

# WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

ISSUE 36

MAGAZINE

APRIL 2020



#StayHomeStaySafe

## DO WE BELIEVE?

All the latest from a disappointing SheBelieves Cup for England, success for Scotland at the Pinatar Cup, we have an exclusive feature with Ipswich Town and all the latest news from the leagues as we continue life without live matches.

# **THE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL MAGAZINE**



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# Welcome

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## Hello and welcome to Issue 35!

Hello everyone, welcome to our latest issue.

Firstly, there is lots going on in the world that is a lot more important than football so we hope all our readers and your families are keeping safe and following government guidelines.

We are all continuing to work (from the safety of our homes) to bring you a little bit of escape each month and bring you some excellent articles to keep you all going.

This month, we bring the latest news and ideas for the leagues, cups and looking ahead to what might happen to Euro 2020. Ali Rampling chats to Ipswich Town manager Joe Sheehan.

We also look back at the international period which includes the poor form of England, the impressive results from Scotland and the latest from Wales and Northern Ireland.

Hopefully we will be all flooding back to stadiums soon and cheering on our teams but for now enjoy the issue!

Helen Rowe-Willcocks

Editor-in-Chief

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# THE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL MAGAZINE

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# WOMEN'S SUPER LEAGUE





# FA wants Women's Super League and Championship completed by August



With football and sport across the country and the world on hold as we continue to battle Coronavirus, word keeps going back to what will happen if we can never finish all the leagues.

Whilst leagues lower down know their fate, what will happen to the Women's Super League and Championship has yet to be decided.

A conference call between clubs was held in March to discuss lots of options including voiding the 2019-20 season, trying to play games behind closed doors and trying to get the season finished.

It is currently understood that no decision has been made but the season "will only resume if and when it is safe".

Bringing the top two tiers to an early conclusion does not appear to be the preferred choice but it is understood that the leagues will recommence no earlier than April 30.

The FA has now set a cut off point of August for the leagues to be completed which means the campaign will need to be resumed by mid-July.

For now fans will have to wait and see what happens.

These are unprecedented times and with no ideas how long restrictions will need to be in place, it is difficult to figure out when a decision will be made.

## How many games are left in the WSL?

WSL clubs have between six and nine league matches remaining this season.

## What will it mean for the WSL title race?

The title race in the WSL has far from been decided.

When games were suspended, Manchester City lead the WSL by one point, but Emma Hayes' Chelsea have a game in hand.

Defending champions Arsenal also remain in the race to keep their title.

They sit three point behind Man City and also have a game in hand.

At the bottom, Liverpool are in the only relegation spot but Birmingham City remain in danger, just one point above them.

## What will it mean for the Champions League places?

With decisions unclear for the end of the WSL season, one of the biggest questions

remains about what would happen to the Champions League places for next season's competition.

If the season is not finished, how will it be decided who will compete in the Champions League?

One option which has been mentioned is that Arsenal and Manchester City (this season's teams competing) would be automatically re-given the places, but how would that be fair on Chelsea?

Another option mentioned would be to give the top two teams the places (Manchester City and Chelsea) but with Arsenal and Chelsea a game in lieu of City, would that be fair on Arsenal?

Let's face it, if the leagues are not completed, there is going to be someone who gets left behind.

There is no easy way and hopefully time will be taken over the decision if it comes to an early conclusion.





# WSL table

## as it stands

		P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	P
<b>1</b>	Manchester City	16	13	1	2	39	9	30	40
<b>2</b>	Chelsea	15	12	3	0	47	11	36	39
<b>3</b>	Arsenal	15	12	0	3	40	13	27	36
<b>4</b>	Manchester United	14	7	2	5	24	12	12	23
<b>5</b>	Reading	14	6	3	5	21	24	-3	21
<b>6</b>	Tottenham Hotspur	15	6	2	7	15	24	-9	20
<b>7</b>	Everton	14	6	1	7	21	21	0	19
<b>8</b>	West Ham United	14	5	1	8	19	34	-15	16
<b>9</b>	Brighton & Hove Albion	16	3	4	9	11	30	-19	13
<b>10</b>	Bristol City	14	2	3	9	9	38	-29	9
<b>11</b>	Birmingham City	13	2	1	10	5	23	-18	7
<b>12</b>	Liverpool	14	1	3	10	8	20	-12	6

— Champions League spots

— Relegation zone





# Daniels and Matthews sign new deals



Striker Yana Daniels and defender Jasmine Matthews have signed new contracts with Women's Super League side Bristol City.

Belgium international Daniels, 27, is in her second spell after re-joining from Liverpool during the 2018-19 season.

Matthews, 26, also had a one-season spell with Liverpool before returning to Bristol City ahead of this campaign.

The pair have made a combined 34 appearances for the club so far this season, with Daniels scoring twice.

Matthews told the official website: "Ever since returning to the club in the summer it has felt like I've come home and I'm grateful for the opportunity to extend my time at the club."

Daniels added: "This club is on an exciting journey with a great group of girls and I just need to keep working hard, improving my game to help the team in any way I can."

# Chelsea sign Melanie Leupolz



Chelsea Women have announced the signing of Bayern Munich captain Melanie Leupolz on a three-year deal.

The German international midfielder will join the Blues in the summer until 2023.

She has been with Bayern Munich for six years, scoring 18 times in 122 appearances and was part of the Germany side who beat England at Wembley in November.

As part of the Germany squad she won the European Championships in 2013 as well as winning an Olympic gold in 2016.

Chelsea boss Emma Hayes told the official website: “It’s a real statement of intent that she chose Chelsea and it shows just how far we’ve come as a football club.”

Leupolz added: “I believe in what Chelsea are doing as a club and I am excited to be a part of that. They want to win titles, and so do I.

“I also like the style of football they play. I have seen a lot of their matches and I think it’s the right club for me.”



# She's a keeper



© Joerdeli Photography | Daniela Porcelli

## By Charlotte Stacey

After a stunning performance at the SheBelieves Cup and a perfect record of clean sheets this season, England and Chelsea goalkeeper Carly Telford has finally been able to show the world what she's made of.

It is an unfortunate truth that goalkeepers can sometimes find themselves on the end of a raw deal. Not only can it be a thankless task, there are instances in which many able keepers are overlooked. The problem they face, unlike outfield players, is that there is only space for one. Of course, for most clubs there is rotation, but depending on circumstances, this can be sparse season to season, tournament to tournament. In the case of Carly Telford, the luck of the draw has not always dealt her the most

favourable hand in reaching the pole position. Although there have been times during her career in which she has not quite managed to maintain a permanent start on the pitch, this has fortunately not deterred her. Luckily at both club level and internationally, Telford has always been nipping at the heels of the number one.

Carly Telford is first and foremost a finely crafted shot stopper. Unafraid to come off of her line and to impose herself on a threatening play, Telford makes some big saves. Having an eye for an incoming play is all well and good, but unless keepers are able to react with the appropriate urgency, this becomes somewhat obsolete. Fortunately, Telford is more than proficient in both. With quick thinking, and equally as quick hands and feet, Telford is more often than not, quite literally, on the ball.

With a no-nonsense approach between the posts, her resolute attitude on the pitch has seen her prove time and time again, she is a player you want in your squad. Her ability to read a game in its entirety, as well as her acute attentiveness to remain switched on even when she is perhaps a little redundant, has meant she has withstood the test of time. Whether it is her wealth of experience or her infectious optimism, there is no denying that Telford has a quality that has kept her around.

