

Welcome

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Welcome and About My Month

Welcome to the new issue of The Women's Football Magazine.

Following the excitement of the 2017 Euros, we are in a full on countdown to the beginning of the season! The FA have announced the fixtures and the first round of the Continental Cup has been drawn too, so we are almost there.

England had a fantastic tournament in Holland and it was great to see how much support they were getting not just from those who travelled to the tournament but those back home as well. Euro fever really hit the country and there were so many talking about it at work, reading about it in the papers and online.

Following on from that the England Under-19s beat both Italy and Scotland to finish fifth in the U-19 Euros. The squad had some tough games including a 1-0 defeat to finalists France but it was a great experience for all of them.

Our congratulations also go Casey Stoney and Meg Harris, who have announced they are expecting a baby!

Helen Rowe-Willcocks Editor





About My Month

Yet another busy month here but definitely an enjoyable one!

Unfortunately, due to other work commintments we were unable to head over to Holland to watch the Euros but it did not mean that we did not catch as many games as we could from here.

I thought Channel 4's coverage was fantastic and it was so good to be able to watch the games so easily.

England's first game against Scotland was a real highlight for me. We went into London to watch a screening of the match with other members of the press, the FA and Channel 4 who were unable to head out to the tournament. The atmosphere was electric - made

even better by the result!

With everything happening in women's football, it is great to see the positive changes which have been happening in the sport from Arsenal dropping the "Ladies" from their articles to more young girls wanting to get involved. Alongside that England have bid for the 2021 Euros so the future is really bright!

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Mark to the team. Mark has joined us as a columnist and will be taking us through the wacky world of women's football each month.

Enjoy the issue! Helen x



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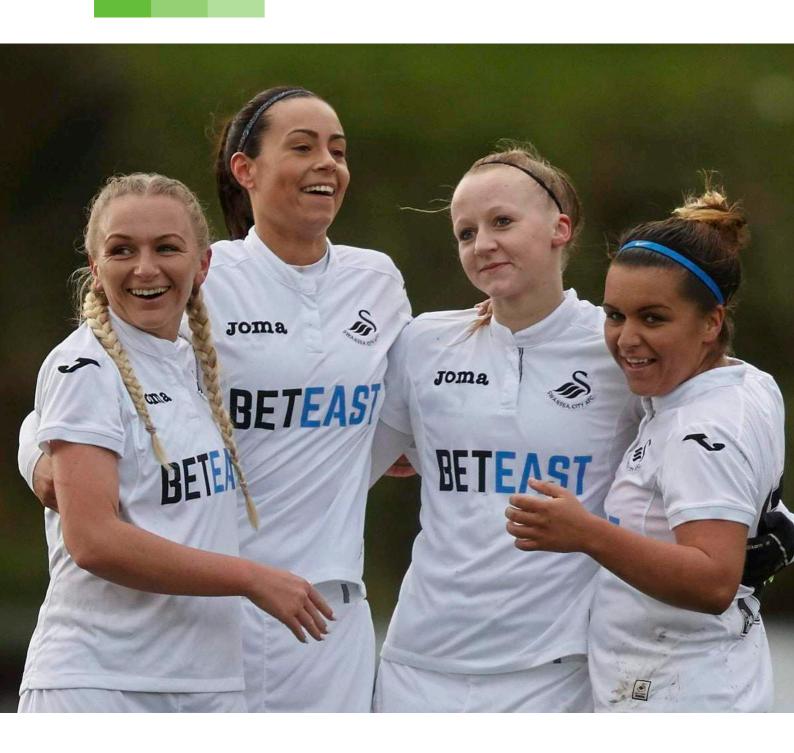
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The Big Story: Swansea Ladies



Hannah's footballing journey with PL Girls

By Jordan Harris

This time last year Hannah Thomas was preparing to enter her GCSE year – the pinnacle of her school career. This summer however, after a season of hard work with our Premier League Girls project, the 16 year old is gearing up to compete in the Champions League – the pinnacle of any footballers' career.

A keen footballer from an early age, Hannah was first attracted to our PL Girls programme earlier this season and has been attending them at her school of Morriston Comprehensive along with a number of her schoolmates. "I found out about the Premier League Girls project through my school and from my friends," Hannah explained. "The coaching and training that was offered sound enjoyable and I knew that I could develop my skills by attending."

