

THE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

ISSUE 34

MAGAZINE

FEBRUARY 2020



LEAVING ON A JET PLANE

We look back at Nick Cushing's time at Manchester City as he prepares to leave for America, Allie Coker discusses Eni Aluko's career, Georgia is back with her latest 'Fylde's Play' and all the latest news and matches from all the leagues from grassroots to the Lionesses.

THE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL MAGAZINE



@thewomensfootiemag



@womensfootiemag



@womensfootiemag

Welcome

CONTRIBUTORS

Editor: Helen Rowe-Willcocks

Writers: Jessica Chandok

Emily Cassidy

Bridget Lockwood

Allie Coker

Marissa Thomas

Hannah Clarke

Reagan Foy

Georgia Stevens

Claire Wray

Photography: joerdeli

@GOTB

Website designer: Will Ibbetson

Graphic designer: Phil Brooke

SOCIAL MEDIA

Twitter: @womensfootiemag

Facebook:

thewomensfootiemag

Instagram:

Thewomensfootballmagazine

The views and comments expressed in this magazine are personal views and comments of the individual writers and not necessarily those of The Women's Football Magazine. Every effort has been made to trace the source of information and to ensure that copyright has not been infringed.



Hello and welcome to Issue 34!

Hello everyone, welcome to our latest issue.

Sunday saw Nick Cushing wave goodbye to his team, the academy stadium and the Women's Super League. Needless to say, there is a lot of Cushing based content in the WSL section this month.

Also in the issue, we have an amazing interview with Sammy Walker, a transgender footballer who talks openly about her struggles. It's a harrowing read and in her own words makes it even realer.

We also have content and articles across all the leagues, news from our four home nation sides and excitement from across the pond and the new NWSL college draft results.

February is going to bring games thick and fast and the first of the Cups will be decided on February 29. If you are in Nottingham, make sure you look out for us and come and say hello! We will be handing out some free goodies before the game gets underway.

Enjoy the issue!

Helen Rowe-Willcocks

Editor-in-Chief

@helenrw11

THE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL MAGAZINE

CALENDAR 2020



DARE TO SHINE

THE WOMEN'S
FOOTBALL
MAGAZINE
CALENDAR 2020



£5 + P&P

ORDER NOW FROM:

www.thewomensfootballmagazine.com



Contents

WSL

7-8 Match of the Month
9-10 'It almost breaks my heart' - Nick Cushing

12-14 How Cushing changed the WSL

15 NC: The Stats

16-17 Who next at Man City?

18 Fran Kirby

19 Emma Hayes

20-21 WSL relegation battle—who will stay up?

22 Injury updates

23 Goodison Park

24-28 WSL review

30-31 WSL transfers

32-34 Behind the lens

CHAMPIONSHIP

36 Robertson leaves Durham

37 Palace keeper speaks out

37 Parker new Lewes boss

38 Eni Aluko and Aston Villa

30 Championship transfers

PREMIER LEAGUE

41-42 WNL Prem div north Round-up

43-45 Prem division news

46 Transfers

47-48 Fylde's Play

GRASSROOTS

50-53 Exclusive: Sammy Walker

CUPS

55-56 FA Cup

57 Conti Cup

58 WNL Cup and Plate

HOME NATIONS

60-61 SheBelieves Cup

63 Scotland in Pinatar Cup

64 SWF Championship teams

65 SWPL Cup

66 Alonso new Celtic boss

67 Opening weekend fixtures

68 Wales friendly announced

69 Wales Women's Cup QF draw

71 NI in Pinatar Cup

72 Redmond wins award

73 New Years Honours

75-76 World Cup watch

77 Fifa start inspections

AROUND THE WORLD

81-84 Eni—the woman, the myth, the legend

87-88 News from around the world

89 Games on TV

90 New children's book



WOMEN'S SUPER LEAGUE



Match of the Month:

Man City 2-1 Arsenal



By Ali Rampling

Nick Cushing ended his six year spell in charge of Manchester City with his side sitting top of the WSL and the title race back in their hands following a 2-1 win over Arsenal at the Academy Stadium.

Cushing took the club from WSL newbies to invincibles within the space of three seasons, and Arsenal were unable to spoil his leaving party as a goal either side of half time from Pauline Bremer and Lauren Hemp condemned the Gunners to their second league defeat on the bounce.

Dannielle Van de Donk pulled one back for Joe Montemurro's side, but they failed to find an equaliser, and now sit three points behind leaders City at the WSL summit.

The first half an hour was a tight affair, with neither side threatening to break the deadlock. Georgia Stanway - operating in an

unfamiliar right back role once more - failed to connect cleanly with Caroline Weir's cleverly worked corner, while at the other end, Jordan Nobbs and Beth Mead both forced Ellie Roebuck into comfortable saves.

The two sides were knocking the ball around well; Keira Walsh was dictating play in the midfield, and Steph Houghton had found the feet of strikers Pauline Bremer and Ellen White with a selection of searching passes from the back.

A fascinating battle was unfolding down Arsenal's left between Beth Mead and Stanway. The Arsenal forward had got the better of the makeshift fullback during the opening exchanges, but Stanway had grown into the game and was more than holding her own against her England teammate.

After an even opening 30 minutes, the hosts started to see more of the ball and stamp

their mark on the game. Pauline Bremer had the first clear cut chance of the half, but she glanced Ellen White's dinked cross just wide.

On the stroke of half time, City took the lead. Arsenal failed to clear Caroline Weir's dangerous free kick, and Bremer pounced to tuck home her 10th WSL goal of the season.

The opening 45 minutes concluded with City deservedly in front. Arsenal had been restricted to half chances, and were perhaps missing the creativity of Kim Little in midfield, with the Scotland midfielder again missing from the squad due to fatigue.

Three minutes into the second half, City doubled their advantage. Lauren Hemp met Keira Walsh's cross, and her bullet header looped into the top corner.

The goal seemed to spur Arsenal into life, and the Gunners almost hit straight back as Mead wriggled into the box and found Nobbs. However, the midfielder sent her effort over the bar.

Just before the hour mark, the visitor's pulled themselves back into the game. Roebuck did tremendously to save Nobbs' original effort after she was played in following a flowing Arsenal move. Dannielle Van de Donk turned home the rebound from a tight angle.

The Gunners should have levelled the scores in the 69th minute. Vivianne Miedema flashed in a teasing cross, but Demi Stokes bravely blocked Van de Donk's effort on the line. From the resulting corner, Miedema stung the gloves of Roebuck from close range.

As the game entered the final 10 minutes, Katie McCabe was lucky to escape a sending off after appearing to kick out at Hemp as the pair were tangled on the floor. However, the referee and her assistant deemed it only worthy of a yellow card.

City saw out the seven minutes of added time to seal what could prove to be a pivotal

victory in the WSL title race. Arsenal's second defeat to a fellow title challenger in the space of a fortnight means they are now relying on the results of others if they are to retain their title. For City, the title race is very much on, as they gave their departing manager the perfect leaving gift.

It was fitting that two young players who have flourished under Cushing had such a telling impact on the result; Keira Walsh - who was handed her Manchester City debut aged 17 by Cushing - was instrumental in the heart of midfield. Lauren Hemp - who has broken into the England team since Cushing signed her as a 17-year-old from Bristol City - was relentless down the left flank, continuing to display the fearlessness of her tender 19 years of age and simultaneously the consistency and composure of an experienced veteran.

The victory means City will be crowned WSL champions if they win their remaining six league games. They host second place Chelsea on February 23 in what could be a title deciding showdown.

Man City: Ellie Roebuck, Georgia Stanway, Steph Houghton, Gemma Bonner, Demi Stokes, Keira Walsh, Caroline Weir, Jill Scott, Lauren Hemp, Ellen White, Pauline Bremer (62' Tessa Wullaert)

Arsenal: Manuela Zinsberger, Leonie Maier, Leah Williamson, Viktoria Schnaderbeck, Katie McCabe, Jill Roord, Jordan Nobbs, Dannielle Van de Donk, Lisa Evans, Vivianne Miedema, Beth Mead



“It almost breaks my heart a little bit” - Nick Cushing



By Ali Rampling

Nick Cushing brought down the curtain on his Manchester City career in style, as he helped guide the team to a 2-1 victory over title rivals Arsenal. The 35-year-old departs the club after six years in charge to take up the role of assistant coach for New York City FC. However, Cushing admitted he was still coming to terms with the fact that he had just managed his final game for Manchester City Women.

Speaking at full time, Cushing said: “It almost breaks my heart a little bit to think that (it’s over). And after a result like that I always want to stay and finish the year. At no point would I have walked out of here happy, even if I’d won 10 league titles on the run, it was always going to be this way.

“You invest so much time in building relationships and you invest so much time in working hard and winning that in the end you create a little bit of a monster when you have to walk away from it.”

Cushing announced he was leaving at the beginning of January, but remained at the club for six matches following his announcement. The former City manager conceded that the time between his announcement and departure have been strange.

“The last five games have felt like I’ve split up with my girlfriend but I’m still living in the same house as her,” Cushing added.

“The last few days have been really strange because obviously I’m really excited for the opportunity and the next stage of the journey, but at the same time it was hard to think I’m never going to come here and win and we’re not going to have Champions League nights and we’re not going to have times when we win trophies.

“I feel really disappointed that this is the last time I’m going to be here but I totally understand that this is the next level of my journey and I’m incredibly excited for it.”

Cushing won the FA Cup twice, the Continental Cup three times and the league title once in 2016, with City going the entire league season unbeaten. Despite his impressive trophy haul, Cushing revealed he was most proud of the standards the club had set in women’s football.

“We made people look at how we were doing it; the facilities we trained at, the way that we treated our players, the opportunities that we were giving them to be professional. We bared the fruits of that really early.

“2016 was a direct reaction from that. We were the best team by a mile in 2016 and we

won the league at a canter. It sort of pushed everybody and I think now Arsenal are doing a fantastic job, Chelsea are doing a fantastic job at pushing the women's game and I'm proud that we played a huge part in that."

Assistant manager Alan Mahon will take charge of the team for the remainder of the season, but Cushing said he will still be on hand to offer advice to the new City manager for the club's title challenge.

"I'm always on the end of the phone," Cushing added. "I know Alan, he's a huge friend of mine and I'll probably play a part in planning the next five games, even from New York, I'll be giving him my advice. He will pick the team and he will be the head coach but I will help this team in anyway that I can."

Despite having already lost twice to Arsenal this season, Cushing admitted he had a good feeling before the game.

"When I walked in at the start of the game I felt like when we played Chelsea in 2016 (and won the league). I'm always super nervous and really anxious before the game because I want to win so much but I never felt we'd lose this game today.

"I've become comfortable being uncomfortable. Every big game has been like that since I've been here. I know the drive and desire this team has and I was pretty comfortable we'd get over the line but you just never know because Arsenal are such a top team."

Arsenal put the hosts under the cosh in the final 30 minutes but left themselves too much to do after falling 2-0 down. Arsenal boss Joe Montemurro rued his side's defending for the goals they conceded, failure to convert their chances at the other end.

Speaking at full time, Montemurro said: "They (City's goals) weren't even created chances, they were half chances. We let ourselves down, it was textbook stuff. It doesn't usually happen but it did and we

have to now forget about what happened, build and move on.

"We had a lot of the ball but in the final third we could have done a bit better. We had opportunities but part of the art of football is finishing the game off and putting the ball in the back of the net and we didn't do that today."

The Gunners are now outsiders for the title after a third league defeat of the season, but Arsenal midfielder Jordan Nobbs said the team had not given up hope of defending their title just yet.

"It's taken out of our hands but we definitely aren't defeated yet," Nobbs said. "This league, every single year, has its ups and downs and we're going to make sure we keep on winning games. We're going to leave here with our heads high and make sure we keep on doing what we do best."





How Nick Cushing changed the WSL



By Adam Mountford

Whilst the eyes of the women's football community were fixated on the NWSL's 2020 draft (and many from the UK spending hours trying to get their head around how it worked), Manchester City released a story that was unexpected to many, with head coach Nick Cushing set to make the move to sister club New York City FC in the MLS. Little had been circulating in terms of rumours as to this happening - there was some criticism over his tactics used with such an attacking squad as he had, but nothing indicated that Cushing was set to depart, and there was definitely nothing linking him with a move to the men's game.

Transition under Cushing

His name is one which carries its own level of history in the Women's game. The then 28-year-old took his first position managing a senior team in 2013, after climbing up the ladder throughout the youth setup at the Etihad Campus and was named as the blues' boss for their inaugural campaign in the Women's Super League for the 2014 season.

Prior to Cushing's appointment, the blues had languished in the National League since the turn of the millennium, and missed out on an opportunity to gain promotion to the top flight in 2011 to the first WSL season, but this was soon changed after their second application a handful of years later was accepted.

Their first season saw a league campaign that was somewhat underwhelming, with them finishing fifth out of the eight teams in the division - comfortably above relegation, but not challenging for European football. Despite this, City lifted their first piece of major silverware in their 26-year history, an Izzy Christiansen goal separating them and Arsenal at the final of the Continental Cup hosted at Adams Park.

Their next season was started poorly by Nick Cushing's squad, but after the summer break, they came back a side rejuvenated off the back of England's third-place finish in the 2015 Women's World Cup in Canada. In their remaining thirteen league games, they were unbeaten in twelve whilst entering a

In 2016, they pulled off one of the most impressive feats possible whilst truly announcing themselves to be a dominant force on the European stage. The blues won the WSL by a comfortable margin of five points, Continental Cup, and Women's FA Cup, a perfect domestic treble. At the same time, they reached the semi-finals of the UEFA Women's Champions League and lost by a single goal margin against Olympique Lyon, the same thing that happened the year after.