When it comes to distribution, Telford is skilled. She is more than capable in making the appropriate decision. Whether it is quickly initiating a counter attack, or taking her time to slow the pace in an attempt to establish possession, Telford is confident in her choice. When pushing forward, Telford is able to direct long balls with accuracy, and completes short passes with clear communication in how she wishes to orchestrate her team.

Patiently having had to wait until last year's World Cup to play her first minutes in a major tournament will have no doubt caused Telford times of disappointment and frustration. However, with her display at the recent SheBelieves Cup, it was certainly

worth the wait. In moments of panic Telford did not bow down to intimidation and remained unnerved when advanced upon. In fact, Telford positively remained one of the calmest players throughout. Her experienced voice of reason serving as a comfort for teammates and supporters alike. Her performance in front of the net almost faultless, noting that without Telford, the Lionesses score line could have read very differently.

Tried and tested, Telford is a player that can be relied upon to get you out of trouble. But more than that, both on and off the pitch, Telford's drive to proceed with resilience and determination in the face of uncertainty is admirable. It is this perseverance that has seen her edge ever closer to her goal, and when the time has called, she has certainly risen to the occasion. Thankfully, Telford's patience has finally paid off.

With those safe hands and mighty saves speaking for themselves, all that's left to say is;

CT, she's a keeper.







## **Question time with Keira Walsh**

**Do you have any rituals or superstitions before a game?**

I tie my laces on my right boot four times before we onto the pitch. I have to get them perfect!

**Do you have a set-pre-match food?**

It is not very exciting but chicken, rice and beans.

**Who is the best player you have played against?**

Dzsenifer Marozsan—she is technically unbelievable.

**What is your favourite goal you have scored?**

Scoring in the Champions League. It was a long range effort and my first for City.

**What is your best football moment to date?**

Probably playing for England in the World Cup, winning the league and Cups with Chelsea.

**Who is your best friend in football?**

Leah Williamson

**Who is the best player you have played with?**

Either Carli Lloyd or Lucy Bronze

**What is the hardest moment of your career so far?**

The World Cup semi-final defeat to USA and the 3-1 loss in the Champions League (to Lyon in the semi-final). It was hard going into the game having to try and turn it around.

**Who is your biggest supporter?**

My mum and dad

## Peyraud-Magnin tests positive

Arsenal goalkeeper Pauline Peyraud-Magnin has tested positive for coronavirus.

The Gunners goalie has said she first suffered symptoms on March 16, four days after returning to London from Lyon.

Peyraud-Magnin had been playing for France in an international tournament.

Arsenal players self-isolated early after men's manager Mikel Arteta tested positive and many of the players had been in contact with him.

In an interview on Lyon player Elodie Thomas' Instagram account she said: "All the doctors told me that I had contracted Covid-19. I had a lot of symptoms related to this virus: fever, polar cold, constant headache, respiratory discomfort, immense fatigue and loss of taste and smell.

"My mother told me that I had the symptoms of coronavirus, and I was really afraid. The difficulty in breathing followed, I really freaked out because it was stressful, the stress causes hyper ventilation and so on.

"Trying to phone people or say things, I couldn't do it and it caused fatigue like I never had. It put me to bed. It's been 11 days since I have been out of my house at all. Otherwise it's better.

"I hope that there will be a before and especially an after for it to be positive for all of us. I would like to congratulate, a big congratulations, thank you, to the whole medical profession, to the emergency and assistance services. My father is a firefighter, my sister is a nurse. For all those people who go to the front for us, please stay at home. "





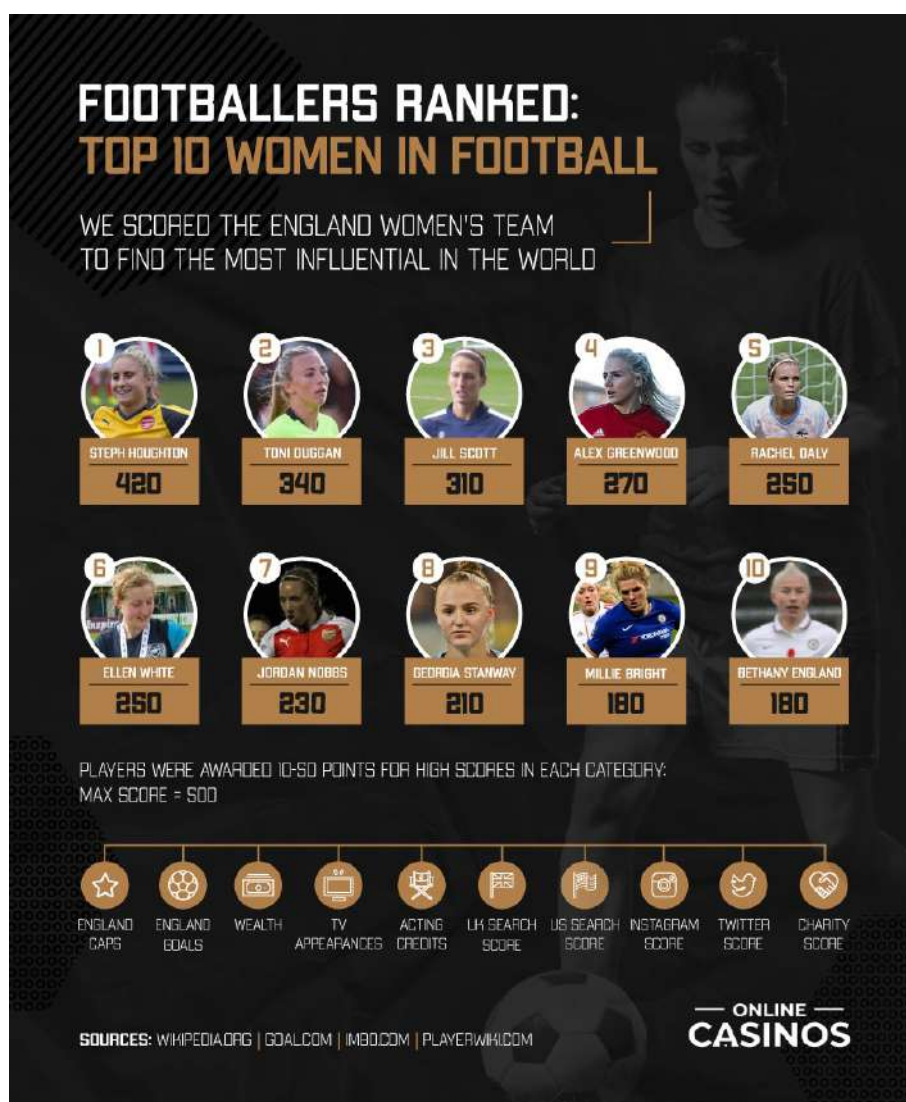
## Steph Houghton named most influential footballer

A new study has named Manchester City's Steph Houghton as the most inspirational female footballer.

Ahead of tomorrow's SheBelieves Cup, a new study by Online Casinos has ranked England's top players to reveal the most inspirational and influential female footballers.

The study looked at criteria such as the number of caps and goals, media appearances, charity work, and digital presence, with Houghton scoring a number of goals in every field.

See the Top 10 below:



# Lucy Bronze named BBC Women's Footballer of the Year



Lucy Bronze named BBC Women's Player of the Year

England and Lyon defender Lucy Bronze has been named the 2020 BBC Women's Footballer of the Year.

Bronze, 28, has won the award for the second time after winning in 2018.

She beat Vivianne Miedema, Megan Rapinoe, Sam Kerr and Julie Ertz to receive the trophy.

Bronze helped England win the 2019 SheBelieves Cup and being part of the squad to reach the semi-finals in the Women's World Cup.