It wasn't just her skills with a football that flourished and were allowed to shine through the community coaching sessions however, as Hannah has seen herself become more confident both on and off the pitch.

"The Community Trust has allowed me to meet new people," continued Hannah. "This has given me more confidence to achieve better things. I have met a lot of new friends and the





sessions have also helped not only my skills, but allowed me to read the game better." Rhodri Morgan, one of her coaches with the PL Girls project, added, "Over the course of the season, Hannah has grown in confidence since she has been attending our sessions. She is a regular attendee, a great leader within the group and helps encourage all the other participants."

It was at these free weekly coaching sessions in Morriston, that she caught the eye of the Club's Ladies set up.

I was made aware of Hannah's potential by the coaches at the PL Girls project," explained Ian Owen, manager of the title winning Swans Ladies. "She was invited to attend some senior team training sessions and impressed. The invitation to attend on a regular basis was offered and shortly after Hannah registered to play for the team," he

@SwansLadies



continued.

Delivered in partnership with The Football Association, Premier League Girls aims to provide opportunities for budding young female footballers to take part in the sport. Through these community sessions, the Swans' PL Girls programme has created a clear talent pathway, which is exactly what happened to the young Welsh winger. "The Community Trust projects are a great way to introduce and involve young females in sport," Ian added. "The environment and encouraging methods of delivery entice these people to take part when otherwise perhaps they couldn't.

"Whilst there, their talent shines through and individuals are given the opportunity to progress," Ian continued.

Hannah's story however is far from an anomaly.

Current Premier League Girl's sessions

are constantly expanding in both size and popularity and new sessions at new venues are consistently being added to the project's weekly timetable. These combined with sessions delivered by Premier League Kicks – a project that helped the Swans Ladies identify first team star Katy Hosford - means that the Community Trust coaches are uncovering and nurturing talent each week.

After putting in the hard yards in training with the Swans Ladies, her debut for the Swansea City Ladies followed in March, as she came off the bench in a 3-0 victory Aberystwyth in the Welsh Premier Women's League – a game that coincidentally witnessed young participants of the Premier League Girls programme act as mascots for the team as part of the Club's celebrations for International Women's Day.

"It was a proud moment making my debut with the Swans Ladies," beamed Hannah Thomas as she recalled the game during a PL Girls session held at her school.

"Playing at such a high level, with a group of such welcoming and supportive girls, was a moment I will always remember!"

Since then, Hannah's hard work with both the Swans Ladies and at her Girls sessions have seen her earn a number of appearances in her first senior season, and what a season it's been.

After being crowned champions of the Welsh Premier Women's League, Hannah and the rest of the squad will travel to Europe this summer to compete in the Champions League.



"Winning the League was brilliant and to qualify for the Champions League is a fantastic feeling," Hannah said. "To have the opportunity to play at that level will be an amazing experience and I can't wait to play against some of the best teams in the world."

It was these accomplishments that saw Hannah receiving the PL Girls Achievement of the Year Award at the Community Trust's annual Celebration Event, and she attributed her success to the project.

"It was a great achievement winning the prize. I was very proud to be recognised and this demonstrates how great the sessions are and that hard work pays off."

Now, Hannah's journey will act as

a source of inspiration for the next generation of girls that are getting involved with Premier League Girls, as the project seeks to increase the footballing opportunities for girls throughout Swansea and the city's surrounding communities.

"I feel very honoured and proud to think that others will be inspired to take part in football by hearing what I have achieved through the support of the PL Girls project," she finished. "I would definitely recommend the project to girls looking to join football and develop their skills because not only has it helped me to become a better player but also helped my social skills through the great sessions that PL Girls offers."

Women's Super League fixtures announced

The Football Association has announced the fixtures for the forthcoming FA Women's Super League season.

The 2017/18 season will be the first to run from September to May, following a move from the original March to November season. The opening weekend begins on 23 and 24 September and will see Everton host Liverpool in an FA WSL 1 Merseyside derby and Spring Series champions Chelsea take on Bristol City. In FA WSL 2, Tottenham Hotspur begin life as a WSL club with a trip to Durham.