After an underwhelming Summer Series and 2017-18 campaign, the blues returned to their form at the restructuring of the English leagues ahead of the 2018/19 season. With all teams now professional in



title challenge which was only lost on the final day of the season, Chelsea eventually lifting the trophy. Despite this, a second-place finish secured the club European Football for the first time in their Women's side's history. In their late run in the 2015 WSL, City broke the league attendance record twice - 2102 were at the CFA for a game against Birmingham City; 3108 against Notts County; and an average attendance of 1500.

a division expanded to eleven teams, they won the FA Cup against West Ham United and Continental Cup against Arsenal and were only pipped to the top spot by the gunners by a handful of points.

When it was initially announced that Cushing would be leaving the blues, he told Manchester City's website 'We've had an amazing six-and-a-half seasons', and that phrase is one that could easily be seen as an understatement. The domestic treble, three continental cups, and two fa cups is no

small feat for any manager to have accomplished in the space of only six years, but it is something that the blues seemed to do with ease. With players like Lucy Bronze, Steph Houghton, Jill Scott, and Toni Duggan: it's not hard to see why this was the case it all.

From seeing the men's side's success under new tactics, he transitioned his squad to play a style of football that has now become the hallmark of City. Gone are the days of Maine Road and being the 'noisy neighbours' - the appointment of Pep Guardiola sent echoes around the country, and has transformed the way that every manager wants their team to play, no matter whether it is men's or women's, professional or grassroots. This change proved to be positive for the men's side, but across the 2019/20 campaign has been something that has held the blues back on many occasions.

Current issues

Here's the problem: City have one of the best attacking frontlines in the country, but when you don't create chances, you don't score goals. Couple this with injury problems that leads to a weakened defence, and you can find yourself with a recipe for disaster. Take a look at their games against Atletico Madrid in the Women's Champions League, the Spaniards dominated the midfield space across both ties, forcing risky passing and putting additional pressure to their weakest area of the pitch - the wings. They struggled for chances, the home advantage aiding them to a point in their first game, where a star performance from Ellie Roebuck was troubled with keeping the opposition's attack at bay throughout the match, whereas Sari Van Veenendaal only had a handful of occasions where she had to work. All of these weaknesses and the overall tactical plan culminated in them bowing out of the Champions League, and then suffering a 3-1 loss to rivals Manchester United in the Continental Cup, where they once again

displayed a less than encouraging performance.

Throughout the season, City have found it easy against the weaker sides in the division, comfortably putting five past West Ham and Brighton, but when they face their title-chasing opponents at the top, the tables immediately turn. A change in manager at the City Football Academy is an opportunity for a fresh start, and above all else, a chance to fix these issues that are currently holding them from the WSL title.

The fact that Cushing is on his way out seems to have led him to make a number of changes to how they play. Pauline Bremer has made the move from being on the bench to one where she is now regularly part of the first team, and has become one of the top goalscoring threats throughout the division.

Some had suggested Cushing's departure for exactly this reason, he is a brilliant footballing mind, but when put up against quality opposition headed up by the likes of Emma Hayes and Joe Montemurro, cracks start to appear. If there's one thing that has been evident throughout every element of the blue half of Manchester since the club's takeover by Sheikh Mansour of the United Arab Emirates, it is that there is no excuse for a lack of success or trophies, and managers of the men's side have faced similar fates throughout their tenures. It's the cutthroat nature of modern football and something that had likely been on the club's radar.



Nick Cushing:

The Stats

HONOURS

FA WSL: 2016

FA Women's Cup (2): 2016–17, 2018–19

FA WSL Cup (3) : 2014, 2016, 2018–19

FA WSL Manager of the Year: 2016

MANAGERIAL STATISTICS

Time as coach: 2013–2020

Games: 188

Won: 141

Drawn: 19

Lost: 28

Goals for: 442

Goals against: 122

Win rate: 75%

Who next for Man City?

Five potential replacements

By Jess Chandok

With Nick Cushing waving goodbye to the Academy Stadium, with the 2-1 win over Arsenal to see Manchester City re-top the WSL table, talk turns to who will take over.

As City battle for their second WSL title and a strong finish to the season without the guidance of Cushing, we identified five potential managerial candidates that could be appointed in the coming weeks or months.

Alan Mahon



Assistant manager to Cushing, Mahon is set to take over as interim City boss after the Arsenal game. Having joined in 2014, Mahon has the advantage of being familiar with the set-up and players and now has potentially eight games to prove whether he can handle the step up. Could the former Burnley and Republic of Ireland midfielder be the man to lead City's push for another title? Even if they do go on to win the league, Mahon's lack of managerial

experience could rule him out of securing the position long term. There are doubts over the Irishman's ability to push on with Cushing's successful legacy and attract the top players needed to compete in Europe.

Jill Ellis



Current FIFA Coach of the Year Ellis undoubtedly has the credentials. Back-to-back World Cups with the US Women's National Team in her five years at the helm make her a worthy candidate. Ellis is currently working with the US Soccer Federation youth team's development programme after announcing her retirement. Could she be tempted to make a return to management in her home country? Stranger things have happened! Having been involved with the USWNT set-up since 2000, the real question would be how Ellis would transition from managing an international side, to a full time club day-to-day.

Bev Priestman



Lionesses' assistant coach Priestman may be a surprising but well-thought-out choice. Priestman undoubtedly has a strong reputation in coaching, having experience with Everton and the FA before she joined the New Zealand FA. It was there that she rose through the ranks to head of football development at only 25 years-of-age. A FIFA women's coaching instructor, Priestman then worked with Canada Soccer and their women's youth national teams. She was also assistant coach for the senior women's team – who notably won bronze at the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio. Appointed as Phil Neville's number two in 2018, she was a part of the coaching staff that oversaw last year's SheBelieves Cup victory. With a number of Lionesses in City's squad, Priestman already has a relationship that she could build on if she were brought in as manager.

Marc Skinner



Certainly an unlikely choice given Skinner only left Birmingham City for NWSL club Orlando Pride a year ago, but he knows what it takes to manage a young team in the WSL. With a relatively small budget, he led the Blues to the FA Cup final in 2017 and

adapted their style of play to make them a threat going forward and defensively solid. With injuries hampering their season and a number of off-field issues, the Pride finished bottom of the NWSL table in 2019, winning just four games from a possible 24. As he prepares for his second season it's doubtful that Skinner would leave right now but with player departures and talks of unrest in the squad, could he soon favour a return to the WSL instead?

Jess Fishlock

If City were to look inside the teams that



make up the City Football Group, they may be interested in those who have coached the highly success Melbourne City women. Melbourne City have taken the Westfield W-League by storm since joining in late 2015. They clinched a league and cup double in their inaugural season, with Fishlock acting as player-assistant coach alongside head coach Joe Montemurro. Continuing the role in her second season, Fishlock was soon promoted to player-head coach after Montemurro left for the men's team midway through the season. In February 2017, she coached Melbourne City to their second consecutive W-League Grand Final title and scored in the 2–0 win over Perth Glory. With the win, Fishlock became the first player-coach to win the league title in the W-League's history. Now playing for Reign FC in the States, Fishlock has an array of accolades plus experience of the WSL through her time with Bristol. She also has coaching experience with Cardiff City Ladies.

Fran Kirby recovering from virus

Chelsea forward Fran Kirby has been struggling for over six weeks with a virus.

Taking to social media to tell fans, the 26-year-old said that the illness had “hit her hard.

She wrote: "Those around me have seen me at my most vulnerable, and have supported me more than I could imagine.

"Once I get over this virus I'll be back on the pitch giving my all."

Kirby made the last of her four appearances for Chelsea this season as a substitute in November's 1-0 win over Manchester United after missing the start of the campaign because of injury.

Fans chanted “Super Fran Kirby” during the 6-1 WSL win over Bristol City to show support for their forward.

You can read the rest of Kirby's statement below:

frankirby I will be taking a step back from social media as I try and allow myself the best possible chance to recover properly from this illness and get back on the pitch ASAP.

I haven't had much to smile about the last 6 weeks, and haven't had much energy to even get off the sofa to go and make myself some food. Those around me have seen me at my most vulnerable, and have supported me more than I could imagine. Every one of my team mates has been amazing, and whenever I've been in the training ground they've always looked out for me. 💙

I was given a Bentley for the week, to try and have a 'pick me up' as the Christmas break was really tough, and it gave me the energy to want to get out the house and actually do something normal for a few days. Even though I only did manage one trip out, it meant everything. So thank you @bentleytunbridgewells 😊

This virus has really hit me hard, you haven't heard much from me on social as I haven't felt like I've wanted to post things about myself in a positive light (apart from the dogs)!! 🐶

I'm doing good, I'm feeling better. I have good days & bad days but my appreciation for people, life has definitely been impacted and once I get over this virus I'll be back on the pitch giving my all.

Until then 🙌 see you all soon and thank you for the love ❤️💙

P.S Instagram saving lives with their filters as I've been living my life as 'grey' the last few weeks 🥰😭

Emma Hayes: 200 games in charge

Chelsea's 6-1 win over Bristol City in the WSL on Sunday, January 12 was manager Emma Hayes' 200th game in charge of the Blues.

Hayes, who has been with the club since 2012, has won a host of trophies including last season's WSL.

Despite this, the Blues' boss believes they should have won more.

Speaking to Chelsea.com, she said: "We should have won more.

"Because of the lost ones I don't think of the ones we have in the bag, I think of the ones we didn't win.

"The thought of being serial winners has to dominate at least my thinking, but winning is addictive so I don't feel any less driven, in fact the opposite. The more we compete, the more I want success for the club.

"Two hundred games – I can't remember the first one, I doubt I remember the 50th, 100th and the 150th, but because you mentioned it, I'll remember the 200th game."

The trophies:

FA Women's Super League (2): 2015, 2017–18

FA WSL Spring Series: 2017

Women's FA Cup (2): 2014–15, 2017–18

Surrey County Cup (2): 2012, 2013



Women's Super League relegation battle: Who will go down?



By Marissa Thomas

While Manchester City, Arsenal and Chelsea are fighting it out for the Women's Super League title, things are tight at the bottom. Just a point separates the bottom three comprising of Birmingham City, Liverpool and Bristol City. Here we assess all three teams and decide whose stay in the WSL will most likely be coming to an end this year.

Birmingham City

Captain Lucy Staniforth handed in a transfer request in July 2019 which was later withdrawn but it served to highlight the discontent at the club. Key players Ellen White, Aoife Mannion and Hayley Ladd all left for Manchester, with White and

Mannion joining City and Ladd joining United.

After finishing fourth last season, Birmingham find themselves just above the relegation zone this term. The Blues have won just two of 11 league games. Their wins came against relegation rivals Liverpool and Bristol City while the heaviest defeat suffered so far was a 6-0 thrashing at the hands of Chelsea.

The quality in Birmingham's play has significantly decreased this season and while they may just about avoid relegation, this is a huge concern.

If they are losing their best players and cannot attract replacements of the same calibre, it is only a matter of time before the

Championship beckons.

Chance of relegation this season: 3/5

Liverpool

The only team other than Arsenal to win consecutive league titles. Liverpool's fall from grace has been disappointing. The former WSL champions continually lose key players and took them 12 games before they finally got their first win of the season, against fellow strugglers Bristol City.

A serious lack of a goal threat should be a concern for the Reds who have scored just four times in the league.

Key player Rinsola Babajide has yet to score a WSL goal but after scoring four as Liverpool beat Blackburn 8-1 in the FA Cup, that should do wonders for her confidence. If Liverpool do get relegated, Babajide will be a target for a lot of WSL clubs which could see Liverpool yet another one of their best talents.

Chance of relegation this season: 4/5

Bristol City

After finishing an impressive sixth last season, Bristol City are struggling in the current campaign. Like Liverpool, they have only won once and have been on the end of some heavy defeats.

With a goal difference of -29, it goes without saying that Bristol City need to tighten up at the back. Being part of the biggest scoreline in WSL history as they were thumped 11-1 by Arsenal in December will have been hard to get over for the Vixens.

Losing to relegation rivals Liverpool is even worse at this difficult time, especially when they had a penalty saved in that match. A win against Tottenham in their next WSL fixture would provide some much-needed respite from the relegation battle.

Chance of relegation this season: 2/5



Tabea Kemme: Knee injury forces Arsenal midfielder to retire

Arsenal midfielder Tabea Kemme has been forced to announce her retirement at the age of 28.

The German international joined the Gunners in July 2018 but an ongoing knee injury has stopped her making many appearances.

Before moving to north London, Kemme played 145 times for Turbine Potsdam and won the Uefa Women's Champions League with the club in 2010.

She also won gold at the 2016 Olympics in Rio.

Kemme took to Instagram to share the decision: "A decision made with tears but also joy.

"After 14 years of competitive sport, which was very formative for me, a prolonged knee injury means I'm unable to continue playing top-level football.

"This chapter has now ended. Now there are exciting times ahead for me. My new chapter has already begun."

Liverpool's Fran Kitching

Liverpool goalkeeper Fran Kitching suffered a horrid injury in training after being caught by a boot as she attempted to gather the ball on the ground.

The 21-year-old had to have several stitches to repair the head and face wound and missed the club's first league win of the season against Bristol City.

In a statement, she wrote: "This has got to be the worst injury I've ever had as a goalkeeper but after a lot of swelling and pain (and looking like a cabbage patch doll) I can finally say I'm feeling a lot better and ready to get back out there.

"See you back on the pitch soon – love Fran aka Harry Potter (for now)."

It's not certain when Kitching will be back for Liverpool, but we wish her a speedy recovery.

Goodison Park to host the WSL Merseyside derby



Goodison Park will host the Women's Super League Merseyside derby when Everton face Liverpool on Sunday, February 9.