For Lyon, she claimed a trophy treble, winning the French league and cup, as well as the Champions League.

Speaking to BBC World Service, Bronze said: "I look at the list of

nominees for this award - before the public didn't maybe know as much about the players - and now I think: 'Everybody knows who these girls are'".

"That's definitely pretty special. Things have changed so much since the World Cup, and next year with a home Euros it's something that can change even more and get even bigger, especially for us in England.

"In the past two years I've changed so much as a person and a leader. I'd like to think my football has improved a bit - but as a person I've grown up a lot. I'm coming up to 30 so I have to.

"When I was younger I just wanted to play and win, but now I'm taking on a bigger role to help the team win at England and Lyon."







# CHAMPIONSHIP





# My favourite match

**By Derek Purcell**

It was Sunday December 9 2018 and little did I know it was going to be the day of my favourite match.

The game was Durham Women vs Manchester United.

When I got to the ground, I just had the feeling that we could this. We can win this game.

All of my fellow Durham fans were feeling the same.

As the teams came out, we all said that Manchester United looked nervous—and they were.

Kick off came and whilst they looked nervous, I was confident we did not.

The game was end-to-end but we were in luck.

A free kick saw Durham take the league through out captain, the stands were celebrating but not for long.

Just five minutes later, the game was even again.

Half time came, and I do not know what was said to the Durham squad during that 15 minutes, but it worked.

We were even more fired up.

Shot after shot were saved and then a Manchester United handball saw the referee award us a penalty.

I could not watch.

We had missed two penalties in a row and I could not bare the idea of it being three.

I needn't worry, Hepple stepped up and scored.

Then with just one minute to go Kathy Hill went screaming past three Manchester United players.

“Go on Hill!” I scream.

She spots Zoe Ness on the far side—unmarked.

“Go on Zoe!” We all shouted.

What a cool finish—the rood nearly came off the stand.

The final whistle goes and the record crowd (915) goes wild.

It was an amazing day, my favourite match and it showed because the next day, I lost my voice!

What a day.





# Watson signs for Sheffield United



Sheffield United have signed England U17 international Lucy Watson.

The teenage forward joins from Doncaster Rovers Belles where she broke into the first team aged 15.

Watson, who turned 16 in November, was part of the Belles Regional Talent Centre before making the step up.

The forward was involved in the UEFA Women's U17 European Championships first round qualifying tournament in Bosnia-Herzegovina in January as they secured a place in the next round.

The 16-year-old scored against both Bosnia and Belgium and England will now face France, Wales and Slovakia in March, with one team progressing to the tournament itself in Sweden in May.

Manager Carla Ward told the official website: "Lucy's been someone we've been monitoring for a while now.

"She has a huge potential and already is proving a joy to work with."



# All change at Blackburn Rovers



Blackburn Rovers Ladies have announced the signing of Sheffield FC's Hope Knight until the end of the season.

Knight, who rose through the ranks at Hull College's Centre of Excellence, played for Notts County and signed for Doncaster Rover Belles at the start of 2014.

After helping them secure promotion to WSL 1 in October 2015 she had her first spell at Sheffield FC followed by a stint at Hull City Ladies.

Rovers manager Gemma Donnelly told the official website: "I am delighted to have signed Hope for the remainder of the season and potentially beyond.

"Although I've had minimal contact in person with Hope given the current situation, what I do know is that she has experience playing at the top level of Women's football and as an England teammate of Tash Flint.

"From my initial impression of Hope, she is a determined and passionate player and wants to compete at the highest level. I'm excited to see more of her and perhaps she can do to other teams what she did to us last season, whilst playing for Hull.



“The remainder of the season will be a huge test and she’ll certainly be thrown in at the deep end but for me it’s a great way to exhibit her potential and rise to the challenge.

“I look forward to welcoming Hope to the club when we eventually get back underway.”

Also at Rovers, they have announced the re-signing of midfielder Hannah Walsh until the end of the end of the season.

The 20-year-old moved to the USA for a football scholarship in the 2019/20 season.

In the USA, she played for the University of the Incarnate Word Cardinals, where she made 17 appearances, scoring twice before the season was cut short due to Covid-19.

She initially joined Rovers’ Centre of Excellence from Preston North End in 2014, rising through the club’s RTC and then breaking into the first-team.

Head Coach, Gemma Donnelly added: “I’m delighted to have coaxed Hannah back to Rovers on an interim basis during her break from her USA Scholarship.

“She will add competition to midfield areas and can also offer versatility to the squad. I know all about Hannah and what she has to offer, having been at Rovers for many seasons.

“She will complement our squad for the remainder of the season and it’s a very welcomed boost for us at this time.”



# What is the latest for the Championship?

## **What did the FA statement about the suspension of the league?**

“The FA, Premier League, EFL and women’s professional game, together with the PFA and LMA, understand we are in unprecedented times and our thoughts are with everyone affected by COVID-19.

“We’re united in our commitment to finding ways of resuming the 2019-20 football season and ensuring all domestic and European club league and cup matches are played as soon as it is safe and possible to do so.

“The FA’s Rules and Regulations state that “the season shall terminate not later than the 1 June” and “each competition shall, within the limit laid down by The FA, determine the length of its own playing season”.

“However, our Board has agreed for this limit to be extended indefinitely for the 2019-20 season in relation to professional football. Additionally, we’ve collectively agreed that the professional game in England will be further postponed until no earlier than Thursday 30 April.

“The progress of COVID-19 remains unclear and we can reassure everyone the health and welfare of players, staff and supporters are our priority.”

## **How many games are left in the Championship?**

Due to postponements over the winter there are between eight and five games left for teams in the Championship.

In order to complete the season by August, teams would realistically need to be playing again in June to give time.

## **What will it mean for promotion and relegation?**

Aston Villa went into the forced break six points clear at the top of the Championship and are on course to secure the one promotion spot available.

At the bottom of the table, Charlton are currently sitting in the relegation place.

But Coventry United are just two points above them with two games in hand and Lewes—on the same amount of games—are also two points above.

Realistically, it is still all to play for.

Blackburn Rovers and Crystal Palace are only three points above Charlton so realistically there could be a lot of change at the bottom if the season were to play out.



# Championship table

## as it stands

		P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	P
1	Aston Villa	14	13	1	0	39	11	28	40
2	Sheffield United	14	11	1	2	46	16	30	34
3	Durham	14	10	2	2	33	10	23	32
4	London City Lionesses	15	8	2	5	25	24	1	26
5	London Bees	12	4	3	5	16	19	-3	15
6	Leicester City	15	4	3	8	22	35	-13	15
7	Blackburn	12	3	1	8	13	25	-12	10
8	Crystal Palace	14	2	4	8	15	33	-18	10
9	Lewes	12	2	3	7	10	18	-8	9
10	Coventry United	14	2	3	9	19	35	-16	9
11	Charlton Athletic	12	0	7	5	9	21	-12	7

- Promotion
- Relegation zone

# London FA celebrates first all-female disciplinary panel



## LondonFA

The London FA has spent four years recruiting a new and diverse independent panel to join the existing cohort of London FA council members.

The voluntary role of independent panels involves “individuals from an array of backgrounds, sitting on disciplinary panels along with members of the London FA Council to make decisions on football disciplinary cases.”

As part of the recruitment campaign, the London FA has been focusing on ensuring a greater BAME representation as well as making a concerted effort to recruit more females to the panels.

On March 13, London FA held a weekly non-personals with its first ever all-female discipline panel.

Carl Long, the London FA’s Investigations Officer arranged the panel and acted as secretary.