The opening weekend fixtures are as follows:

Arsenal Women	VS.	Birmingham City Ladies		
Chelsea Ladies FC	VS.	Bristol City Women		

Everton Ladies FC vs. Liverpool Ladies FC

Reading FC Women vs. Sunderland AFC Ladies Yeovil Town Ladies FC vs. Manchester City Women

FA Women's Super League 2

FA Women's Super League 1

Aston Villa Ladies FC vs. Brighton & Hove Albion Women Durham Women FC vs. Tottenham Hotspur Ladies FC

London Bees vs. Doncaster Rovers Belles FC

Millwall Lionesses vs. Watford Ladies FC Oxford United Women vs. Sheffield FC Ladies

For a full fixture list for both the FA Women's Super League 1 and 2 season visit:

http://www.fawsl.com/matches.html#xVuWUjqiZVxbXpIJ.97







England right-back Bronze joins treble winners Lyon B

By Jessica Pratt

England defender Lucy Bronze has sought to put the disappointment of the Lionesses' early Euros exit behind her by taking on a new challenge in South-East France. Bronze signed a three-year contract with European Champions Lyon this month, leaving Manchester City after a successful two-year stint with the club. The switch saw German forward Pauline

@jpratt14



Bremer move the opposite way to join the WSL 2016 champions.

Bronze signed for City back in 2014 from then-champions Liverpool and was an integral part of the blues' subsequent trophy successes. Since her arrival, both the Manchester club and Bronze herself have made great strides establishing themselves in the women's game. Bronze was part of the team that went unbeaten and conceded only four goals in 2016, a feat which helped City claim their first WSL title. On a personal note, Bronze has been individual nominated several for accolades and was crowned the PFA Women's Player's Player of the Year for a second time in April.

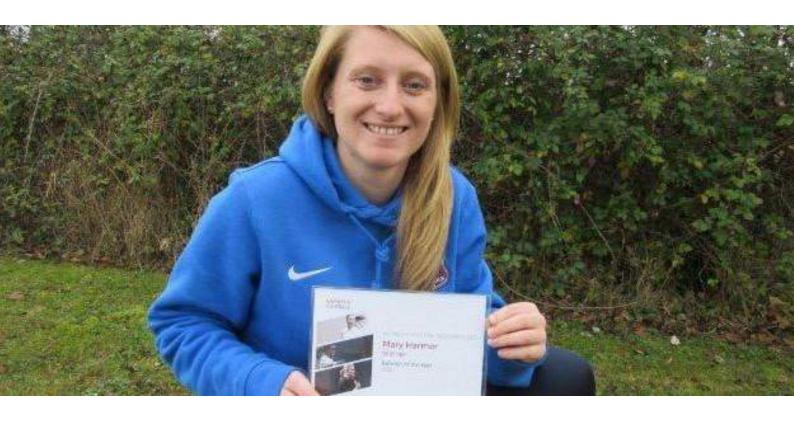
The tenacious right-back leaves City for a team who narrowly beat them over two legs in last season's Champions League semi-final. Lyon went on to win the final against fellow French side PSG in Cardiff and will begin this season on the back of two consecutive trebles, after they also took home the Division 1 Féminine and Coupe de France titles.

One might wonder why new coach Reynald Pedros is even bothering to recruit more talent to a team that rarely loses a game in their domestic league and has become the dominant force in Europe. Yet nobody can argue against the decision to sign Bronze, one of the game's most consistent performers and a standout player for England at the this summer. Bronze Euros certainly proved her credentials as a world-class defender over recent years and there is no doubt that this is a clever signing from Les Lyonnaises that will strengthen their defence even further. With league challengers PSG growing in confidence each season, the difference that a statement signing like this could bring may be invaluable.

Bronze said of the move, "Having the opportunity to go to the best team in Europe, the best team in the world in my eyes, is an opportunity that I don't think I could have turned down."

She also made her aspirations for the future clear, stating her desire to learn from her world class teammates and win the Champions League with them. She joins fellow England talent Toni Duggan and Swedish striker Kosovare Asllani as the high-profile outgoings from City this summer, with Duggan too opting for a move abroad, to Barcelona, and Asllani re-joining her first club Linköpings. Bronze believes English players opting to leave won't impede the English league. "The WSL may be losing homegrown players but they're also gaining foreign players. England will benefit from players going to European sides." Quotes taken from The Guardian





Who wants to be a referee? By Jennie Powell

Recently I have had the opportunity to have a chat with Mary Harmer a qualified Level 4 referee.

A Level 4 referee (for those like me who didn't know) can referee an Eastern Counties game or be an Assistant Referee for Premier, Southern & Ryman League games. Mary can also referee WSL games.