The reverse fixture was held at Anfield in November with the Toffees' 1-0 winners over their rivals in front of 23,500 fans.

It is not the first time that the stadium has held women's games.

The ground has previously hosted a number of high-profile women's fixtures, with a long-standing world record crowd of 53,000 watching Dick, Kerr Ladies take on St Helens in 1920.

Everton also hosted a Women's FA Cup semi-final at the ground in 2015.

Toffees' boss Willie Kirk told the club website: "Big games like Merseyside derbies are the ones you want to be involved in as a player and manager and we have the opportunity to play this historic fixture on the biggest stage."

WSL January review

By Bridget Lockwood



TheFA Women's
Super League



Arsenal

Position: 2nd

Results:

Arsenal 2 – 0 Birmingham City

Brighton & Hove Albion 0 – 4 Arsenal

Arsenal 1 – 4 Chelsea

Arsenal dominated straight from the start with Captain Kim Little scoring just nine minutes into the game, heading home a cross from Miedema into the bottom corner. The Gunners second goal came from Jordan Nobbs, an impressive volley from the edge of the box. Going into half-time Arsenal could have extended their lead but had several narrow misses and a goal disallowed for offside, leaving the final score at two nil. Arsenal faced Brighton in their second game of the month; starting strong van de Donk scored just three minutes in, slotting the ball in after cutting in from the left. Roord fired in the second from the edge of the box after being left unmarked. A clever dummy from Miedema helped Nobbs score Arsenal's third, with the last goal coming after Brighton keeper Walsh spilled the ball allowing Beth Mead to rocket home. A disappointing game against Chelsea saw Arsenal lose three points to their title rivals, causing them to drop down the table.

Birmingham City

Position: 10th

Results:

Arsenal 2 – 0 Birmingham City

Reading 1 – 0 Birmingham City

Birmingham 0 – 2 Manchester City

Birmingham faced Arsenal in their first game of a tough month, despite a difficult first half conceding two goals Birmingham came out with more aggression in the second half stopping the opposition from extending their lead even more. Birmingham played Reading next, losing only one nil. Although the result wasn't in their favour, they showed periods of excellent defending to stop the Royals from extending their lead. In their last game of the month Birmingham went behind quickly as Ellen White scored after just thirty-four seconds. Manchester City caused Birmingham problems throughout the game; this constant pressure led to Walsh doubling the lead for the away team; a powerful long range shot which hit the inside of the post to go in.





Brighton & Hove Albion

Position: 9th

Results:

Brighton & Hove Albion 1 – 0 Liverpool

Brighton & Hove Albion 0 – 4 Arsenal

West Ham United 2 – 1 Brighton & Hove Albion

Brighton got their second win of the season against Liverpool, starting the slower of the two sides they made the Reds pay for missed chances as Aileen Whelan poked home a header from team-mate Maya Le Tissier in the 33rd minute. Brighton couldn't hold onto this winning run as next they faced Champions Arsenal, conceding very early on Brighton weren't able to hold off the strong attacking presence that Arsenal held. The closest the home team came was when Emily Simpkins fired wide just before half time. It looked like Brighton would be gaining three points against West Ham as they lead for a long period of the game with a single goal from Danique Kerkdijk, but West Ham were persistent and got their equaliser with just ten minutes to go. Lehmann then scored a second just three minutes later to turn the game around and win.

Bristol City

Position: 12th

Results:

Manchester United 0 – 1 Bristol City

Chelsea 6 – 1 Bristol City

Bristol City 0 – 1 Liverpool



With a quiet start to the game it all got exciting when Bristol striker Ebony Salmon slide down the left wing, going passed United defender Abbie McManus to slot the ball through the legs of Earps in the United goal. In the closing stages of the game Baggaley produced several excellent saves to help Bristol get the first win of the season. There looked to be a glimmer of hope for Tanya Oxtoby's side when fifteen minutes in they scored the first goal of the game as Salmon capitalised on a loose ball. However, this lead didn't last long as Chelsea began a flurry of goals, scoring five before half time and one in the second half. In their last game of the month Bristol faced Liverpool, conceding early in the game they did have an opportunity to level when Charlie Wellings was brought down in the box. Wellings stepped up to take the shot but was too close to the Liverpool keeper who parried it clear, this leaves City at the bottom of the table.



Chelsea

Position: 3rd

Results:

Chelsea 3 – 1 Reading

Chelsea 6 – 1 Bristol

Arsenal 1 – 4 Chelsea

A good month for Emma Hayes side as they remain the only team this season without a lost. Their first game of the month started off with Reading on top, captain Fara Williams stun the Chelsea fans as she drilled through their defence to score the opener. However, this was the only joy Reading would have during the game as just minutes later their keeper Moloney was sent off for a late challenge on new signing Kerr. This changed the game allowing Chelsea to take control, despite Reading's substitute keeper Rachael Laws valent effort in goal the Blues prevailed scoring three to win the game. The goals kept coming for Chelsea as they faced bottom of the league

Bristol, conceding first again didn't faze them with England goal beginning the flurry of goals from Blundell, Carter and Ji. Sam Kerr scored her first goal for Chelsea as they dominated Champions Arsenal. A game of glorious goals started with a curling effort from England, just three minutes later Kerr headed home to make it two. Sophie Ingle made it three with a beautiful left-footed half-volley straight into the top corner. A fourth goal didn't stop Arsenal wanting to score, and Chelsea clean sheet was broken when a tame header from Mead slipped through Berger's grasp.

Everton

Position: 5th

Results:

Manchester City 3 – 1 Everton

Everton 3 – 1 Reading



Everton's first game of the month was postponed due to a significant flu outbreak within West Ham's squad. Everton played well against Nick Cushing's side, an early shot from Hannah Cain was tipped onto the bar by City keeper Roebuck. Despite this nice play early on City's strong attacking presence didn't hold back scoring three and it could have been many more. Everton did get on the score card when Stanway turn the ball into her own net from an Everton corner. Chloe Kelly scored a hattrick to beat Reading for Everton's first win in four WSL games. Kelly's first goal came early on as, breaking down the left side and strike the ball into the right bottom corner. Reading did equalise from a penalty when Megan Finnigan fouled James inside the box. In the second half Kelly completed her hattrick, scoring direct from a corner after curling the ball perfectly and from a cross which Laws in the Reading goal got a foot to but still went in.



Liverpool

Position: 11th

Results:

Brighton & Hove Albion 1 – 0 Liverpool

Bristol City 0 - 1 Liverpool

Liverpool started strong and came close to scoring when Babajide shot just wide of an open goal. New signing Rachel Furness showed her character dominating the midfield in the second half, creating chances all through the game her best effort going narrowly wide. Liverpool were made to pay for all their missed chances when Whelan scored for Brighton after slotting home a header from her team-mate Le Tissier. Liverpool's next match of the season against Manchester United was postponed due to a waterlogged pitch. The Reds got their first win of the season against Bristol; new signing Furness scored her first for the club after Melissa Lawleys effort was saved but Furness buried home the rebound. Bristol had the chance to equalise after Wellings was brought down in the box but Liverpool keeper Anke Preuss was able to save the shot to secure Liverpool's first win of the season.

Manchester City

Position: 1st

Results:

Tottenham Hotspur 1 – 4 Manchester City

Manchester City 3 – 1 Everton

Birmingham 0 – 2 Manchester City



City took the lead just two minutes in against Tottenham when Bremer put the ball into the left corner of the net, White then doubled City's lead three minutes later putting them two nil up after just five minutes played. Spurs were able to get one back through a penalty from Dean after she was fouled in the box. Bremer scored her second with a sweet shot from the edge of the area and Lauren Hemp finished the scoring just before half time with a goal from close range. In City's second game of the month Pauline Bremer was on fire once again scoring twice for the second game running. Another goal from Bonner put City up three however they could keep hold to a clean sheet after Stanway put the ball into her own net in the ninetieth minute. Nick Cushing side caused Birmingham problems from the start, a low cross found Ellen White and her first time shot found the back of the net just 34 seconds in. Walsh doubled City's lead with a powerful shot from the edge of the area which hit the inside of the post to go in.

Manchester United

Position: 4th

Results:

Manchester United 1 – 0 Bristol City

Manchester United 3 – 0 Tottenham Hotspurs

Despite having most of the possession and over twenty-five shots in their game against Bristol, United couldn't score. A goal from Ebony Salmon and some excellent saves from Bristol keeper Baggaley meant United would walk away without any points. Manchester United's next match against Liverpool was postponed due to a waterlogged pitch. The Reds started strong against Tottenham but couldn't break the deadlock till after half time. United first goal came when skipper Katie Zelem found the net from a penalty, Sigsworth then scored the second from a clever corner routine, then Zelem scored again to give United three. Despite the comfortable win a scuffle in extra time saw substitute Ella Toone sent off but this didn't dampen the mood of United's fans.



Reading



Position: 6th

Results:

Chelsea 3 – 1 Reading

Reading 1 – 0 Birmingham City

Everton 3 – 1 Reading

Reading stunned Chelsea early on in the game when Fara Williams fired home for the Royals, however the Reading fans weren't in elation for long when moments later keeper Grace Moloney was sent off for a late challenge on Kerr. That incident changed the game as Chelsea just grew stronger and stronger, scoring three. In their next game of the month Reading faced Birmingham, despite some excellent defending from the visitors the Royals kept pushing forward and Norwegian International Eikeland superb lob over the keeper gave Reading the deserved victory. Reading conceded early against Everton when Kelly scored in the eleventh minute, Williams later equalised from the penalty spot after Angharad James was fouled. Everton super striker Kelly didn't hold back in the second half as she went on the score two more goals completing her hat-trick, leaving Reading with only one win in the WSL this month.

Tottenham Hotspur

Position: 7th

Results:

Tottenham Hotspur 1 – 4 Manchester City

Tottenham Hotspur 2 – 1 West Ham United

Manchester United 3 – 0 Tottenham Hotspur

Tottenham couldn't stop the frequent dynamic attacks from City with the visitors scoring just two minutes into the game and doubling their lead three minutes later. Tottenham did get one back after Dean was fouled in the box, which she converted herself in the twentieth minute. Despite the goal City looked the better team with Bremer scoring her second from the edge of the box and Hemp further increasing their lead just before half time. Both teams started bright, but it was Spurs who took the lead when Mitchell who was making her debut curled the ball into the bottom corner from outside the box. The Hammer then equalised in the ninetieth minute when Dali struck the ball, but with nine minutes of extra time both teams pushed for the win; substitute Addison ran down the left and found Dean in the box who headed the ball in to the top left hand corner for a thrilling finish to the game. Spurs then faced Manchester United, despite hitting the woodwork twice the hosts found themselves ahead and emerged 3 – 0 winners.



West Ham United

Position: 8th

Results:

Tottenham Hotspurs 2 – 1 West Ham United

West Ham United 2 – 1 Brighton & Hove Albion

West Hams first match of the month was postponed due to a significant flu outbreak within the Hammers squad. West Ham thought they had earned themselves a point after Kenza Dali scored in the eighty ninth minutes to go level with Spurs, but with both teams pushing for the win in extra time the Hammers were left to rue their missed chances as Spurs scored in the last minutes of extra time. West Ham then played Brighton; the visitors took the lead after Kerkdijk poked the ball home after a goalmouth scramble. It took a while for West Ham to secure the three points, Lehmann scored the equaliser after connected with a cross from Longhurst, and just three minutes later again scored for the win.



February's WSL fixtures can be found at:

www.thewomensfootballmagazine.com/fixtures



WSL January Transfer window

Arsenal



IN: Caitlin Foord (Sydney FC)

EXTENDED

CONTRACTS: Bethany Mead, Lia Waelti

OUT: Emma Mitchell (Spurs – loan), Tabea Kemme (retirement)

Birmingham City



IN: Emma Kelly (IBV Vestmannaeyjar), Georgia Brougham (Everton – loan)

Brighton & Hove Albion



IN: Cecilie Fiskerstrand (LSK), Rianna Jarrett (Wexford Youth), Maxime Bannink (loan – Reading)

EXTENDED

CONTRACTS: Maya Le Tissier, Megan Walsh

OUT: Sophie Harris (Lewes – loan)

Bristol City



IN: Elise Hughes (Everton – loan), Ella Rutherford (end of loan – Crystal Palace), Jeon Ga-Eul, Megan Wynne (Tottenham – loan), Faye Brison (Everton), Chloe Logarzo (Sydney FC)

OUT: Kirsten Reilly (Rangers WFC), Ella Rutherford (loan – Leicester City), Ellie Strippel (Yeovil Town)

Chelsea



IN: Samantha Kerr (Chicago Red Stars), Jamie -Lee Napier (Hibernians)

EXTENDED

CONTRACTS: Jonna

Andersson

Everton



IN: Isobel Christiansen (Olympique Lyonnais), Sandy McIver (Clemson University), Hayley Raso (Brisbane Roar)

OUT: Elise Hughes (Bristol City -loan), Georgia Brougham (Everton – loan), Faye Brison (Bristol City)

Liverpool



IN: Rachel Furness (Reading), Ellie Fletcher (Sheffield United – end of loan), Rylee Foster (West Virginia Uni)

EXTENDED

CONTRACTS: Missy Bo Kearns

OUT: Missy Bo Kearns (Blackburn Rovers – loan), Ellie Fletcher (Blackburn Rovers)

WSL January Transfer window

Manchester City



EXTENDED

CONTACTS: Lauren Hemp, Steph Houghton

OUT: Nick Cushing (Manager – New York City)

Manchester United



EXTENDED

CONTACTS: Lauren James

OUT: Mollie Green (Sheffield United – loan), Maxime Bennink (loan – Brighton)

Reading



IN: Rachel Furness (Tottenham- end of loan)

EXTENDED

CONTACTS: Fara Williams

OUT: Rakel Honnudotir (Breidablik), Rachel Furness (Liverpool)

Tottenham Hotspur



IN: Emma Mitchell (Arsenal – loan)

EXTENDED

CONTACTS: Kit Graham, Hannah Godfrey

OUT: Rachel Furness (Reading – end of loan), Megan Wynne (Bristol City – loan)

West Ham



IN: Grace Fisk (South Carolina), Filippa Wallen (IF Brommapojkarna)

EXTENDED

CONTACTS: Kate Longhurst

OUT: Brooke Hendrix (Washington Spirit)



Behind the Lens

Hi Everyone!