Independent members Anita Poulman and Fiona Rudge were joined by London FA Council Member Louise Dorling, who was appointed as the Chair of the panel.

Speaking to the London FA website, Long said: “Since I joined the London FA around a year and a half ago, I can already see the progress that we have made in diversifying the people that sit on our panels and it has been a privilege to be a part of this.

“Footballing organisations should reflect the people that they represent and, by moving away from traditional panels and stereotypes, should be something that we commit to and become a driving force to highlight that all aspects of football should be accessible to everyone.

“Being based in the capital gives us more opportunities to create a truly unique and diverse pool of people that are trained and capable to deliver a fair and just outcome on all matters, from discipline commissions



to the day-to-day aspects of running the business. By highlighting the progress we have made by being able to have an all-female discipline panel, we set ourselves a new benchmark for ensuring that our panels represent the people we serve and we aim to use this to highlight that we can deliver on being a County FA that champions diversity, equality and inclusion as a core principle, not a novelty.”

Whilst the panel’s appointed Chair, Louise Dorling, is accustomed to being the first female to do many things in football, having being involved in the discipline process for so many years, this opportunity has been a real highlight for Louise.

She said: “I must admit to being somewhat used to being a female-first in the world of football, still dominated by men.

“I have now been involved in the footballing fraternity for over 40 years, having first been the Chair of a Youth League (and in those days Under-13s was the youngest age possible) in the 1970s.

“I then progressed to become League Secretary of a league involving men and boys.

“I was definitely one of the first females in that role, which involved dealing with

everything to do with the administration of the league from fixtures, to cup competitions to results and disciplinary.

“I had to prove so much more than anyone previously in my role. I then kept this role for over 30 years and developed my skills which took me eventually into the London FA and their judicial procedures.

“I have been a qualified Chair (still one of only a few women) and secretary for several years and it is with great pleasure that today I chair an all-female panel.”

On being appointed to our first all-female panel, Poulman shared her excitement, saying: “It is hard to explain how thrilled I am to be part of the first all-female disciplinary panel for the London FA.

“I am sure that this all female panel will be the first of many, and hopefully will encourage more ladies to get involved in developing the game we all love.

“Gender should never be a barrier to participation in any role and in any capacity – it has never stood in my way.”









# NATIONAL PREMIER LEAGUE



**THE WOMEN'S  
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# Dreams cut short



On March 26, the FA made the decision that all Women's Football in the UK below the Championship should end immediately with all results expunged.

The decision means there will be no promotion or relegation in these leagues.

A statement from the FA read: "We have been working collaboratively with the National League System (NLS), the women's football pyramid and the wider grassroots game since the outbreak of COVID-19 on how to conclude the 2019-20 season in the most appropriate way possible.

"These are challenging circumstances for English football and all decisions taken are in the best interests of the game and in consultation across key stakeholders.

"Our primary concern will always be for the safety and welfare of clubs, players, staff, officials, volunteers and supporters during this unprecedented time.

"The steps taken into account the financial

impact during this uncertain period, whilst considering the fairest method on how the sporting outcomes for the season will be decided with the integrity of the leagues in mind.

"The FA, FA Women's Board members and the Women's Football Conference have consulted and reached a consensus regarding the women's football pyramid.

"The FA and the leagues within tiers three to seven have reached a consensus to bring the season to an immediate end and all results will be expunged.

"This will mean no promotion or relegation of clubs between tiers three to seven. Agreement has also been reached to end the Regional Talent Clubs season, which was due to conclude in April 2020.

"We remain in consultation with the Barclays FA Women's Super League and FA Women's Championship Board and clubs regarding the most appropriate way to complete the current season, including for the Barclays FA Women's Super League Academy."



# How have Premier Division teams reacted?



With the National Leagues being finished and no promotion or relegation from this season, many clubs have taken to social media to give their thoughts.

## Northern Premier Division

### Sunderland

“While the decision will lead to disappoint for players, staff and supporters alike, the club accepts it and recognises that in these unprecedented times, difficult measures must be taken to protect the safety and welfare of all within the game.

“Finally, everyone at SAFC would like to congratulate Mel and her players and staff on a fantastic season. We look forward to seeing you back in action, and we know you will come back stronger than ever.”

### Derby County

Derby County chairman Nick Britten said: “While we are all disappointed, there are far more important things than football to consider at the moment and we hope that all of our supporters and their families are keeping safe and wherever possible staying at home at this time.

“Clearly the FA have not taken this decision lightly and we fully respect it. Up until the outbreak, a lot of football had been played which saw the first team sitting second in the

league and the development side top of the reserve equivalent.

“The respective standings of the two squads up to the league season being called to a halt not only speaks volumes in terms of the club’s progression, but bodes very well for the future, and the players and management should be congratulated for their efforts this season.”

### Nottingham Forest

“To the hundreds of you at every home game and to those who travelled to support us away, thank you for your fantastic support this season.

“We’ll see you all again for the next campaign.”

Player Sophie Walton added: “Thank you, thank you, thank you! We appreciate you all.”

### Stoke City

Player Abbie Cartwright wrote: “Gutted this season has come to an end, first season at Stoke City and I have loved every minute of it. Onwards and upwards now, ready and prepared to see what next season brings. Can’t wait to have football back!!”

Chloe Jones added: “Absolutely gutted about this but we support the FA’s decision. We have achieved so much as individuals, as

Teams and as a club we have travelled so far together. We will continue building. Love this team.”

### **Burnley**

Manager, Matt Bee said: “Obviously the league’s decision is a tough one in a football context, not just for ourselves but for all clubs and players. However, the safety of everyone is crucial and must be put at the centre of everybody’s thoughts.

“I am working hard to reflect on all aspects of the club and the season and plan efficiently for the future.

“We will work hard collectively to be prepared as effectively as possible for next season. Stay safe everyone.”

### **Huddersfield Town**

“Unfortunately our league season has come to an end and there will be no further play. Hopefully we’ll start again in August 2020/21 but in the meantime, stay safe, stay home and save lives.”

### **Middlesbrough**

“Everyone at Middlesbrough Women FC would like to send our love to everyone across the world in these difficult circumstances. We will see you soon.”

### **Fylde**

“Following The FA announcement, AFC Fylde Chairman, David Haythornthwaite issued a operational update, in an open letter to our supporters.

“It was announced in this open letter that the Chairman had made the decision to temporarily suspended the Women’s Team from all duties in line with the recent FA statement and had this to say: “Please be in no doubt that AFC Fylde is wholeheartedly committed to its women’s team and will ensure it remains a part of the club.”

Women’s Manager Conrad Prendergast added: “I’ve been in constant contact with our CEO and Chairman throughout these unprecedented times. We have already commenced with plans for next season with

the support and backing from our club being better than it ever has been before. I’d like to sincerely thank all of our players, staff, fans and volunteers for their commitment this season as we now look ahead to the next.”

### **Hull City**

“Following the news of the conclusion of the FAWNL season, we want to thank everyone for their efforts, time and support this season. We want everyone to keep safe and we will be back next season stronger than ever!”

### **Sheffield FC**

“They think it’s all over... well it is now.”



### **Southern Premier Division**

#### **Crawley Wasps**

Naomi Cole said: “It’ll be a memory of what we can do at this level instead of factual. I’m proud to have played a part in such a competitive league. Ultimately everyone’s health is more important than football, which is why decision had to be made.”

#### **Watford**

Hornets’ chairman and CEO Scott Duxbury said: “Certainty is welcomed at a time when there is little around for obvious reasons. This decision provides the opportunity to look to



next season and ensure that thoughtful and appropriate planning can take place in the coming weeks.”