As a youngster Mary played football at U11 and U13 before someone recommended she work for a Duke of Edinburgh Award. It was whilst doing the Award that it was suggested she try her hand at refereeing – her immediate thought was 'who wants to be a referee?'.

Not one to resist a challenge she attended the referees' course, just two girls attended the rest were men but Mary duly qualified and went on to referee her first official match at the tender age of 15. Unfortunately the experience was not a good one as she was verbally challenged by one of the team managers who ran onto the pitch in order to accost her.

So, newly qualified one match under her belt and the 15 year old Mary had to attend a hearing at the FA – luckily for her the offending manager explained his actions by saying that 'for a match of this significance a more experienced referee should have been appointed' illustrating the absurdity of his actions –since the match in



question was an Under 11 competition.

It was an experience that surprisingly did not put her off and here I think you begin to get the impression that this 15 year old was going to grow into a formidable and determined young woman, who does not wilt under pressure.

As an illustration of her progress, in October Mary was an assistant referee at a girls U17 Euro qualifying competition in Portugal and involved teams from Italy, Georgia, Portugal and Finland. The other referees will came from as far afield as Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan.

Mary has also officiated at England U16 girls v Italy in July and the England U19s v USA match that was played at St George's Park.

As an aspiring FIFA referee this is all great experience.

Last year Mary won the Women in

Football Referee of the Year and her focus for this year is to be in a position to be promoted to Level 3 contributory league football and WSL1 and 2.

There has been some criticism of refereeing in the women's game and it is an area that needs improvement but we also need to attract more women to become referees and with role models like Mary, Stacey Pearson (from Yeovil Ladies) and Emily Heaslip (Millwall Lionesses) that will surely help girls coming through to see there is a career path.

It is a sad fact that at the moment England has just three FIFA level referees and is rarely represented at senior level International female competitions. This situation will surely, albeit slowly, begin to improve now that the FA has appointed Joanne Stimpson as the new women's refereeing manager, with a brief of doubling the number of female referees and producing referees whose entire experience is within the women's game.

No doubt they will also be looking into the complaints made by one of the WSL1 managers who pointed out that there is a lack of preparation and training for officials; that positioning for a referee in a women's game is different to a men's game and most significant; that officials are paid half the fee to officiate at a women's match and that performance points don't count towards promotion so there is a lack of incentive for officials to take women's matches.

One of the first things Mary said to me, when we first met, was "One day a woman will referee in the Premier League." Which will surely happen

"If you aren't willing to learn no-one can teach you anything. If you are determined to learn no-one can stop you."

more quickly, now that Bibinia Steinhuis has been appointed as the first female to referee in the Bundesliga.

I also look beyond the Premier League to the Champions League Final or the World Cup. In truth the day I am looking forward to is when no-one comments on the gender or race of the referee or coach, that the best person is chosen regardless — on that day we will have achieved parity.

Following the wide coverage of the Women's Euro 2017 tournament and the increasing number of matches televised in the WSL the women's game will continue to increase its profile more referees will be attracted

to the game and be less likely to take it lightly.

When giving talks Mary uses this motivational speech: "If you aren't willing to learn no-one can teach you anything. If you are determined to learn no-one can stop you."

This sums up her philosophy and I hope and believe she will get to the top of her chosen profession.

On a lighter note at a match when Mary was running the line a man stood behind her and not agreeing with the decision she'd made told her "why don't you go back to the Sunday League" – 'well look on the bright side,' I told her, 'that's just the sort of



comment he would make to a male referee, so he was only seeing you as an official rather than a female". We are getting there!

We wish Mary every success in her career and look forward to watching her progress.

You can follow Mary on twitter @Mary_Harmer

FA WSL Continental Tyres Cup Fixtures Announced

The four groups, two in the north and two in the south are made up as follows:

Group One North

Aston Villa Ladies
Durham Women
Liverpool Ladies
Sheffield FC Ladies
Sunderland AFC Ladies

Group One South

Arsenal Women
London Bees
Millwall Lionesses
Reading FC Women
Watford Ladies

Group Two North

Birmingham City Ladies
Doncaster Rovers Belles
Everton Ladies
Manchester City Women
Oxford United Women

Group Two South

Brighton & Hove Albion Women Bristol City Women Chelsea Ladies Tottenham Hotspur Ladies Yeovil Town Ladies

Teams will play each other once at the group stage with each game being played to a conclusion. If the result of a group match is a draw after 90 minutes then a penalty shootout will take place with points distributed as follows:

- Teams will receive 3 points for winning a group game in 90 minutes
- Teams will receive 2 points if a group game is tied after 90 minutes and they win the penalty shootout
- Teams will receive 1 point if a group game is tied after 90 minutes and they lose the penalty shootout.