I am Claire Wray. I'll be writing a monthly piece for the magazine talking about my experiences at Women's football games alongside photographs I've taken at them, too.

I'm a photographer based in Manchester with a life-long love of football. My two passions have collided, so you'll often find me at any game I can with my camera. My aim is to document the growth in the Women's game since the success of the 2019 WWC. I really enjoy watching the heart warming interactions between players and young fans. I can't help but feel the women's game has a very bright future ahead.



to watch the City girls at home to Everton... in horrific conditions! The rain was lashing down and did not stop. This wasn't the occasion for beautiful football, it was just about getting the 3 points in the bag, which they did. We were hoping to see the return of Izzy Christensen, who has returned to England from Lyon, but it wasn't to be. She has yet to make her debut back in the WSL for Everton due to injury. I'm sure the popular Lioness will receive a very warm welcome when she steps back on the field. This weekend also featured a shock home defeat for Manchester United Women against a plucky Bristol side with what looks like a dip in form for Casey Stoney's side. A last minute win for Tottenham against west ham. winning 2-1 in the 96th minute. Wins for Chelsea and Arsenal kept the title wide open in a 3 legged race.



So! January was a busy month with plenty of games stacking up in the WSL alongside the FA and continental cup draws.

I started the New Year at The Hive in London, home to Tottenham Ladies who hosted Manchester City. The City girls enjoyed an extended holiday season and returned to training a week or so after most other teams in the WSL, but you wouldn't know it, recording a relatively straight forward 4-1 win.

Next up was a trip to the Man City Academy





shock of Arsenal being heavily beaten at home to a relentless Chelsea side. This left Man City top of the table on goal difference. Chelsea are unbeaten this season with wins and only 2 draws having beaten arsenal, the current champions, at home and away and have a game in hand. Also a special mention to Chloe Kelly that weekend for her Everton hat trick! What a performance.

I headed North Mid-Week to Chesterfield to see Sheffield United host Manchester City in an exciting Continental Cup draw. I had a great time perched next to the dug out listening to Nick Cushing direct his players. Sheffield were defensively tight and their game plan was working a treat, but when the first goal went in, it went downhill from there. Pauline Bremer got a well deserved hat trick and since her return from a leg break which ruined her first season at City, the super smiley German is establishing herself as one of the most prolific strikers in the WSL. Watch out Miedema!



It was lovely to see Man City Women's Supporters club presenting Nick Cushing with gifts after the Birmingham game. Nick announced he will be leaving Man city after 7 years in February to take up a job in the MLS and will be sorely missed. The classy MCWSC also presented a visibly thrilled Pauline Bremer with a signed match-ball for her hat trick.

A few days later I found myself in Solihull! Man City edged a tight 2-0 win against a defensive Birmingham city on a beautifully sunny day which took the edge off the crisp conditions. Lioness Lucy Staniforth had some great chances and showed real touched of class I can't help but wonder where she will be playing next season.



This was an exciting day in which the title race was yet again blown wide open with the





Last but not least, the Manchester Derby for the FA Cup on the 26th Feb. What a game that was! City edged it in a 3-2 thriller. Ellen White was back to her best with a brace, and even Jill Scott got on the score sheet. Lauren James came on for Man United and changed the game, putting the Reds right back in contention, but couldn't stop the experienced City women. What a future she has . I can't wait to see more of her.

The WSL will be losing a few players to their International sides this month. Most notably Janine Beckie. Janine was taken off at half time as City attempted to find a replacement for her while she is in Texas competing for Olympic qualification with the Canadian national team. Good luck Janine! Beckie has been an incredible asset to Manchester City this season - the forward slotting back into defence to replace the injured Aoife Mannion. Don't forget to check out Janine's very entertaining 'Being Beckie' video blog on Youtube for an insight into life as a WSL player.



January was a very interesting month in which the title race was blown right open again. What a close one this is going to be. Man city seem to have the upper hand as they host Chelsea and Arsenal - but can they make the most of playing at home? Consecutive wins are needed to lift the trophy this season. There is no room to slip up.

Thanks everyone and I look forward to telling you what February had in store!

Claire



CHAMPIONSHIP



Robertson leaves Durham due to work commitments



Durham midfielder Lisa Robertson has announced she will not complete the second of the Championship season with the club due to increased work commitments.

The midfielder joined the Wildcats from Scottish side Hibernian in November 2018 but now will not be able to meet the club's training schedule.

Speaking to the official website, she said: "The decision comes down to work reasons.

"I've got a really good, new opportunity which is going to take up a lot more of my time, meaning I had to step back.

"It's obviously hard leaving a club where I've been made really welcome and have really settled into.

"I've enjoyed playing with the girls and it's a fantastic dressing room, but given the circumstances I feel it's the best thing for me and the club moving forward."



Crystal Palace keeper speaks out about alleged sexist abuse

Crystal Palace goalkeeper Lucy Gillett has said she was subjected to sexist abuse from male fans against Coventry United.

The 25-year-old American told BBC Sport that during the first half of Palace's 3-2 Championship defeat a group of fans shouted that the referee should "check the gender" of Palace players.

Coventry United released a statement saying: "We are investigating the matter carefully, with the close support of the Football Association. Until the investigations are complete, CUFC staff or players will be making no further comment."

There has been no further update since the incident.



Parker steps up as Lewes Women manager

Lewes Women assistant manager Simon Parker has been announced as the new manager following Fran Alonso's departure.

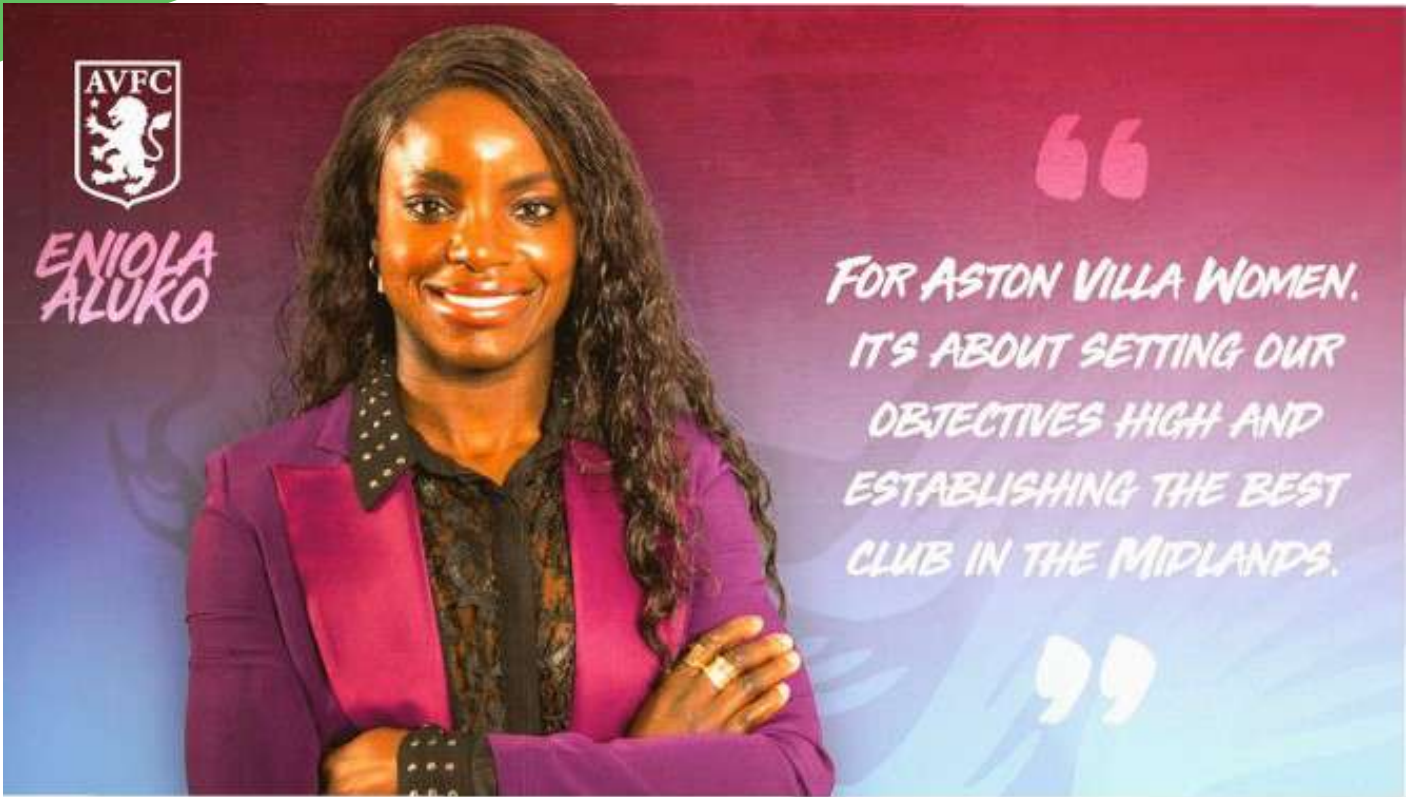
He will be supported by Jesus Cordon.

Before joining the Rooks, Simon was First Team Manager at Southampton Women FC where, over a four-year career he had a League win rate of 88%.

On the change, co-head of women's football Roger Warner told the official website: "We truly wish Fran all the best. Of course, it's been a tough few months on the pitch, but Fran has created so many positive changes at Lewes from which we can now build.

"With Simon, we have a superb Manager in his own right too, so asking him to step up was an easy decision."

Eni Aluko joins Villa as club's first-ever Sporting Director



Aston Villa have announced Eni Aluko as the club's first-ever Sporting Director for Women's Football.

Aston Villa CEO, Christian Purslow, told the official website: "Eniola enjoyed a fabulous playing career and took her first steps in the game in this city, the city where she grew up.

"She is an inspiration and inspiring role model to young girls and women in Birmingham and will help Aston Villa to be an exemplar of women's and girl's football in the region."

Aluko took to social media to say: "I am delighted to announce my new role as sporting director of Aston Villa Women.

"The club's commitment, investment & ambition towards building a leading women's program of excellence is exciting and I am proud of this opportunity to lead within the historic Villa family.

"Special thanks to club chairman Christian Purslow, Corporate affairs director Paul Tyrell and assistant coach, the legend John Terry."

Championship Transfer window

Aston Villa



EXTENDED

CONTRACTS: Asmita Ale

Blackburn Rovers



IN: Levi Chambers-Cook (AFC Wimbledon), Lauren Perry (Linfield), Kelsie Burrows (Linfield), Ellie Fletcher (Liverpool), Missy-Bo Kearns (loan – Liverpool), Georgia Walters (Tranmere Rovers)

OUT: Kelsie Burrows, Louise McDaniel, Lauren Davies, Danielle Whitham, Rhema Lord-Mears (Sheffield United)

Charlton Athletic



IN: Chloe Mustaki, Ciara Watling (Crystal Palace)

OUT: Charlotte Kerr, Renee Hector, Charlie Devlin (Leicester City), Ellie Leek (Lewes), Siobhan Wilson (Crystal

Palace), Hannah Churchill
Coventry United



EXTENDED

CONTRACTS: Amber Hughes, Shannon O'Brien

OUT: Chenise Austin, Jade Formaston, Erin Smith

Crystal Palace



IN: Amber Stobbs, Amber Gaylor (London City), Siobhan Wilson (Charlton Athletic), Amy Taylor (Lewes)

EXTENDED

CONTRACTS: Annabel Johnson, Aoife Hurley

OUT: Ciara Watling (Charlton Athletic), Ella Rutherford (end of loan – Bristol City)

Durham



IN: Eleanor Dale (Middlesbrough)

OUT: Megan Bell (Rangers), Lisa Robertson

Leicester City



IN: Ashleigh Plumptre (University of Southern California), Charlie Devlin (Charlton Athletic), Ella Rutherford (loan – Bristol City)

OUT: Leigh Dugmore

Lewes



IN: Paula Howells, Ellie Leek (Charlton Athletic), Sophie Harris (loan – Brighton)

OUT: Amy Taylor (Crystal Palace)

London Bees



OUT: Lucy Loomes (Hounslow)

London City Lionesses



OUT: Amber Gaylor (Crystal Palace)

Sheffield United



IN: Rhema Lord-Mears (Blackburn Rovers), Mollie Green (loan – Manchester United)

OUT: Megan Tinsley (Derby County)

NATIONAL PREMIER LEAGUE



THE WOMEN'S
FOOTBALL
MAGAZINE

WNL Premier Division

Round-Up: All the latest from the league



By Leed United's Emily Cassidy

The first week of the 2020 FA WNL Premier Division saw only one league fixture take place, where 2nd placed Derby overcame 5th placed Stoke City to a 2-1 victory. Former Women's Championship player Ellie Gilliatt scored early doors, with Sophie Domingo doubling the Ewe Rams lead. Abby Hunt added a late consolation goal for the away side, unfortunately it wasn't enough to take anything from the game for City. Going into 2020, Sunderland Women sit top of the FA WNL Premier Division, with their next fixture being the 3rd round of the FA Cup. Other teams still going strong within the biggest cup competition in the women's game is newly promoted Burnley, Nottingham Forest, Fylde,

Loughborough Foxes, Huddersfield Town and West Bromwich Albion.