### **Oxford United**

Manager Liam Gilbert told us: “It is frustrating but I want to thank everyone who has been part of what has been a hugely important year for the women’s side. We have built steadily and sensibly and have a fantastic group of players who I know will be gutted not to get the chance to finish the season.

“I want to thank those players, and all of the staff behind the scenes for their support. But what is happening right now in the world is much more important than football and the biggest message I want to get out there is to all the fans. You have been amazing this season so stay home, stay safe, and we will be back stronger than ever just as soon as we can.”



### **Plymouth Argyle**

“With the news of our season finishing early, it brings an early resignation for our secretary Andrew Bellamy. He has been an amazing part of the team and the whole club would like to thank you for everything you have done.”

### **Yeovil Town**

Yeovil Town manager Jamie Sherwood said: “To say we are gutted is an understatement as this feeling of disappointment and discontent will linger in us all. But what I do know is that I am committed along with others to putting this club where we believe we belong and we will work tirelessly until it’s achieved.”

### **Portsmouth**

Blues chairman Eric Coleborn said: “While it is obviously disappointing to see the 2019/20 season come to a premature end, we are pleased that there is now clarity and we can start planning for the 2020/21 campaign.

“Football remains secondary to the health and wellbeing of players, staff and supporters, and we urge everyone to continue following government advice.”

### **Milton Keynes Dons**

MK Dons boss Charlie Bill: “What an enjoyable season it had been and certainly one where I learnt and developed as a coach. Having the opportunity to coach with over 1000 spectators at Stadium MK, getting to our first ever national cup semi final and reaching another county cup final. The group of players were a credit throughout and were a huge part of developing me as a coach, willing to buy in, challenge and move forward together. Plus the staff who made me life easier and played a huge part of the journey as well. Can’t wait to start season 2020/21.”

# How the tables finished

## Northern Premier Division

		P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	P
<b>1</b>	Sunderland	14	13	1	0	53	10	43	40
<b>2</b>	Derby County	15	9	2	4	46	17	29	29
<b>3</b>	Nottingham Forest	13	9	1	3	27	19	8	28
<b>4</b>	Stoke City	14	8	1	5	32	17	15	25
<b>5</b>	Burnley	11	7	1	3	19	13	6	22
<b>6</b>	Huddersfield Town	12	5	3	4	35	22	13	18
<b>7</b>	West Bromwich Albion	11	5	2	4	31	20	11	17
<b>8</b>	Middlesbrough	15	4	2	9	27	52	-25	14
<b>9</b>	Fylde	14	3	4	7	15	24	-9	13
<b>10</b>	Loughborough Foxes	15	4	1	10	24	42	-18	13
<b>11</b>	Hull City	14	2	0	12	23	64	-41	6
<b>12</b>	Sheffield FC	10	1	0	9	7	39	-32	3

## Southern Premier Division

		P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	P
<b>1</b>	Crawley Wasps	14	12	1	1	36	9	27	37
<b>2</b>	Watford	11	9	1	1	40	14	26	28
<b>3</b>	Oxford United	14	9	0	5	44	20	24	27
<b>4</b>	Plymouth Argyle	14	9	0	5	42	18	24	27
<b>5</b>	Yeovil Town	13	8	2	3	47	17	30	26
<b>6</b>	Cardiff City	13	8	1	4	23	9	14	25
<b>7</b>	Portsmouth	9	5	0	4	28	15	13	15
<b>8</b>	Milton Keynes Dons	14	4	1	9	18	30	-12	13
<b>9</b>	Gillingham	11	3	2	6	12	27	-15	11
<b>10</b>	Keynsham Town	12	2	1	9	9	39	-30	7
<b>11</b>	Hounslow	14	0	3	11	4	74	-70	3
<b>12</b>	Chichester City	13	0	2	11	6	37	-31	2

*\*\*Please note the decision to end the season means no teams will be promoted or relegated from these tables.*



# WNL Premier Division Round-Up: All the latest from the league



## By Leed United's Emily Cassidy

The last week of February seen multiple games take place, despite weather taking its toll over the last few weeks affecting games taking place. 4th placed Stoke City took on Huddersfield Town who have taken two losses in the last two games, therefore will be looking bounce back to winning ways. The points were shared in the end of the 90 minutes, with a 1-1 draw between the two sides which saw Town's captain Kate Mallin get on the score sheet giving the away side the lead. It wasn't to be again for Town as Stoke bounced back with a goal from Ella Pemberton in the latter stages of the game.

Nottingham Forest left it late to grab all three points against Fylde, with substitute Helena Constantinou scoring in the 93rd minute to spoil Fylde's afternoon. The reds took an early lead from Rebecca Rayner in the 11th minute, which was cancelled out 9 minutes later when

Laura Merrin hit a long-range effort that flew into the top corner. Unfortunately for the away side, Merrin's strike was not enough to take any points this week. Derby County breezed past Middlesbrough in a 7-0 victory which saw opposition player of the match, Ellie Gilliatt notch 4 goals. 3 individual goals from Rosie Axten, Amy Sims and Hannah Keryakoplis added to Gilliatt's strikes in a superb team performance for Derby. Middlesbrough will be looking to tighten up that defence in the coming weeks, having conceded 13 goals in the last 2 games.

In other competitions, a high in confidence Sunderland side took a 1-0 victory against Southampton FC to reach the FA WNL cup final, where they face league rivals Stoke City. West Bromwich Albion Women sealed their place in the semi-finals of the FA WNL Plate with a 4-1 victory over Bolton Wanderers, in which a brace from Leigh Dugmore and a goal



each from Jade Arber and Harriet James meant the away side progressed. The game was all square at half time at 1-1, until Albion took control of the game in the 2nd half which seemed to be too much for Wanderers. The standout moment of the game seemed to be an incredible overhead kick from Dugmore on the hour mark.

Due to more bad weather, the FA WNL Northern Premier games were disrupted in the 1st week of March. With only two games taking place, league leaders Sunderland beat league strugglers Hull 4-0 at home to make it 9 league wins on the bounce for the lady black cats. The other game that took place was Stoke City hosting newly promoted side Burnley, in which Stoke took all three points. This fixture saw Natasha Baptiste score a brace to take her overall goal tally to 11 in 16 appearances.

The following week seen Burnley increase the pressure on the top 4 with a comfortable 2-0 win at home against Loughborough Foxes. Burnley now sit in 5th position on 22 points, 3 points behind 4th placed Stoke, with the comfort of 3 games in hand over most teams above them. Fylde and Derby County shared the points after Fylde took a 1st half lead. Coming out for the 2nd half a goal behind and having to pick up points to remain in 2nd place, Derby County pushed and pushed until they got their equaliser in the 77th minute thanks to a Callan Barber converted penalty.

In Yorkshire, Huddersfield hosted a confident Nottingham Forest side, but it was Town who took the lead in the 1st minute thanks to a Lucy Sowerby goal. Unfortunately for Town, taking all 3 points wasn't to be again as Forest's top goal scorer Precious Hamilton scored again to take a point for The Reds.

Top of the table Sunderland hosted bottom of the table Sheffield FC. Things went from back to worse for Sheffield when Jess Heald was given a dubious red card, after the ref appeared to play on, in the 47th minute for a tug back on striker Bridget Galloway. Finishing 3-0 in the end, things seemed all too comfortable for the Lady Black Cats in the





this affair. West Brom hosted fellow league strugglers Hull City in a tasty affair with both sets of teams needing the 3 points. West Brom were the winners in a 4-2 victory that seen Leigh Dugmore and Evangeline Gallop come off the bench for The Lady Baggies to grab a goal each that would be vital to taking all three points. This game also featured a red card for Hull's Florence Pegrum for handball.

