenal to third spot in the 2017/2018 campaign.

The key to their success this season is a vast improvement in the final third of the pitch. The Berkshire club have so far netted 36 league goals, an average of 2.25 goals per game. In their debut campaign they managed just 0.94 goals per game while they netted 1.25 goals per game in the 2017 FA Women's Super League 1 Spring Series.



Reading's much-improved strike rate has been helped by the signing of veteran midfielder Fara Williams last summer. The England international has bagged 10 goals for her new club so far this term which includes a number of stunning strikes.

Former Notts County Ladies and Birmingham City Ladies player Remi Allen is beginning to prove her worth in the top flight, as is fellow midfielder Brooke Chaplen with both players having scored nine goals. Consistency has been Reading's secret in both team selection and results. Chambers has fielded influential trio Williams, Allen and Chaplen in every fixture in league and cup and having those players fit has been crucial to the club's cause. Five wins from their last six matches have ensured the club's gradual climb up the league table. Much has been made of Reading's attacking quality, however, their defensive record cannot be dismissed.

The Royals have conceded just 17 goals in 16 league games while they have recorded clean sheets in five of their last six games. Success in any division, at any level of football is about winning matches and Reading certainly haven't been fazed by highly rated opponents. They have avoided defeat against Chelsea this season, won at Manchester City and drawn with Arsenal in the league, a huge achievement.

With new financial challenges coming to the FA Women's Super League in 2018/2019, the biggest question is just how much further Reading can go but make no doubt about it, manager Chambers has assembled a special group and nobody will want to take on her side.



Grassroot Girls: Starlets FC

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In each edition of The Women's Football Magazine, we take a look at one of the UK's grassroots girls clubs. This month, reporter Dan Pentland speaks with Denise Wells who is a coach and club secretary for Stevenage based club Starlets FC.

Who are Starlets FC?

Starlets FC are the first all-girls Charter Standard Club in Stevenage. We were formed in 2017, with just one team. We have now progressed to having five teams for the next season, Shooting Stars (Under-6), Under 8's, Under 9's, Under-10's and two Under-12's.

What is your role at the club and how long have you been involved with Starlets FC?

In addition to being the club secretary, I am also the coach for the Under-11 navy team. Myself and a fabulous group of parents founded the club when we decided that we were missing a girls club in the local area.

Have any of the girls had any achievements in the last 12 months either in league or cup competitions?

Currently none of our teams are playing competitive football (this starts in September 2018), however, we have had lots of things happen. We have won Comet Sports Club of the Year and we achieved Charter Standard within one year of starting.

I won the Hertfordshire Sports Partnership Coach of the Year. The club were also nominated for Comet Sports Team of the Year while we won some tournaments (and had lots of runner-up places!).

The girls chose a Charity of the Year for the Club, which was Breast Cancer Care and they have raised over £2,000 in total. This is something they are very proud of. We have had lots of opportunities supporting Stevenage Ladies as mascots and have been flag bearers in the SSE Women's FA Cup for our Sister Club, Watford Ladies as well as attending an open training session with The Lionesses.

Has the club produced any promising players in recent years who could go on to play either semi-professionally or professionally in the future?

We have lots of talented girls within the club, we have three girls who are currently part of the Arsenal PDP set up and are attending trials for RTC this summer.

Are you seeing more girls wanting to play for Starlets FC or for other clubs in your local area?

The growth of girls football in general has been massive, we now have nearly



60 girls training with us. It is not just the young players starting, we have had an influx of Year 6 girls, deciding they want to play. Our ultimate aim is to get as many girls playing, irrelevant of ability. It really isn't about winning, that is not our mentality. Development is the name of our game!

What is the best thing about working with the club and what are your hopes for the club in the future?

I love seeing girls come along not having played football before, they are shy and lack confidence and then they start playing football and they change. They grow in confidence and ability and make friends. Football not only keeps the girls fit, it teaches them life skills that will help them as they get older. We are very proud of everything

we have achieved and will continue doing what we are doing. We hope to end up with our own 3G pitch and have a ladies outlet for the girls when they need it (it's some way off with our oldest girls only being 11 at the moment). We love sharing the Starlets love and it is great how people are responding to what we are doing.

A special thanks to Denise and the Starlets for sharing their club's story with The Women's Football Magazine.

To get in touch with Starlets:
T: Denise 07903 636705
Email: contact@starletsfc.com

Club of the Year
WINNER



Stevenage
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🕒 Today at 18:55

She Believes Cup info <https://t.co/zdQS2ZepZo>

🕒 Today at 19:26

@bluemafia You're welcome! Have you entered our competition to win two Conti Cup final tickets? If not, tweet from earlier!

🕒 Today at 18:28

Do not forget to enter our competition everyone. See the below tweet and follow us for your chance to win! <https://t.co/2liakx3SUR>

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