The league leaders eased through with a 4-1 win over Fylde, a double from Jessica Brown and goals from Maria Farrugia and top goal scorer Bridget Galloway meant that Sunderland face London side Watford FC Ladies at home on the 26th January. Burnley continued their good run of form, beating fellow league rivals Nottingham Forest 2-1. Going in at half time with the game level, both teams came out fighting to reach the 4th round and a Nicola Worthington strike in the 84th minute sealed the victory for Burnley who will now face a team from the league above, Leicester City Women. Loughborough Foxes faced a tough Huddersfield Town team

on the 5th January with Town coming out 3-2 winners on the day. Coming back from 2-0 down at half time, a strike from Lucy Sowerby then two goals within two minutes from Ellie White and Kate Mallin seemed too much for The Foxes who ran out of steam late on in this close affair. Town had an outstanding FA Cup run in the 2018/19 campaign, reaching the 5th round last time out and beating Women's Championship team Charlton Athletic Women 5-4 on penalties after coming back once again from 2-0 down at half time.

Town will be looking to not only replicate last season's cup run, but equally will have determination of wanting to better it so their fixture against Ipswich Town will be a tasty affair to say the least. The final team to play in the FA Cup from the Northern Premier Division was WBA who went out due to a 3-1 defeat to 2nd placed Southampton Women's who play a division below Albion in the Division 1 South West league. Confidence in Southampton showed within this fixture, as 3rd from bottom WBA went in 1-0 down at half time. Not being able to level things after the break, Southampton Women's doubled their lead with Albion only gaining a consolation goal for their efforts.

A week later, saw more teams return to league action with Loughborough Foxes, Hull City, Nottingham Forest, Middlesbrough, Derby County and Burnley all taking to the field. Loughborough Foxes managed to take all 3 points again Hull City winning 3-2, despite a converted penalty by Katie Thompson in the 79th minute which inspired a hopeful comeback from 3-1 down for the Tigresses. On form Nottingham Forest, beat Middlesbrough 1-0 to continue their 4-game

unbeaten run in the league. A strike from 2019/20 signing Hannah Keryakoplis seemed to be enough for Derby County to beat fellow title challengers Burnley 1-0 in a tight game.

With most teams having County Cup fixtures towards the end of January, only Derby, Hull, Sunderland and Fylde played league fixtures the following week. Derby comfortably beat Hull 6-1; player of the match Ellie Gilliatt shone throughout the game and got a well-deserved hat-trick to complete a good day at the office for Derby. Sunderland increased their lead at the top of the table with a rampant display at home, beating Fylde 4-0. Sunderland impressed further with 4 different players getting on the score sheet, including captain Kiera Ramshaw on her 196th appearance for the club.

The end of January sees no change at the bottom of the table with Hull City, Sheffield FC and West Bromwich Albion making up the bottom 3. Tight margins separate the teams at the foot of the table, only goal difference currently separating Hull and Sheffield. With it all to play for, February may be an important month as it will see if the likes of Derby County, Nottingham Forest and Burnley can put pressure on Sunderland Ladies and close the gap at the top of the table.



Premier Division News

Hull City announce new manager



Hull City Ladies have announced the appointment of Adrian Costello as first team manager and head coach.

The news comes after Rachel Gay decided to 'step aside' but she remains part of the set-up and will work alongside Costello.

Costello arrives at the club after managing Swedish fourth-tier side Ytterhogdal IK and is a former soldier and PC.

Speaking to the official website, Costello said: "I'm absolutely delighted to have been asked and to take on the role.

"This year I'm hoping to get them up the league, I think being bottom at this time is not a realistic position that they should be in from what I've seen.

"We will climb the league with that bit of belief and desire.

"Where Danny and Rachel have taken the club from is absolutely incredible, it's important that the city of Hull has a top level football team."

Former manager Rachel Gay also added "We are absolutely delighted to welcome Adie Costello to the club.

"When someone of this calibre becomes available you snap him up immediately, he brings with him an abundance of knowledge and experience in managing and coaching, not only in this country, but more recently across in Sweden. We believe he can take us up the league starting on Sunday."

"The girls have really enjoyed the first two training sessions with him and you can see in such a short space of time the impact he is going to have at this club, and how much the players and staff are going to learn from him."

Newcastle's Donnelly out for rest of the season

Newcastle have confirmed that goalkeeper Grace Donnelly will be out for the rest of the season.

An MRI scan has confirmed that she has ruptured her ACL.

We wish her a speedy recovery!



Solihull Moors' Smith breaks collarbone

Defender Antonia Smith broke her collarbone in the 2-1 defeat to Sutton Ladies.

A late winner for the visitors knocks the Moors out of the County Cup.

We would like to wish Antonia Smith all the best in her recovery

Premier Division News



Ben Fisher takes over Middlesbrough Women

Middlesbrough Women have confirmed that Ben Fisher has taken over ownership of the club from Lindsey Stephenson.

Speaking to the official website, he said: "I've been involved with football, playing youth team and reserve team football for Hartlepool United and Bradford City and have also previously worked at Middlesbrough Women FC as Secretary and head of the clubs' junior section.

"I'm looking forward to trying to move the club on to the next level. I want to place on record my thanks to Lindsey for all the hard work and the tremendous job she has done over the years.

"Without her, the club would not be an established Northern Premier Division team and supporters of the club should be forever grateful to her for putting Middlesbrough Women FC on the map.

"I feel the club have firm foundations and I am excited at the prospect of working with Steph to try and continue the recent success of this great club".

Chorley Women split from men's team

Chorley Women have announced they will no longer play their home games at the home of the men's team, Victory Park.

The team have played there since July 2018 after an agreement to become one club, despite running as two separate entities.

The link looks to have ended after the women were told that they must pay from next month onwards to continue to use the facilities at Victory Park.

Chorley Women revealed that they were not able to meet those payments and so will now fulfil their remaining league fixtures at Croston Sports Club.

A statement issued by Chorley FC Women said: "The agreement in July 2018 held that CFCW's first team would play home league and cup fixtures at Victory Park as an integral part of the Magpie family.

"CFCW's committee explained to CFC that, as a self-funded club, we could not sustain the costs CFC quoted for continued use of Victory Park, but were happy to meet to consider how we could build a relationship both professionally and financially.

"However, this offer was dismissed by CFC."



Imperial cars partner with Southampton Women

Southampton Women have announced a new partnership with Imperial Cars.

The multi-award winning used car retailer has a headquarters in Southampton and wants to back the club's aim to reach the Women's Super League.

The company will sponsor the back of the players' shorts until the end of the 2021/21 season.

Premier Division News

Donny Belles announce new manager



Doncaster Rovers Belles have appointed Andy Butler as their new first-team manager.

Butler, who spent five seasons as a player with the men's team, and after retirement re-joined Rovers as an academy coach.

Belles chief executive Russ Green told the official website: "He's a Doncaster lad who loves the club and has great standing as a coach already.

"I think it's a great asset for us to have having a professional footballer and coach coming in to take over in a managerial capacity, he's got great experience and hopefully that can come across to the girls."

Thomas commits to Ipswich Town

Natasha Thomas has committed herself to Ipswich Town Women after getting an offer from Championship side Lewes Women.

The 24-year-old goal-scoring machine, who has netted 83 goals in 103 appearances for the Tractor Girls, was approached by Lewes but after a lot of consideration turned them down.

Speaking to the official website, Thomas said: "To be recognised by a reputable Championship club like [Lewes] means a lot to me and I'm humbled by the approach.

"It was a strange feeling to hear I had been approached by a higher division side who pay their men's and women's players the same.

"At this moment in time I couldn't see myself playing for anyone other than Ipswich Town. The club has done so much for me in recent times and I can't wait to play my part in an exciting future.

"I feel like I have so much more to give here and more great times to share with the club, teammates and fans."



Northern Prem Division transfers

*Only clubs who have
announced transfers are
included*

Derby

IN: Megan Tinsley (permanent from Sheffield United after loan), Jodie Michalska

Fylde

IN: Molly Wilcock, Megan Powney (Wigan Athletic)

Middlesbrough

IN: Libby Dixon, Anna Young (Sunderland)

OUT: Eleanor Dale (Durham)

Nottingham Forest

IN: Sydnie Naylor

Sunderland

OUT: Abi Cottam, Anna Young (Middlesbrough)

West Bromwich Albion

IN: Leigh Dugmore (Leicester)

Southern Prem Division transfers

Cardiff

OUT: Chloe Lloyd (end of loan spell), Jordan Guard (Yeovil Town)

Keynsham

OUT: Jasmine Bull (Cheltenham Town)

Portsmouth

IN: Nicole Filipe

Yeovil Town

IN: Ellie Strippel (Bristol City), Chloe Lloyd (from Cardiff City loan spell), Jordan Guard (Cardiff City Ladies), Kiani Wong (Cardiff City FC Women)

OUT: Harriet Lambe (Cheltenham Town)

North Div One transfers

Brighouse Town

OUT: Danni Bailey (Bolton Wanderers)

Bolton Wanderers

IN: Kali Habberley (coach), Katie Halligan (coach), Danni Bailey (Brighouse Town)

Chorley

IN: Sophie Charlton

Leeds United

IN: Kirsty Johnson (Doncaster Rovers Belles)

Midlands Div One transfers

Doncaster Rovers Belles

IN: Jasmine Saxton, Hannah McWilliams, Eleanor Sharpe

OUT: Kirsty Johnson (Leeds United), Betsy Thomas (Lincoln City)

Lincoln City

IN: Betsy Thomas (Doncaster Rovers Belles RTC)

Solihull Moors

IN: Annie Ackroyd, Mollie

Richardson

SE Div One transfers

Ipswich Town

OUT: Aimee Lynn (Dual signs with Newmarket Town)

Kent Football United

IN: Demi Brown (Leyton Orient), Emily Stanley

Leyton Orient

OUT: Demi Brown (Kent Football United)

Stevenage

IN: James Merrett (coach)

SW Div One transfers

Cheltenham Town

IN: Becky Donnelly, Harriet Lambe (Yeovil Town), Jasmine Bull (Keynsham)

OUT: Amy Leask (Swindon Town), Anna Barnes (Swindon Town)

Swindon Town

IN: Amy Leask (Cheltenham Town), Lauren Bulley (Highworth Lions), Kirsty Miles (dual signing with Marlborough Town), Shannon Redhouse (Melksham Town), Laura Morgan, Lauren Kayall (Royal Wootton Bassett), Anna Barnes (Cheltenham Town)



Fylde's Play

with Georgia Stevens

@Stix_Official_9 @FyldeLadiesFC

In terms of football, January was a bit of a dull month. Because of the poor weather, we found it hard to play a game, with our FA Cup clash against Sunderland being moved and then postponed, and then moved again before we finally got to play it.

It's a problem many teams face in lower leagues this time of year, not just in the women's game. Sadly with our venues being on the Fylde Coast - when it rains, it pours. It was frustrating to be playing such an important game on a 4G pitch at such short notice. However, the facilities were great and a massive thank you to JMO Sports Park in Skelmersdale for accommodating both sides.

The hassle in the lead up to the FA Cup game is no excuse for the performance, we were beaten 4-1 by the better side and we all knew that after the game. To be beaten again in the league by the same side, 4-0, is a tough pill to swallow. We arguably played much better in spells, but to be on the receiving end of the same scoreline is difficult to say the least.

I would like to say to any Sunderland Ladies fans reading this however, that your support is something that is unrivalled in this league most definitely. To have such a crowd week in, week out must fill those girls with such confidence and it certainly doesn't go unnoticed.

Despite things not going the best on the pitch with Fylde, off the pitch, things have really gone from strength to strength for myself. I've appeared three times already on "RedMenTV" and it's brilliant to be involved on such a platform. They're one of the leading fansites in the Premier League, winning the North West Football Award among others for their work supporting and talking all things Liverpool FC.

There couldn't be a better time to be a Liverpool fan and to be able to talk about that on a channel with over 400 thousand subscribers is incredible.

Being involved with them, along with some of the other work I've done for Copa90 or Umbro, is something that is so important to me. The fact is, for many female footballers, just playing football sometimes isn't sustainable enough, especially in comparison to the men's game.

I think all fans of the women's game are aware of this to some extent, with many women juggling jobs while playing. I'm lucky that the career path that I've decided to go down is so interwoven with the game I play and love, so it never really feels like work.

At the end of January, I was also in London with Kick It Out for the first Game Changers seminar of 2020. I'm so fortunate to be a part



of the programme, the opportunity to talk and connect with so many individuals from across the country is brilliant.

It's great that we're all from different backgrounds and are all involved in football through different outlets. Being able to then talk about issues that affect us directly, while understanding some of the issues that affect others is a unique opportunity and I hope that it's something we can share with the wider public in the near future.

Although this month's update wasn't as action packed as previous one's have been, I hope you enjoyed it! I always think it's important to include what's going on in my life off the pitch, because as I mentioned before, it's such a big part of my football journey too.

Instagram: Georgia.Stevo

Twitter: Stix_Official_9

Fylde's games in February:

02/02 Middlesbrough vs Fylde

Bedford Terrace

09/02 Fylde vs Sheffield FC

Mill Farm Stadium, 2pm KO

16/02 Fylde vs Huddersfield

Mill Farm Stadium, 2pm KO

19/02 Fylde vs Burnley

Mill Farm Stadium, 7.45pm KO

23/02 Nottingham Forest vs Fylde

Coronation Park, 2pm KO

GRASSROOTS



SAMMY WALKER

Sammy Walker has been a footballer through her life but during her transition she found it difficult to find a place she 'fit in'.