After gaining a well-earned point against 2nd placed Derby, Fylde hosted another top team with Nottingham Forest facing the Lady Ewes.

Fylde could not replicate the fantastic result they had the previous week as once again, top goal scorer Precious Hamilton scored just after half time to take all 3 points back to Nottinghamshire.

Sunderland, currently on a 4-game unbeaten streak in all competitions, beat Stoke City 4-2. Star of the game was hattrick hero Bridget Galloway, who netted 3 times to add another 3 points to take the table toppers points total

to 40. Mid table Huddersfield Town's next fixture was away to West Bromwich Albion who were slowly but surely climbing the table. It was the away side that lead 2-1 at the break, however 3 goals in the 2nd half for the home side was enough to seal a 4-3 victory for the home side. In the past few weeks, West Brom have made up ground on the teams above them, now sitting in 7th place, a point behind Huddersfield Town, with a game in hand.

Following advice from the FA WNL and government recommendations, all football has been suspended due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Sadly, since then then a decision by the FA has been made and it has been decided that women's football below the Championship has been finished with no promotion or relegation and the seasons void.









# Huddersfield Town launch football academy



Huddersfield Town have announced the launch of a new football academy in association with Calderdale College.

It will be aimed at aspiring female footballers aged 16-18 and will be from September 2020.

The Town Foundation will deliver on the football element of the programme, with delivery based from Calderdale College.

Additionally, coaches will have the opportunity to obtain their FA Level 1 in Football coaching qualification.

All successful applicants to the programme will join a full-time dual football and education programme, with the opportunity to study a wide range of courses through the College including but not limited to: Business, Construction, Health & Social Care, Music and Performing Arts, Sport and Public Services.

The Town Foundation will deliver on the football element of the programme, with delivery also based from Calderdale College. This will include sessions based around:

- Tactical and technical skills development
- Strength and conditioning
- Recovery strategies
- Nutrition workshops
- Psychology workshops
- Performance analysis

As part of the programme, you would typically train for six to eight hours per week and take part in education-based learning for 12 hours per week. However, please be aware that education hours may vary dependent upon which course you choose.

You would also take part in fixtures on Wednesday afternoons, with early departure times possible dependent upon away fixtures.

Scholars will have the opportunity to take part in player development reviews to monitor continual improvement. As part of this, they will assess their own strengths and weaknesses, which will then be compared with the coaches review so that targets and goals can be set.

The programme is being championed by Town Foundation Community Coach, Ashley Vickers, who said: "As someone with a long history in the women's game, I'm looking forward to getting started on the Foundation's new female football academy, and to welcoming our new scholars.

"All of us at the Foundation are passionate about progressing the women's game and the academy is a real opportunity to help identify new talent, while ensuring that scholars can continue their wider learning.

"We look forward to working with Calderdale College as a new partner and building strong ties for the future."

For queries regarding recruitment to the programme or for any further information, please contact Ashley Vickers at [Ashley.Vickers@htaafcfoundation.com](mailto:Ashley.Vickers@htaafcfoundation.com) and 07741 671 072.



The poster features the Huddersfield Town Foundation logo on the left, which includes a stylized blue figure with arms raised inside a heart shape, with three stars above it. To the right of the logo, the text reads: **NEW HUDDERSFIELD TOWN FOUNDATION FOOTBALL ACADEMY**. Below this, it says: "Aimed at aspiring female footballers aged 16-18 years, in partnership with Calderdale College." A list of benefits is provided in a bulleted format, followed by contact information. On the right side of the poster, there are two photographs: the top one shows a group of female footballers in blue and white striped kits celebrating on a field, and the bottom one shows a group of players in blue and white kits standing in a line on a field.

**NEW HUDDERSFIELD TOWN FOUNDATION FOOTBALL ACADEMY**  
Aimed at aspiring female footballers aged 16-18 years, in partnership with Calderdale College.

- TRAIN THREE TIMES A WEEK
- COMPETE IN THE EFL COMMUNITY & EDUCATION FOOTBALL ALLIANCE LEAGUE
- STRENGTH & CONDITIONING SESSIONS
- NUTRITIONAL WORKSHOPS
- ACHIEVE YOUR FA LEVEL 1 IN COACHING FOOTBALL QUALIFICATION
- COACHING OPPORTUNITIES
- PATHWAY INTO HUDDERSFIELD TOWN WOMEN (FA WOMEN'S NATIONAL LEAGUE)
- FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT COMMUNITY COACH ASH VICKERS AT [ASHLEY.VICKERS@HTAFCFOUNDATION.COM](mailto:Ashley.Vickers@htaafcfoundation.com) OR ON 07741 671 072



# How have Division One teams reacted?



With the National Leagues being finished and no promotion or relegation from this season, many clubs have taken to social media to give their thoughts.

## Division One North

### Barnsley

Barnsley Women have issued a very strong statement on the FA decision.

“The discrimination against women by the FA is even worse than we realised when we urgently issued our Press Release yesterday.”

Please see the next page for the full statement.

### Brighouse Town

“Extremely disappointed we now won't get the opportunity to play for the FAWNL title or attempt to defend our WestRidingFACup! We understand people's health comes first, but why can't we continue to play until the end, whenever that may be?”

### Liverpool Feds

“Our season is over with cup's and leagues still to play for across our adult teams. Thank you for your support this season and we can't wait to be back with you for the 2020-2021 season.”

### Durham Cestria

“Disappointing way to end our first FAWNL season but what fantastic effort from all involved in the club. Well done to all players and coaching staff. Thank you to our fans and volunteers that have helped us along the way.”

### Newcastle United

Newcastle United manager Becky Langley said: “We were all absolutely gutted that the season was coming to an end - every weekend we look forward to our games, home and away, so it was really disappointing, but my overall reaction is that it's the best thing. I think we probably would have been compromising the players' safety, jumping back into a season further on the down the line without training sessions, without fitness work - jumping into three games a week could have compromised the players' safety, so I think it's the right decision. We finished the season really strongly - we finished mid-table and we think we probably could have finished higher had we played our last games - but there are bigger things going on in the world at the minute and football isn't more important than people's health.”



**PRESS RELEASE - 27 MARCH 2020**

## **Discrimination against Women and Women's Football by the FA**

The discrimination against women by the FA is even worse than we realised when we urgently issued our Press Release yesterday.

The FA have announced that they are bringing an immediate end to the season and that all results will be expunged, for the FA Women's National League, which comprises Tiers 3 & 4 of the Women's Football Pyramid.

We now realise that the FA also said in their Press Release that "We will continue to assist and support the National League (NLS steps one and two) to determine the outcome of its 2019-20 season as quickly as possible". The National League comprises Tiers 5 & 6 of the Men's Game.

Therefore the FA are treating the Men's National League (Tiers 5 & 6) entirely differently and more favourably than the Women's National League (Tiers 3 & 4). This is clearly discriminating against women.

Our key points in response to the decision are :-

1. The FA are discriminating against women
2. The FA are not taking Women's Football seriously
3. Tiers 3 & 4 of Women's Football should be treated no less favourably than Tiers 3 & 4 of Men's Football
4. The Women's National League should be treated no less favourably than the Men's National League
5. This decision was made by the FA without any discussion with the Women's Tier 3 & 4 Clubs
6. The FA should immediately reverse this decision

The Players in Tiers 3 & 4 of the Women's game aspire to be Professional Footballers. They make huge sacrifices to train and develop their skills alongside working full-time in their day jobs. The FA have just unnecessarily damaged or taken away the dreams of thousands of women Players. We owe it to all these players to challenge the FA to change their mind and allow Tiers 3 & 4 of Women's Football to eventually complete the season in the same way as Tiers 3 & 4 and/or Tiers 5 & 6 of Men's Football.