The top two teams in each group progress to the quarter finals and further knockout stages.

For the first time in women's football, this season's FA WSL Continental Tyres Cup will be introducing the use of a fourth substitute that can be utilised during extra time of the knockout games if the match progresses beyond 90 minutes.

The Final is set to take place on the weekend of 10/11 March 2018.

For a full list of fixtures for FA WSL Continental Tyres Cup please visit: http://www.fawsl.com/matchesCup.html#KqBvJKxuHOFTvbcQ.97



If you're involved in women's football at any level, you could be forgiven for thinking that 'this is our time'.

The Lionesses are arguably currently the world's best international women's football team. Arsenal have dropped the 'Ladies' and over-turned external perceptions in an instant. Lewes FC (of the Bostik League) have become the first football club in the world to offer equality of pay to its men's and women's teams.

Participation is on the increase (with the FA aiming to double it by 2020) and attendances across the FAWSL and FAWPL are also rising with compelling evidence that this is not just happening at elite levels, but also at new clubs like the Wildcats up in Durham where in 4 short years crowds of 500 are becoming the norm.

Coverage is increasing too, both on traditional TV channels and online too, with Channel 4 registering a 3.3 million / 15.5% peak audience for the Lionesses' game v France. Players are leaving the shadows; their names are entering the sporting lexicon and, as a result, more and more inspired youngsters are taking up the sport. Unprecedented things are happening on an, er, unprecedented basis.

Life is not without its challenges, of course. The new winter schedule of the FAWSL is likely to present new challenges, especially as the weather is likely to make it more difficult for those clubs without covered facilities to attract young families (a strength of the women's game), but it may also augur in a phase where a stronger 'core' following is developed with a positive impact on match day atmosphere.

So how do those of us further down the pyramid capitalise on this and grow our clubs? How do we attract more spectators and supporters? How do

For me, the clue is in that word 'unprecedented'.

Although our game has a long and storied history (from the infamous FA 'ban' in 1921 to the re-emergence of the game from the 70s), it is still 'new' to most of the people who are currently marvelling at the impact it's making.

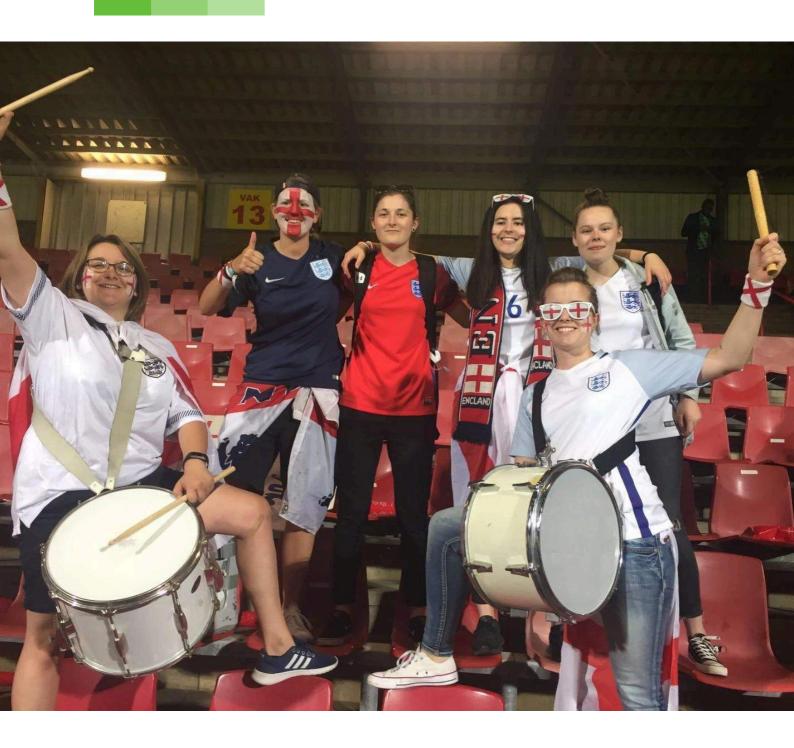
The game is free from the chains of convention that have slowed engagement and experimentation in the men's game so, once we can attract the volunteers to match our ambitions, clubs at every level of the game have some 'open goals' in front of them.