Now Walker is happily playing football in Bristol and enjoying the game again but there were a lot of bumps on the way.

This is her story.

I have been playing football since I was four years old. I remember being taken to a training session with a local side when I was really young and playing with kids that were three or four years older than me. I just loved it. Between that and going to watch West Ham when I was younger, I just fell in love with the game. My love for the game grew and grew. I was playing four or five times a week and I think it gave me a good escape from life. When I was playing it was all about the game. It's continued to be like that for me.

I got scouted originally by Wycombe Wanderers and then I moved on to Watford and I was in their academy up until I was in my late teens when several injuries and issues with myself kind of made me feel like I could not pursue it.

I like to think I had the talent to play at a high level, I would never have been a world beater, but I think I could potentially have had a good career out of the game. I left the academy set up in my late teens, I had not really been showing a professional attitude towards my game due to the lack of feasibility of me being able to play at the highest level due to my identity. I think they were probably going to let me go due to my sudden loss of interest and professionalism eventually anyway.

It was a surprisingly easy decision to make – leaving football. I had spent most of my teens on anti-depressants and anti-anxiety medications and the lift of the pressure was actually a relief. My desire to play was heavily influenced and driven by my families expectations.

*When I found
“inclusive
football, I felt I
had found
my place”*

I didn't tell anyone other than a few friends about my gender issues until I came out later in life and started my transition.

Growing up I knew I was not the same as other guys that I played football with or at school and it was really difficult. The only people that I was exposed to that were born male and presented as female were drag queens on the TV and Eddie Izzard and I knew I was not Eddie Izzard. It had a big effect on me and it affected a lot of my life choices growing up until I fully accepted and started to transition.

I had some very openly homophobic family members. And for years I wasn't really aware that transgender people existed. Growing up, it was my understanding they were men who were gay, and who dressed up, not women who were 'born in the wrong body' as it were. I saw how often people were attacked for being gay and how often it was used as a slur against someone's character. I was quite feminine when I was younger and it was made quite clear to me that it wasn't how a boy was 'supposed' to be. It was paralyzing and affected the way I did everything. I would carry myself, speak and do things a

certain way in order to try and appear more masculine in order to avoid it.

The first time I kind of realised it was a thing was when I was about 15. A friend came out as trans and it was a bit of a lightbulb moment for me. At that point I was attributing my femininity to being gay because it was the only thing I was exposed to. There were certain members of my family that were not overly supportive of LGBTQ+ people and I think it was almost a fear that who I was, was wrong. I think when I got older and I was experimenting a bit more when I was with guys and girls then I realised there was some identity issues in my head.

It's only since I transitioned and have become more involved in the community that I have even become aware that there are people playing sport professionally, people competing. It's very difficult to envisage a future for yourself when you cannot see anybody doing the same thing.

I came out and started presenting as female at 26 and started medically transitioning at 27.

I moved down to London as an adult after I started my transition and I was living with a partner. I think she was getting a bit fed up with me doing keepee-uppies in the kitchen. I played on my own, I would kick a ball against a wall even as an adult. It was always

part of my life, I always played FIFA and other games. I missed being part of a team, match days and being in the dressing rooms before games having a laugh and a joke and then playing. That was a nice way to spend a weekend but I was very, very scared at the time of who I was and how people would react to who I was.

At first I joined a ladies' team. It was okay, but as I played more I would be frequently called by the wrong pronouns, often by mistake as I was still relatively early in my transition, but there was occasionally a tone of malice in it.

But to be honest, it was more the behind my back comments about how it was unfair, or that I'd end up hurting someone, or that I was somehow removing their ability to have fun by being there and playing well. I'd rarely be dispossessed and I was quicker to the ball in training. The only unfair advantage I had was that I received years of some of the best training a footballer could have. The reality is I weigh 10st. I'm 5ft 10. There were taller and heavier girls there. And I spent much more time bouncing off them than they did bouncing off me.

Despite this, I was frequently tackled with a lot more force. At the last training session I went to the manager took me to one side before the session and

and basically said that I needed to not play as well because it was upsetting some people.

I think hostile is the wrong word. I think that's combative term and it wasn't hostility. There were frequent mis-gendering and a few mutterings that it was 'unfair'. I think they were confused at why I was there or thought I shouldn't be. Maybe fearful they would get hurt playing? Back then I was at the very start of my transition, so I didn't necessarily look the part and I think they saw me as a guy. You don't necessarily look the part from day one. I like to think they'd react slightly differently to me now.

I don't think it's a simple debate to have and there are numerous factors to consider.



The Big Interview

I think the biggest problem is that people are making it a men vs women comparison, when it should be women vs transwomen. There are significant changes to a person in transition and the data from studies just doesn't back up that there is any significant physical advantage. Size and power are often attributed to be something that a male born player would have in abundance over female born players - but at 5ft 9 and 9.5 stone, I don't think I do. The other factor is safety. Often it is claimed that cis female players are more likely to get hurt with a transwoman on the pitch - I strongly refute that. If we ignore biology and focus on physics - if you have an 8st woman and a 12st woman going for a 50/50 challenge, who is more likely to get hurt? The smaller player right? So if it is a safety concern why aren't we all campaigning for weight classes in team sports? Probably because it's exclusionary and wrong.

The best players in the world are not the biggest or strongest or fastest. They are the ones who have a tactical mind and great technique.

I don't know think you can change a lot of people's minds once they've made them up - but what we can do is better educate the next generation. I think a lot of the misconceptions surrounding women like myself are based in a lack of understanding and

archaic opinions that have been passed down generation to generation - but the youngsters are a lot more open nowadays and I have hope for the future.

I think the women's game is MILES ahead of the men's game. You can see the vast difference in "out" players; but the initial push for inclusive sport was more geared toward the acceptance of sexuality, and gender identity and transition isn't the same thing. I think transgender players pose a different set of questions. That being said, I know of multiple trans players that play happily in the women's game. Unfortunately, despite a plethora of evidence, some people will forever see players like myself as imposters in the women's game.

After trying that, I got in contact with someone who was non-binary and playing for an inclusive team called Soho FC and I went along to a training session and I was immediately accepted. For the first time in my footballing life I felt like it was the place for me.

I remember the first session I went to, I had not played in ages and I just went and tried to play like I always used to. I was throwing up on the side of the pitch, I could not breathe it was awful! I really struggled that first session but Jez Tomley who runs it, he is fantastic, asked me if I played before and I told him I used to play quite a bit. He asked me

back and I went every week from then onwards until I moved to Bristol.

I am now with Bristol Panthers. They have been fantastic so far. The manager even came and picked me up from my house and dropped me back off on my first training session.

When I found inclusive football, I felt like I had found my place. I think it's a message that needs to be spread. Growing up I did not have anybody who I could look up to so I want to fill that gap. I encourage people to reach out to inclusive teams; there is so much acceptance all over the UK. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

I would love to play women's football again, but right now I play on a predominantly men's team in an inclusive LGBT league because I prefer to focus on playing rather than having conflict hanging over why I am on the pitch. I played at a reasonable level pre transition and it's still a challenge to play against bigger, stronger more aggressive players.

I would love to play women's football again, but right now I play on a predominantly men's team in an inclusive LGBT league because I prefer to focus on playing rather than having conflict hanging over why I am on the pitch. I played at a reasonable level pre transition and it's still a challenge to play against bigger, stronger more aggressive players.



CUPS



SSE Women's FA Cup

FA Cup 4th round results

The fourth round games were played on the weekend of 25–26 January.

Southampton Women hosts Coventry United at St. Marys Stadium whilst Huddersfield played at John Smith's Stadium.

Bristol City	1-0	Durham	Liverpool	8-1	Blackburn Rovers
Burnley	1-3	Leicester City	Sheffield United	0-3	Birmingham City
Everton	1-0	London Bees	Southampton	1-4	Coventry United
Huddersfield Town	1-4	Ipswich Town	Sunderland	2-0	Watford
West Ham	0-2	Arsenal	Tottenham	5-0	Barnsley
Charlton Athletic	0-4	Chelsea	London City	0-5	Reading
Lewes	1-1	Billericay Town	Aston Villa	2-3	Brighton & HA
<i>Lewes win 5-4 on penalties</i>			Southampton FC W	0-4	Crystal Palace

Round Dates

First Round Proper - Sunday 10
November 2019

Second Round Proper - Sunday 1
December 2019

Third Round Proper - Sunday 5
January 2020

Fourth Round Proper - Sunday 26
January 2020

Fifth Round Proper - Sunday 16
February 2020

Quarter Final - Sunday 15 March 2020

Semi-Final - Sunday 19 April 2020

Final - Saturday 9 May 2020





FA Cup 5th round draw

Arsenal v Lewes

Bristol City v Everton

Chelsea v Liverpool

Coventry United v Tottenham

Leicester City v Reading

Manchester United v Ipswich Town

Sunderland v Birmingham City

Crystal Palace v Brighton & HA

The Women's FA Cup Fifth Round draw took place on Monday 27 January, live on Sportsday on the BBC News Channel.

The draw was conducted by Sue Smith and Rachel Brown-Finnis.

The Fifth Round Proper games will take place on Sunday 16 February.

Continental Tyres League Cup



Quarter-final results

Chelsea Eriksson (55), So-Yun (81), Murphy (90+1)	3-1	Aston Villa Welsh (84)	Kingsmeadow Att: 1799
Arsenal Little (86)	1-0	Reading	Meadow Park Att: -
Sheffield United	0-4	Manchester City Bremer (38, 44, 90+3), Coombs (73)	Proact Stadium Att: -
Manchester United McManus (13), Ross (75)	2-1	Brighton & HA Green (P, 83)	Leigh Sports Village Att: 642

Semi-final draw

WSL sides Chelsea, Manchester United, Manchester City and Arsenal are in the Continental Cup semi-finals for the second year running.

So far only two clubs have lifted the trophy: Arsenal (five times) and Manchester City (three times).

The two sides will meet in the semi-finals on Wednesday, January 29, meaning a new side of Manchester United or Chelsea will reach the final.

The draw for the semi-finals are as follows:

Man Utd v Chelsea

Arsenal v Man City

Games to be played at 7.30pm on Wednesday, January 29.

Nottingham Forest to host Conti Cup final

This year's FA Women's Continental Tyres League Cup Final will be held at Nottingham Forest's City Ground on Saturday 29 February (kick-off 5.30pm).

The 30,000 capacity stadium will replace Brammall Lane as the venue of last year's final, where Manchester City beat Arsenal 4-2 on penalties following a gritty 0-0 draw.



WNL Cup quarter-final results

Huddersfield Town 1-3 Stoke City

Sunderland 4-0 Derby County

Portsmouth vs Southampton

MK Dons 2-0 Chesham

*Portsmouth vs Southampton will be played on
February 5.*

WNL Plate quarter-final results

Middlesbrough 2-1 Nottingham Forest

Bolton Wanderers v West Bromwich Albion

Plymouth Argyle 3-1 Stevenage

Chichester City v Watford

*Bolton Wanderers vs West Bromwich Albion
and Chichester City vs Watford will be played
on February 9*

Home Nations



**THE WOMEN'S
FOOTBALL
MAGAZINE**

England SheBelieves Cup 2020



The games and teams for the 2020 SheBelieves Cup have been announced.

England will travel to the US to defend their 2019 title facing Spain, Japan and hosts USA.

This will be Japan's second appearance after making their debut in 2019 whilst it will be Spain's first time in the competition.

Where will games be played?



What are the fixtures?

March 5	Spain	vs	Japan	16:15 ET 21:15 GMT		Exploria Stadium, Orlando
	USA	vs	England	19:00 ET 00:00 GMT	BBC 2 and iPlayer, 23:45 GMT	Exploria Stadium, Orlando
March 8	Japan	vs	England	14:15 ET 19:15 GMT	BBC 4 and iPlayer, 19:00 GMT	Red Bull Arena, Harrison
	USA	vs	Spain	17:00 ET 22:00 GMT		Red Bull Arena, Harrison
March 11	England	vs	Spain	16:15 CT 22:15 GMT	BBC 4 and iPlayer 21:00 GMT	Toyota Stadium, Frisco
	USA	vs	Japan	19:00 CT 01:00 GMT		Toyota Stadium, Frisco





Scotland to compete in Pinatar Cup



The Scotland Women's National Team will take on Ukraine, Iceland and Northern Ireland in the Pinatar Cup in March this year.

They will take on Ukraine, Iceland and Northern Ireland in the competition.

March 4	Northern Ireland	vs	Iceland	14:00 GMT	Pinatar Arena, Murcia
	Ukraine	vs	Scotland	18:00 GMT	Pinatar Arena, Murcia
March 7	Scotland	vs	Iceland	14:00 GMT	Pinatar Arena, Murcia
	Ukraine	vs	Northern Ireland	18:00 GMT	Pinatar Arena, Murcia
March 10	Northern Ireland	vs	Scotland	14:00 GMT	Pinatar Arena, Murcia
	Iceland	vs	Ukraine	18:00 GMT	Pinatar Arena, Murcia



SWF Championship teams decided



The SWF Championship teams have been decided for the new leagues.

It was created off the back of the 2019 Senior Consultation Process and will sit under the Scottish Women's Premier League (SWPL).

As part of the performance pathway, all teams must meet criteria. All 26 teams are currently compliant with this criteria or have suitable plans in place to bring all areas of their clubs into compliance for the 2021 season.

Full fixtures for the 2020 SWF Championship season were released on Monday 27th January.