We are fully behind all measures relating to Covid-19, and we only want the season to continue when it is safe to do so.

We are asking the FA to immediately reconsider and agree to treat Tiers 3 & 4 of Women's Football in the same manner that Tiers 3 & 4 and/or Tiers 5 & 6 of Men's Football adopt.

We are asking everyone in Football to get behind every possible action to get the FA to change its mind and to stop this discrimination against Women and Women's Football.

Lets take whatever action is necessary and available to get the FA to do the right thing.

**#KickingOff**



## **Norton & Stockton Ancients**

“Thank you to all our supporters and fellow clubs in what has ended as a difficult season for us all. Stay safe and see you all soon.”

## **Chorley**

“Chorley FC Women (all teams) 2019-20 season ended with immediate effect. Whilst we understand the decision will no doubt divide opinion, the club accepts and recognises that in these unprecedented times, difficult decisions have to be made and whilst other leagues must still wait we are glad that a quicker decision has been made and we can focus on the future. Finally, everyone at Chorley FC Women would like to thank the players, management, supporters and most importantly volunteers who make this club what it is, please stay safe and we will see you all on the other side.”

## **Bradford City**

Chair Sally Thackray said in a statement: “Bradford City Women's FC welcome this week's statement from the FA that announced the season would not be completed and it would be expunged. We appreciate the difficult issues that the FA have had to consider and acknowledge that there is not an ideal solution that will be agreeable to everyone.

“Under the current circumstances it is difficult to see how the season could be completed, and this solution does at least leave clubs in the same, rather than worse, situation as last August. Now that clubs know what is happening with this season, we can all start planning now for the future. The most important thing is everyone's health and wellbeing, everything else after that is secondary.”

## **Division One Midlands**

### **Wolverhampton Wanderers**

Manager Dan McNamara said: “I'm heartbroken and devastated for the girls because they have worked so hard this season. Although I believe the FA's decision has been made too early, we must accept it, as

it has been made based on the safety of everyone at this present moment in time. Football must take a backseat in this current period, with everything that we are all going through. We must think about the supporters, the players, the staff and everybody involved in football – that has to be at the forefront of our minds and our primary concern. However, that doesn't make the decision any easier on us as staff, on the club, and on the girls who have worked tirelessly throughout this season to put themselves in the position that they have done.

“Although promotion is never guaranteed, it's not just ourselves who will be affected by this. If you go one division above, Sunderland are running away with their league and would have been making that massive step up to the Championship. It's a very tough decision to take but we've got to accept it, we've got to move on, and there will be some big decisions to be made over the summer because it's going to take a lot to motivate people to come back from such a difficult time.

“Our immediate plans are focused on ensuring the safety of all our players and staff and make sure everybody in the UK is listening to what the government are saying, and together we can hopefully overcome this virus. It will take a couple of weeks to let this news digest, and the girls have got to go away and think about their futures and what that holds. We've got a lot of players who should be playing higher in the women's pyramid and at the start of the season, I asked them to come and do a job for me and they've done that, but some of them might want to go on a different journey, and we as a club have got to respect that. “However, it's early days for us to start saying what's going to be happening in the future, but a period of reflection is important for all of us.”

### **Birmingham & West Midlands**

Manager Marcus Webber said: “Despite the season being cut short, it is one that all us at BWMLFC are proud of. Another season of transition on & off the field, yet, another season of very positive steps being taken by

this fantastic club. From everyone at BWMLFC stay safe, and we will see you next season!"

### **The New Saints**

TNS manager, Lawrence Wilson said: "After hearing the news on Thursday that the FA were calling the 2019/20 season null and void, I was in disbelief. I still believe it's the completely wrong decision that the FA have made. There are so many other ways that the FA could have done this and got a better outcome.

"My honest opinion is that the best way to finish the season was to base the league off points per game, as this is the fairest. As teams have played a different amount of games, this would create reasonable a outcome. Looking at our run-in to the end of the season, I believe we could still have finished 2nd in the table, but from 2nd to 5th anyone could finish there. It was very tight, but the FA made the call.

"What annoys me about it the most, looking at it in a general football aspect across men's and ladies' football, is there is a lot of work that goes on behind the scenes at every club up and down the country and now it was all for nothing.

"Not promoting or relegating teams is another issue, teams on the way to promotion have worked to get there and now they can't move up the divisions. Then, on the flip side you have the relegation battles and they have been reprieved, but that has then stopped teams coming up again.

"I know clubs were not consulted at all regarding decisions, when I feel that all clubs should have and that they had to vote on the outcome.

"Don't get me wrong, with the current climate of affairs, it's not nice at the moment. I hope everything gets sorted as soon as possible and everyone gets back to good health and normal life can resume again. I would like to take this time to thank all the of NHS staff, for what they are doing is a marvellous job.

"Also, I would like to personally thank

everyone that has been involved with the club this season – to the supporters, backroom staff and players. It was looking to be a very good season on paper, but next time round we will be back and even stronger to go, and be even more determined to keep improving."

### **Lincoln City**

Lincoln City manager Richard Cooper said: "We find ourselves at a premature end of our Lincoln Women FAWNL season. A massive shout out to all the players, coaches, committee members & volunteers that have made this season so memorable. We continue to become stronger and more professional on and off the pitch. Ta!"

### **Leafield Athletic**

The safety of everyone is paramount. As the FAWNL have made the sensible decision to cancel the rest of the season, I want to thank everyone for their continued support. Thanks to Switch Sport for their coverage. We go again soon...ish"

### **Sporting Khalsa**

"Thank you for those who have worked tirelessly behind the scenes and on the pitch for Sporting Khalsa and all those who have supported us this season. We will be back stronger ahead of the 20/21 season."

### **Doncaster Belles**

Chief executive Russ Green said: "We know all the girls, fans and staff were looking forward to getting back out there as soon as they could - but at this time we all consider that secondary to the importance of keeping everyone safe. We know the girls have been keeping busy, fans may have seen them put videos of their challenges and training on social media, and with a good few results before this enforced break we can feel very confident the club is on the right track going into the next campaign - whenever that is."

### **Solihull Moors**

Chairman Darryl Eales said: "At the moment, football is a secondary consideration but the club supports the approach that enables everyone to follow the Government advice



Regarding the lockdown and that football should take its time before making any decisions regarding the future of this season and the implications for next season. Personally, I feel it is better if all leagues - Premier League, EFL and National League - adopt a common approach and remain in step together. Aside from any financial support from the FA, the Premier League or the EFL and alongside any Government support, the Board can reassure fans that it will ensure that the Club survives the current challenges and will emerge intact with as bright a future as before the crisis."

## **Division One South East**

### **Ipswich Town**

For a full comment see the Tractor Girls on Tour article.

### **AFC Wimbledon**

Player Liz O'Callaghan said: "We can hold our heads high and be proud of what we have achieved this season. 1 point from top with all to fight for but we must put everything into perspective and see the bigger picture. Safety and health is more important than anything. Big things to come for this team.."

### **AFC Basildon**

Player Cerys Adams: "Can't wait to be back with the girls."

### **Billericay Town**

Kim Coster: "Thanks to all that have been part of this season's journey we have made great memories, next season we make more, players we keep engaged as when it is safe we will all start planning for next season and make sure we celebrate together in style."

### **Leyton Orient**

"The FA has confirmed today that - sadly but understandably - the 2019-20 FAWNL season is now over (and has been declared null and void so there will be no promotion or relegation)."