Many sports clubs struggle to attract volunteers and yet there are thousands of students around the country looking for 'real' experiences who could offer time, support and expertise in areas ranging from match day management (pitch preparation, football administration, refreshments, ticket, programme and raffle sales) to club promotion (social media, marketing, commercial management, etc.) and beyond.

From the perspective of a student, obtaining a short work experience stint at a major football club might mean you simply pass the time making tea for the person who makes tea for the person who puts up the corner flags (*hyperbole alert), but at a small growing women's club he or she could make a massive impact by exploring all of the areas associated with club growth.

So check out your local universities and colleges, make contact with your local County FA, advertise your volunteering opportunities on social media and make a start.

In future editions of the Women's Football Magazine I'll offer more ideas on how clubs of every size can engage, improve and prosper. But one thing is clear. This is the time.



Euros 2017: The Fans Experience



By Sophie and Rachel

There is something incredibly special about attending an international championship. It provides the opportunity to follow your team through three weeks of top international football, experience a different country and culture and make new friendships.

Our recent trip over to watch Euro 2017 was our third major tournament experience and one that proved to be just as unique as the first two.

The Netherlands were the hosts this summer's event and really embraced the responsibility. They set the tone for the whole tournament, with lots of smiles and a party vibe. This came to the fore when backing their team,

transforming the Fanzones into a dance party – their club remix of The Beatles' "Hey Jude" and "Let It Be" was a little alternative while the unofficial anthem for the tournament "Links Rechts" became adored by home fans and visitors like. It is hard to explain what happens when that tune comes on but we would recommend taking a look on YouTube.

Away from the Dutch games, the crowds may have been smaller but the approachable atmosphere remained the same. This is one of the beautiful aspects about following the women's game. This vibe of friendly rivalry was particularly evident when England opened their campaign against Scotland. There was no trouble from the 5,000-strong crowd in Utrecht just an evenly split, loud support for either

"We return home having made plenty of memories that will last for a long time."

side.

It was a strong showing from fans of the Lionesses - certainly much increased from the 2013 European Championships and 2015 World Cup – and those that came over really embraced the experience. We may have been outnumbered in the quarter-final against France but that didn't mean we were outsung; the rendition of the national anthem that evening gave me goosebumps. Holland is a relatively small country and we took our chance to explore when England weren't playing.

We returned home after the final, having made plenty of new memories that will last for a long time. There were a few tears yes, when England lost, but the laughter, football and time spent with friends are the main takeaways. We are already planning for the 2019 World Cup in France and urge you all to join us in what promises to be another memorable experience.

Congratulations to the hosts the Netherlands on winning Euro 2017 and hosting an amazing tournament!



England's 2017 Euros:

Group D England 6-0 Scotland England 2-0 Spain Portugal 1-2 England

Quarter-finals England 1-0 France

Semi-finals Netherlands 3-0 England

@girlsontheball



The Women's FC

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Side note: we are always looking for people to join the team, so whether you have a passion for social media, journalism, video production or editing, or if you just love women's football and want to be part of something creative, we'd love to hear from you!

Contact:

TheWomensFC@gma il.com



What is the Women's FC?

The Women's FC was initially borne out of a desire to learn more about women's football and a subsequent frustration at the lack of videos available to watch online.

Our story began at the University of Birmingham, working on the university's student newspaper, Redbrick. The university had a fantastic women's football team, and it was there that we realised that university football represented a very good standard of play. In fact, it was so good that it was even considered a stepping stone for some players who would go on to play in the FA WSL and FA WPL after graduating – and some already were playing while they were still students! The University of Birmingham's women's football club had included Izzy Christiansen (Man City), Emma Folen (Birmingham) and Aoife Mannion (Birmingham) in that time, and the more we looked in to it, the more we discovered that this was not a one-off. Other university teams also had their own star players!

The seed was sown and we wanted to learn as much about the game as we possibly could. A trip to Wembley with a record-breaking crowd for the 2015 FA Cup final soon followed, and that was it. Chelsea beat Notts County 1-0. Eni Aluko ran the game. We were hooked.