SWF Championship North

Buchan
Cove Rangers
Dryburgh Athletic
Dundee West
Dunfermline
East Fife
Grampian
Inverness CT
Kelty Hearts
Montrose
Stenhousemuir
Stonehaven
Westdyke

SWF Championship South

Airdrie
Ayr United
BSC Glasgow
Clyde
Edinburgh Caledonia
Edinburgh City
Falkirk
Gartcairn
Livingston
Morton
Renfrew
St Mirren
United Glasgow

SWPL CUP



1st Round—February 9

Celtic	vs	Glasgow	K-Park Training Academy
Forfar Farmington	vs	Kilmarnock	Station Park
Hamilton Academical	vs	Dundee United	Fountain of Youth Stadium
Hearts	vs	Boroughmuir Thistle	Riccarton Synthetic—John Brydson Arena
Motherwell	vs	Partick Thistle	Daiziel Park
Rangers	vs	Queens Park	The Hummel Training Centre
Spartans	vs	St Johnstone	Ainslie Park Stadium
Stirling University	vs	Aberdeen	Stirling University Sports Ground

1st Round—February 16

Aberdeen	vs	Hearts	Aberdeen Sports Village
Boroughmuir Thistle	vs	Stirling University	Meggetland Sports Complex
Dundee United	vs	Rangers	DISC
Glasgow Women	vs	Spartans	Petershill Park
St Johnstone WFC	vs	Celtic	McDiarmid Park
Kilmarnock FVC	vs	Motherwell	William Mcilvanney Leisure Centre
Partick Thistle	vs	Forfar Farmington	Firhill Stadium, Glasgow
Queens Park	vs	Hamilton Academical	Lesser Hampden

1st Round—March 1

Boroughmuir Thistle	vs	Aberdeen	Meggetland Sports Complex
Dundee United	vs	Queens Park	DISC
Hamilton Academical	vs	Rangers	Fountain of Youth Stadium
Hearts	vs	Stirling University	Riccarton Synthetic—John Brydson Arena
St Johnstone	vs	Glasgow	McDiarmid Park
Motherwell	vs	Forfar Farmington	Dalziel Park
Partick Thistle	vs	Kilmarnock	Firhill Stadium, Glasgow
Spartans	vs	Celtic	Ainslie Park Stadium

Fran Alonso announced as new Celtic boss



Fran Alonso has been announced as the new Celtic Women's manager.

The Spaniard, formerly Ronald Koeman's assistant at Everton arrives at the Scottish club from Lewes.

Alonso was the Championship side's boss for 13 months.

He replaces Eddie Wolecki Black, who steered Celtic to successive third place finishes in the SWPL1 in his two seasons, with the former Glasgow City boss now head of the women's football department at Motherwell.

He told the official website: "When Celtic want you, you can't say no.

"Celtic is about passion, heart and soul, about the love of great attacking football.

"I know the team are very together, focused on the future and focuses on improving and committed to working hard to achieve our objectives.

"I also know that Celtic has real ambition and purpose around its women's team I wanted to be a major part of that."

Opening weekend fixtures



SWPL 1

February 23

Celtic v Glasgow City

Forfar Farmington v
Motherwell

Hibernian v Spartans

Rangers v Hearts

SWPL 2

Aberdeen v Kilmarnock

Hamilton Academical v
Stirling University

Partick Thistle v Glasgow
Women

St Johnstone v Queens Park



Wales friendly announced

Wales Women have announced they will return to the Racecourse Ground in Wrexham for the first time since 2012.

Jayne Ludlow's side, who are preparing for the remainder of their 2021 Euro Championship qualifiers, will take on Estonia on March 6.

Estonia are managed by former Cymru manager Jarmo Matikainen.

Wales resume their UEFA Women's Euro 2021 qualification campaign in April with home games against the Faroe Islands and Norway.

They are currently second in Group C, four points behind leaders Norway.



FA Wales Women's Cup quarter-final draw

The draw for the quarter-final has been made.

Swansea City v Rhyl/Bethel

Denbigh/Connah's Quay Nomads v Port Talbot

Llandendo v Abergavenny

Cardiff City v Cardiff Met

Games will be played on Sunday, February 9.







Northern Ireland to compete in Pinatar Cup

The Northern Ireland Women's National Team will take on Ukraine, Iceland and Northern Ireland in the Pinatar Cup in March this year.

They will take on Iceland, Ukraine and Scotland in the competition.

March 4	Northern Ireland	vs	Iceland	14:00 GMT	Pinatar Arena, Murcia
	Ukraine	vs	Scotland	18:00 GMT	Pinatar Arena, Murcia
March 7	Scotland	vs	Iceland	14:00 GMT	Pinatar Arena, Murcia
	Ukraine	vs	Northern Ireland	18:00 GMT	Pinatar Arena, Murcia
March 10	Northern Ireland	vs	Scotland	14:00 GMT	Pinatar Arena, Murcia
	Iceland	vs	Ukraine	18:00 GMT	Pinatar Arena, Murcia



Gail Redmond wins Belfast Telegraph Sports Award



Gail Redmond has been named as the winner of the Game Changer Award for 2019 at the Belfast Telegraph Sports Awards.

Gail is the Irish FA Foundation's Women's Domestic Manager and has worked at all levels of women's and girl's football in Northern Ireland.

As a player she captained Northern Ireland and was given the award for her work promoting the game in the country.

Speaking to the Irish FA, Redmond said: "When I heard I was nominated I was totally gobsmacked because they (the other nominees) are all so deserving of this award.

"It's been a long journey this past year because I've just had a baby so I'm just glad to be out on a Monday night. Thank you very much for this award. I'm completely shocked."

Women honoured on New Year's Honours list

Four women associated to women's football were named on the Queen's New Year's Honours List.

Baroness Sue Campbell

FA director Baroness Sue Campbell is to become a Dame for services to sport.

An FA spokesperson said: "We're thrilled and delighted that Sue has been recognised with a damehood in the New Year's Honours list.

"Sue has dedicated her career to the advancement of sport in this country spanning four decades."

Jill Scott

Manchester City and England midfielder Jill Scott has been made an MBE for services to women's football.

Scott is second only to Fara Williams MBE in the table of the country's most-capped footballers, having made her 146th appearance last month.

The FA added: "We're also delighted that Jill Scott has been awarded an MBE for her services to English football.

"Jill has been one of the outstanding players in the England Women's team for well over a decade and was one of the key figures in the team's success at the FIFA Women's World Cup in France earlier this year."

Scott wrote on Twitter: "I hope this MBE

can be for the whole of women's football and an appreciation of the amazing journey it has been on and an excitement for where it can go!

"To my team mates and all staff this would never be possible without you all I'm just lucky that I've been part of great teams!"

Loren Dykes

Wales international Loren Dykes and Bristol City captain has been awarded an MBE for services to women's football in Wales.

Dykes, 31, won her first senior cap against the Netherlands in 2007 and played in every match of Wales' 2019 FIFA Women's World Cup qualifying campaign.

Rose Reilly

Rose Reilly is Scotland's most successful women's footballer.

The 65-year-old has been awarded an MBE for services to women's football.

Handed a life ban by the SFA in the early 1970s for having the temerity to play abroad, she made her name in Italy, winning eight Serie A titles, as well as a world championship silver medal (an unofficial forerunner of the World Cup) for her adopted country.

Now she helps inspire other footballing hopefuls in Scotland.



FIFA Women's World Cup France 2019™ 

World Cup Watch

Women's football qualifiers moved

The Asian Football Confederation has moved the women's Olympic football qualifiers from the central Chinese city of Wuhan after the spread of a new coronavirus.

The have now been relocated to Nanjing in north China.

Chinese authorities have advised people to stop travel into and out of Wuhan, the city at the heart of the outbreak.

Chinese Taipei had said they would not send a team unless the games were moved.

The tournament's dates of 3-9 February remain unchanged, with the top two teams qualifying for the play-offs for the final two places at the Tokyo Olympics.

How does qualifying for the women's football at the 2020 Olympics work?

Six teams are already qualified for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, with six places still up for grabs.

Japan, Brazil, New Zealand, Great Britain, Netherlands and Sweden have qualified already.

So how does it work and when will we know the final teams?

Means of qualification	Dates	Venue	How many?	Qualified
Host country	7 September 2013	N/a	1	Japan
2018 Copa America	4–22 April 2018	Chile	1	Brazil
2018 OFC Nations Cup	18 November – 1 December 2018	New Caledonia	1	New Zealand
2019 WWC	7 June – 7 July 2019	France	3	Great Britain (due to England) Netherlands Sweden
2020 CONCACAF Olympic qualifying	28 January – 9 February 2020	USA	2	TBC
2020 AFC Olympic qualifying	6 – 11 March	Various	2	TBC
2020 CAF Olympic Qualifying Tournament	2 – 11 March	Various	1	TBC
CAF–CONMEBOL play-off	9–15 April	Various	1	TBC

So when are all the games?

2020 CONCACAF Olympic qualifying

Group A: USA, Costa Rica, Panama, Haiti

Group B: Canada, Mexico, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis

Semi-final 1: Winner Group B v runner-up Group A

Semi-final 2: Winner Group A v runner-up Group B

Final: Winner semi-final 1 v winner semi-final 2
 BOTH finalists will qualify for the 2020 Olympics

2020 AFC Olympic Qualifying Tournament

This is now in the third round of qualifying.

Group A: South Korea, Vietnam, Myanmar (North Korea withdrew)

Group B: Australia, China PR, Thailand, Chinese Taipei

February 3	Australia	vs	Chinese Taipei	04:30 GMT	Juangning Sports Centre, Nanjing
	China	vs	Thailand	07:30 GMT	Juangning Sports Centre, Nanjing
	Myanmar	vs	South Korea	10:00 GMT	Jeju World Cup Stadium, Seogwipo
February 6	Thailand	vs	Australia	04:30 GMT	Juangning Sports Centre, Nanjing
	Chinese Taipei	vs	China		Juangning Sports Centre, Nanjing
	Vietnam	vs	Myanmar	10:00 GMT	Jeju World Cup Stadium, Seogwipo
February 9	Thailand	vs	Chinese Taipei	04:30 GMT	Juangning Sports Centre, Nanjing
	South Korea	vs	Vietnam	06:00 GMT	Jeju World Cup Stadium, Seogwipo
	Australia	vs	China	07:30 GMT	Juangning Sports Centre, Nanjing

After the third round, there will then be TWO two-legged finals.

1 st Leg	2 nd Leg	
March 6	March 11	Runner up Group B vs Winner Group A
March 6	March 11	Runner up Group A vs Winner Group B

TWO winners will qualify for the 2020 Olympics

2020 CAF Olympic Qualifying Tournament

We are into the fifth and final round of the 2020 CAF Olympic Qualifying Tournament.

Two teams remain to battle it out for the one place available from this tournament.

Cameroon and Zambia will play two legs between 2 – 11 March but the official dates are not yet known.

CAF–CONMEBOL play-off

The final team to be decided will be in the CAF–CONMEBOL play-off.

Chile, who qualify for the play-off game as runners-up of the Copa America await their opponents.

The second team will be the runner-up in the 2020 CAF Olympic Qualifying Tournament.

The play-off will be played as home-and-away two-legged tie on 9 and 15 April, 2020.

Fifa starts inspection visits to bidding member associations



Fifa starts inspection visits to bidding member associations

Fifa is set to visit the four countries in contention of hosting the 2023 Women's World Cup in the coming months.

The 2023 competition will contain 32 countries or the first time.

Visits are as follows:

- Colombian Football Association (29 January – 1 February)
- Brazilian Football Association (3 February – 6 February)
- Football Federation Australia and New Zealand Football (17 February – 22 February)
- Japan Football Association (24 February – 27 February)

The FIFA delegation will conduct visits to specific locations as well as working meetings with the bid committees, the main purpose of which will be to assess certain technical aspects contained in the bid books and discuss the overall plans for women's football development in the respective countries.

How the rest of the process will work:

- Jan/Feb: Inspection
- May: Publication of bid evaluation report
- May/June: Winning country(ies) announced





AROUND THE WORLD



JP JOERDELI PHOTOGRAPHY
© Daniela Porcelli

THE **WOMEN'S**
FOOTBALL
MAGAZINE



Eni the woman, the myth, the legend



By Allie Coker

When Eni Aluko announced she had left Juventus and was heading back to London it set all of Women's football twitter ablaze.

Was she coming back to play or to coach?

Was she going to continue on her already successful punditry career?

Or was she leaving the beautiful game altogether and going back to her fallback career in entertainment law?

For this was a woman with many strings to her bow.

Eni Aluko is probably one of the most divisive and controversial England legends of recent years. And I am including good old Gazza on that list. However, unlike Mr. Gascoigne, it is largely down to others' actions that have made her name so

infamous.

Born in Nigeria in 1987 she moved to Birmingham at the tender age of one. This is where her passion for football began. Playing for a local team from a young age, she was scouted by Birmingham City, thanks to her pace and her prolific goal-scoring ability.

'She is the Wayne Rooney of women's football'- Marcus Bignot

It was for the midlands club that she made her senior debut. At 15 she played in the final of what is now known as the Women's National league cup. Despite their loss, it put Aluko on the map and she won the FA young player the following year in 2003.

2004 saw a move to Charlton that allowed Eni to catch the eye of Hope Powell and international duty beckoned. All this

despite her young age (she was still studying for her A-Levels during the Euros in 2005).

Domestically Charlton proved to be a good move for the young Aluko as she picked up more trophies including her first FA Cup.

Spoiler alert: she went on to lift this trophy a further two times with another London club, this time being Chelsea. Charlton also brought her the FA community shield and the league.

Therefore it was a massive shock in 2007 when Charlton decided to trim 'some fat' to make up for their gargantuan fall in earnings due to their relegation from the Premier League. It was then the Eni moved onto the club she is most associated with.