There are many fantastic people out there providing incredible coverage of women's football in the form of



"Our mission is ultimately to help support the growth and participation of women's football"

been brewing for a while. It's the first YouTube channel devoted entirely to women's football that will be featuring interviews, football challenges and more with players, coaches, journalists, thought-leaders and fans from all levels of the sport, both in the UK and abroad.

Our mission is ultimately to help support the growth and participation of women's football through fun, original videos that all fans can enjoy watching. We want to tell the stories of everybody involved in the game at every level and want to bring fans even closer to the players and those who work tirelessly off the pitch and behind the scenes. The women's football community is really amazing and since announcing this project we have had a lot of support, and been made to feel so welcome. Hopefully we can reward all that backing with the videos we have planned, which hope you will all love. The first of our videos featuring an FA WSL player will be launching on 09.08.17 – so keep an eye out and don't forget to subscribe to the channel!

By Alex Kronenberg



Rune Temte on why he loves women's football



Last Kingdom, Eddie the Eagle and Fortitude Actor, Rune Temte has been a fan of women's football for a long time.

Before he became an actor himself, he played football for Strømsgodset Football Club in Norway. After the Euros, we got the chance to chat to him about how women's football is perceived in the country.

Before you started acting, you were a footballer in Norway. At what age did you start playing? 6 at my local club Solberg Sportsklubb (SSK).

Did you play at school?

Always. As soon as class was over. Came back sweaty and dirty and out of breath and with a red face.

When you were at school were there girls teams as well?

At our local club yes. Only for the over 18 though. This was in the 80thies so they were just starting up around here.

Was it normal for girls to play the sport at school/ growing up as much as the guys?

No. Not at all but then once they would like to join they were welcome!

What made you change your career path?

Always wanted to be a story teller. I enjoyed playing but was never a real footy nerd so I suppose we grew apart the football and me.

Women's football is much more popular in Norway than many parts of the world, why do you think that is?

It is great that it is popular. Our National team has been doing great for years. The Clubs are serious and the



the players dedicated.

You are a fan of women's football yourself, do you have a team which you support?

I support Avaldsnes even if they lost out a bit after years at the top with some of the worlds best players on their books. Rosana and Debora Cristiane de Oliveira was there! And of coursethe team is named after the place that Harald Hårfagre, the Viking King that gathered Norway into one kingdom.

How did you think Noway did in the women's Euros?

I was disappointed. I believe they put to much pressure on themselves and could not enjoy the game. It was too much at stake for them to just let go...easy said but I think they had a great team but they did not manage to show their best.

Do you think they showed a lot of promise for the future?

They will come back for sure!

Who did you watch the competition with?

Friends and family on an island in Denmark

Was there a lot of build-up and hype to the competition in Norway?

Norwegians are mad when it comes to sport...and especially football. It's crazy because we are not that good but we always want big things!

Who is your favourite player? Ada Martine Stolsmo Hegerberg.

The Back Page Quiz Test your knowledge!

10

Tweet us and tell us how you do! @womensfooriemag

Question 1 Who were elected to the FA Women's Super League?

a) Everton b) Doncaster Belles c) Millwall Lionesses

Question 2 Who has Hannah Short recently signed for? a) Sheffield FC Ladies b) Watford Ladies c) Oxford United

Question 3 Which opening weekend WSL game is to be televised? a) Arsenal v Birmingham b) Chelsea v Bristol City c) Liverpool v Everton

Question 4 Who recently dropped 'Ladies' from their name? a) Arsenal b) DWatford c) Millwall Lionesses

Question 5 Where did Bristol City Women sign Danique Kerkdijk from? a) PSG b) FC Twente c) Lyon

Question 6 What position is Nicola Hobbs, who recently signed for London Bees?

a) Goalkeeper b) Centre-back c) Right-wing

Question 7 Who won the FA Continental Cup last season? a) Birmingham Ladies b) Man City c) Arsenal

Question 8 Who have Lyon signed from Liverpool Ladies? a) Shanice van de Sanden b) Casey Stoney c) Alex Greenwood

Question 9 How many years was Anna Signeul manager of Scotland Women for?

a) 8 b) 10 c) 12

Question 10 Which English side join Man City in the Champions League draw?

a) Birmingham b) Chelsea c) Liverpool

Answers: 1a, 2c, 3c, 4a, 5b, 6a, 7b, 8a, 9c, 10b