2007 saw Eni's first stint at Chelsea under the tutelage of Matthew Beard. This saw Eni score 15 goals in 28 appearances and started her journey in becoming Chelsea's top scorer in their modern era. As we all know that Chelsea's actual top scorer in history is Julie Newell. Chelsea allowed Eni to showcase her best attribute which was her pace. Very few defenders could outrun, out mark or outpace the young Brummie.

'I had an opportunity to become one of the best players in America'- Eni Aluko

In 2009 she made the move to play over in the states. Multiple clubs took on Eni due to the instability of the American League. Despite being an unknown to them at the time she became a much sort after commodity. Her goal-scoring prowess lifted St Louis from rock bottom to narrowly losing the playoffs. However, the league was on the verge collapse in 2012 which became the trigger for Eni to come home.

A brief stint at Birmingham and another FA Cup win to her name. She came back to Chelsea for her longest Club stint yet. Six years at the West London blues saw title success after title success. Eni was flying high.

'You've got to be a special player to score a goal out of nothing' - Mark Sampson

Internationally Eni was on fire having won the Cyprus cup three times and shone in both the



Euros and the 2011 World Cup despite poor performances as a whole from the team. Though many criticized her lack of scoring prowess and ended up being on the international subs bench during first and only knockout game England played in the tournament.

The shining moment came in 2015 when England placed the highest it had done since Italia 90. After the crushing blow of the Laura Bassett's own goal in the semi-final against Japan, Eni was part of the team that got the bronze medal after beating Germany in extra time.

Overall Eni became a centurion for her country representing them 102 times up until 2016 where she fell out of favour. Much has been talked about the Mark Sampson scandal. An evocative subject which brings the best and worst from both sides. This writer won't go into detail as the facts are freely available. What can not be argued no matter your opinion was the treatment of Eni afterwards.

As with most whistleblowers, Eni became a pariah. Though she carried on with Chelsea and went on to win the FA cup in 2018 as

well as the league, her appearances started to dwindle. The lowest point seems to be when she was brought on as a late sub against Manchester City. Booing could be heard throughout the Academy stadium every time she touched the ball. It's also not clear if it was just the opposition fans who were the Greek chorus.

Eni moved to Juventus at the end of that season where again she proved to be successful. Winning both the Italian league and the Coppa Italia with 27 appearances and 15 goals to her name. You can see why now is the time for Aluko's retirement. Going out in a blaze of glory to shut down her detractors.

Eni is still with the footballing world, having just signed as sporting director for Aston Villa. True to typical Eni she has already managed to offend half of Birmingham by announcing that Aston Villa is the best club in the Midlands.

So here's to you Eni, the woman, the myth, the legend.





NWSL College draft results



NATIONAL WOMEN'S SOCCER LEAGUE

The NWSL College Draft is an annual event which takes place in January where the teams of the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) select players who are in their senior season in college or have exhausted their college eligibility.

Rules of the draft:

The draft is primarily built upon team's ranking during the previous season

If teams are tied, the league follows a 'tie-break' procedure

Draft order may also be impacted by trades involving draft picks and expansion teams

The 2020 draft was held on January 16 in the Baltimore Convention Centre.

Most selections: Orlando Pride

Fewest selections: Houston Dash

Round	Pick	Nationality	Player	Position	NWSL Team	Previous team
1	1	USA	Sophia Smith	F	Portland Thorns	Stanford
	2	USA	Morgan Weaver	F	Portland Thorns	Washington State Uni
	3	USA	Taylor Kornieck	M	Orlando Pride	Uni of Colorado
	4	USA	Ashley Sanchez	F	Washington Spirit	UCLA
	5	Canada	Evelyne Viens	F	Sky Blue	Uni of South Florida
	6	USA	Aleandra Watt	F	North Carolina Courage	Texas A&M
	7	USA	Courtney Petersen	D	Orlando Pride	Uni of Virginia
	8	USA	Tziarra King	F	Utah Royals	NC State
	9	USA	Kelcie Hedge	M	Reign FC	Santa Clara Uni

Round	Pick	Nationality	Player	Position	NWSL Team	Previous team
2	10	Jamaica	Konya Plummer	D	Orlando Pride	Uni of Central Florida
	11	USA	Kaleigh Riehl	D	Sky Blue	Penn State
	12	USA	Kate Del Fava	M	Utah Royals	Illonois State Uni
	13	USA	Natalie Jacobs	M	Washington Spirit	Uni of Southern California
	14	USA	Pheobe McClernon	D	Orlando Pride	Uni of Virginia
	15	USA	Julia Bingham	D	Chicago Red Stars	Uni of Southern California
	16	USA	Camryn Biegalski	D	Chicago Red Stars	Uni of Wisconsin
	17	USA	Averie Collins	M	Washington Spirit	Washington State Uni
	18	USA	Bridgette Andrzejewski	F		Uni of North Carolina
3	19	USA	Zoe Morse	M	Chicago Red Stars	Uni of Virginia
	20	USA	Amanda McGlynn	GK	Sky Blue	Virginia Tech
	21	USA	Cheyenne Shorts	D	Orlando Pride	Uni of Denver
	22	USA	Chloe Castaneda	F	Houston Dash	UCLA
	23	USA	Katie McClure	F	Washington Spirit	Uni of Kansas
	24	USA	Ella Stevens	F	Chicago Red Stars	Duke Uni
	25	USA	Meghan Nally	D	Portland Thorns	Georgetown Uni
	26	USA	Abi Kim	F	Orlando Pride	Uni of California
	27	USA	Sinclair Miramontez	D	North Carolina Courage	Uni of Nebraska
4	28	USA	Addisyn Merrick	D	North Carolina Courage	Uni of Kansas
	29	Jamaica	Chantelle Swaby	M	Sky Blue	Rugters
	30	USA	Chelsee Washington	M	Orlando Pride	Bowling Green
	31	USA	Cyera Hintzen	F	Utah Royals	Uni of Texas
	32	USA	Kaiya McCullough	D	Washington Spirit	UCLA
	33	USA	Samantha Haitt	M	Reign FC	Stanford
	34	USA	Meg Brandt	M	Reign FC	Uni of Nebraska
	35	USA	Aeial Chavarin	F	Chicago Red Stars	Yale
	36	USA	Brianne Folds	M	North Carolina Courage	Auburn Uni



News from around the world

Daly and Taylor re-sign for NWSL teams



Rachel Daly and Jodie Taylor have re-signed for their respective NWSL teams.

Rachel Daly has agreed a new contract with Houston Dash whilst Jodie Taylor has re-signed with Reign FC.

Daly, who joined Dash in 2016 after being selected sixth overall in the 2016 NWSL College Draft and has scored 24 goals in 74 appearances.

A statement from Dash said: "We are extremely happy to have Rachel back and excited to help her continue her development and success on and off the field."

Daly said: "The Dash is an unbelievable club and I feel like I have unfinished business here."

"The best is yet to come and I'm excited to be a part of it."

Taylor, 33, scored five goals in 16 appearances in 2019 and has a further year-extension available.

Taylor said: "I am pleased to be returning to Reign FC for

the 2020 season.

"There have been some exciting developments this off season, which I feel will only strengthen the club and team. I am eager to get started on what will be a promising year."

Zenit St Petersburg announce women's team

Zenit St Petersburg have announced they will launch a women's football team.

The blue-white-sky blues ladies' side will begin competing officially in the Russian Women's Football Championship from the start of this season.

Olga Poryadina has been announced as the new head coach.

The former defender said: "'I know that St. Petersburg is very fond of football and Zenit is a real sports asset for them."

"Therefore, the women's club will make every effort to continue Zenit's traditions."





News from around the world

Christine Sinclair

Canada striker Christine Sinclair has beaten the goalscoring record in men's and women's international football.

Scoring twice in 23 minutes in Canada's 11-0 win over St Kitts & Nevis, she achieved 185 international goals.

The record goes over retired American star Abby Wambach.

Sinclair, 36, has made over 290 appearances for Canada and was recently made 'Canada's player of the decade'.

The highest goalscorer in men's international football is Iran's Ali Daei who has scored 109 goals.



The latest from Spain

The collective bargaining agreement agreed by players in the Primera Iberdrola, Spain's elite women's soccer league, has been delayed again after being blocked by Barcelona and Real Madrid, according to Palco23.

Players had suspended their strike in November after reopening negotiations with clubs over pay and an agreement was later reached on 14th January, with the Spanish Football Federation (RFEF) confirming it would pay the €8 million (US\$8.8 million) needed to end the dispute.

However, the agreement, due to be signed on 20th January, is now reportedly in doubt after Barca and Real demanded the right to broadcast matches featuring their women's teams on their own in-house television channels, Barca TV and Real Madrid TV.



Women's games on TV in February

Here is a list of all the women's games we know that are on TV in February.

Don't forget you can watch the WSL on the FA App.

Sunday, Feb 9: Arsenal v Tottenham Hotspur
(BBC Red Button/BBC iPlayer), 2pm

Sunday, Feb 9: Man United vs Chelsea
(BT Sport TBC), 3pm

Thursday, Feb 13: Melbourne Victory v Melbourne City
(BT Sport 2), 8.30am

Thursday, Feb 13: Liverpool vs Arsenal
(BT Sport TBC), 7pm

Sunday, Feb 16: Canberra United v Adelaide United
(BT Sport ESPN), 5am

Thursday, Feb 20: Western Sydney Wanderers v Melbourne City
(BT Sport 2), 8.30am

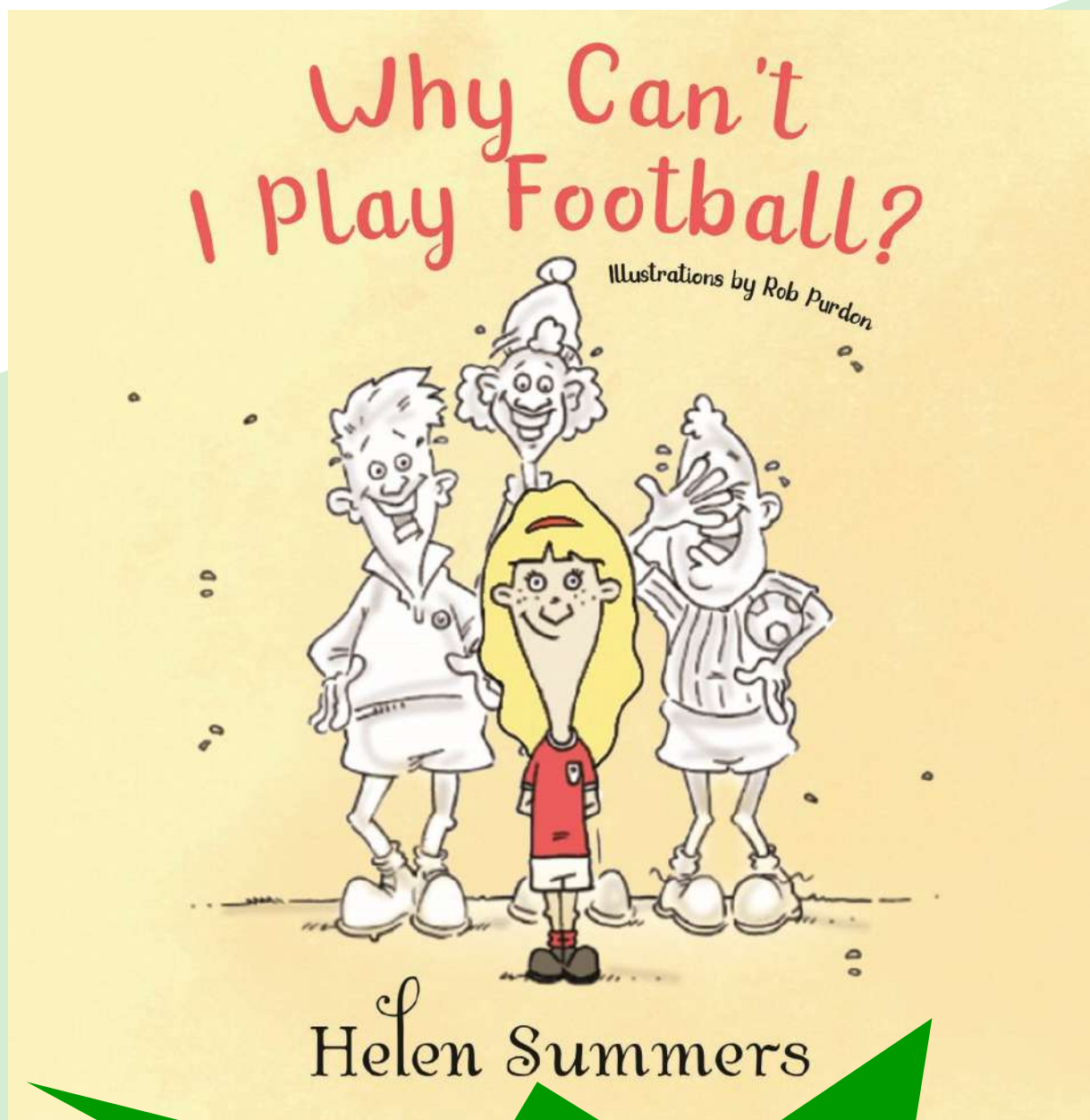
Sunday, Feb 23: Newcastle Jets v Melbourne Victory
(BT Sport 2), 5am

Sunday, Feb 23: Man City vs Chelsea
(BT Sport TBC), 2pm

Thursday, Feb 27: Adelaide United v Newcastle Jets
(BT Sport 2), 8.30am

Saturday, Feb 29: Melbourne Victory v Sydney FC
(BT Sport 2), 5am

NEW CHILDREN'S BOOK OUT NOW



£5.99

Available at Amazon, Waterstones and
all good bookshops

**THE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL
MAGAZINE**