## **Division One South West**

### **Southampton Women's**

Player EJ May said: "With the season declared over, I just want to say a massive thank you to my sponsor. Your support week in, week out is amazing."

### **Exeter City**

Joint manager and player Abbie Britton said: "Whilst we are disappointed that the season has come to a sad end, we are extremely proud of what we have achieved this season. To be sat in third position with half the games played after being promoted last season is an outstanding achievement to the squad, the club and everyone involved. There has been no decision made on the, Senior Devon County Cup Final between us and Plymouth Argyle WFC as of yet. We'll keep you updated when we know more. We completely agree with the league's decision to end the season given the current climate and we fully support the FAWNL. Please remember to keep safe, stay at home and follow the NHS guidelines. From everyone at Exeter City Women FC."

### **Cheltenham Town**

Jess Hawkins said: "Gutted this season is over for the girls, but we will come back harder and stronger next year."

### **Buckland Athletic**

Player Natalie Warman said: "Gutting news but health always comes first. Been very up and down this season but I could not be any more proud to be apart of this club and of the girls and coaches I have the honour to play alongside and work with. We go again next season."

### **Brislington**

"Until we go again, we look after each other."

### **Poole Town**

"Whilst the current season has been cut short prematurely, we're looking forward to the new season already. Please stay safe everyone."

# Tractor Girls on Tour



## By Ali Rampling

Ipswich Town were one of the stories of this season's Women's FA Cup. The fourth tier side completed a hat-trick of giant killings to reach the fifth round for the first time in the club's history.

The Tractor Girls beat Huddersfield of the division above in round four to set up a glamour tie against cup holders and WSL leaders Manchester City.

Playing at the John Smith's Stadium in front of over 1,000 spectators, there was no sign of nerves from a team consisting predominantly of teenagers, bred in Ipswich's successful academy, as they secured a 4-1 victory.

When explaining how his young side were able to handle the pressure of the big occasion against Huddersfield, Ipswich manager Joe Sheehan referenced the team's clash with rivals Norwich at the start of the season, where a record crowd of 761 poured into the Goldstar Ground to cheer the Blues on.

"That game against Norwich showed the journey we were on as a football club and the vision we have in place," Sheehan said.

"It was a night where not a lot of people had seen us before and we'd sort of started to make a really big movement in the last year where Town have got on board.

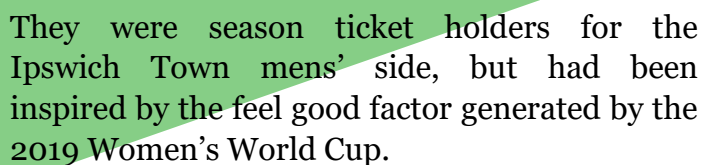
"That was a night where there was a lot of expectation because we want to be taken seriously.

"We want to make sure that we've got people who are really supporting us long term and we had to perform that night.

"There was an element of pressure on us particularly for the young players with it being against the club's arch rivals, so what we did know was that we'd never be in a position where we felt that that pressure and expectation on us again."

Many of the 761 fans who attended September's East Anglian derby had never been to a women's football match before.





Following Ipswich's next home game against Actonians, the supporters group Tractor Girls on Tour were formed. The group of 30, consistently predominantly of men, have since followed the team home and away, with Ipswich consistently recording the biggest attendances in the Women's National League.

Their support was put to the test in the FA Cup, as Ipswich were drawn two lengthy away journeys in rounds four and five. Tractor Girls on Tour were not to be discouraged, as they organised a supporters coach for the 450-mile roundtrip to Huddersfield.

For their blockbuster trip to the Academy Stadium, 400 Ipswich fans made the four hour journey north, spearheaded by the two coaches arranged by Tractor Girls on Tour.

Speaking about the following his team took to Manchester, Sheehan said: “Amazing. Just incredible.

“They’ve stuck by us and they’ve supported us home and away throughout our league.

“Their support’s been magnificent.

“The club, the supporters and the community, they’re with us on this journey.

“Once we showcased what we’re capable of and what we want to do long-term, that’s when there was a movement and the club have been so supportive, the supporters have got on board with us.

“Their support has been fantastic.



“[Against Manchester City] they were great and I think it will be the start of something special and I think that will continue to grow.

“The results help as well, when you’re performing well and winning games people are enjoying their Sundays because of what the team are putting together, that helps the growth. We’re hoping that’s the start of something really special.”

The Blues ultimately sank to a 10-0 defeat to Manchester City, with Ipswich lining up with a team of eight teenagers, while City boasted 10 senior internationals in their starting 11.

One of them was Lauren Hemp, who was forced to leave Norwich for Bristol City at the tender of age of 16 in order to pursue dreams of playing football at the highest level.

These opportunities were not afforded to girls growing up in East Anglia. As a result, the FA set up a WSL status academy at Ipswich (having closed the centre of excellence in 2011), allowing the club to attract the brightest talents from the area.

Many of the Ipswich first team represent England at various youth levels, but as the only non-WSL side in the WSL academy league, they can offer their prodigies first team senior football.

However, there will come a time when these youngsters will have ambitions to play at the very top level domestically. Ipswich are

targeting three successive promotions so that the club can grow to match aspirations of their players. One of Tractor Girls on Tour’s flags has the WSL logo on, representing where they hope to end up. Unfortunately, coronavirus has thrown a spanner in the works.

The Blues were sitting top of the Division One South East (although fourth place Billericay were six points behind with two games in hand, but had an inferior goal difference), before their season was declared null and void following the outbreak. This pushes the club’s aims back a full year.

Taking to Twitter in wake of the news, Tractor Girls on Tour wrote: “This is not the way we wanted our season to end, but this is the only way the girls were going to be stopped from winning the league!

“They are an absolute credit to the football club and should be proud of what they have achieved this season.

“We are all extremely confident that the girls will come back stronger and win the league next May!

“But everyone understands the ongoing situation in the world and as frustrating as it is, is the best thing for humanity. See you next season!”





# How the tables finished

## Division One North

		P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	P
<b>1</b>	Barnsley	14	12	2	0	39	14	25	38
<b>2</b>	Leeds United	17	12	2	3	37	16	21	38
<b>3</b>	Brighouse Town	12	8	4	0	25	10	15	28
<b>4</b>	Liverpool Feds	15	8	2	5	29	16	13	26
<b>5</b>	Durham Cestria	14	6	4	4	33	17	16	22
<b>6</b>	Newcastle United	15	6	2	7	19	23	-4	20
<b>7</b>	Chester le Street Town	14	5	3	6	26	29	-3	18
<b>8</b>	Norton & Stockton Ancients	13	3	4	6	25	33	-8	13
<b>9</b>	Chorley	14	3	2	9	13	19	-6	11
<b>10</b>	Bolton Wanderers	15	3	2	10	16	33	-17	11
<b>11</b>	Stockport County	15	3	2	10	25	41	-16	10
<b>12</b>	Bradford City	14	2	1	11	9	45	-36	7

## Division One Midlands

		P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	P
<b>1</b>	Wolverhampton Wanderers	15	14	0	1	83	10	73	42
<b>2</b>	Birmingham & West Midlands	16	10	3	3	52	23	29	33
<b>3</b>	Bedworth United	16	9	3	4	50	34	16	30
<b>4</b>	The New Saints	16	9	3	4	46	33	13	30
<b>5</b>	Lincoln City	14	8	0	6	44	25	19	24
<b>6</b>	Long Eaton United	15	7	1	7	25	23	2	22
<b>7</b>	Leicester United	13	6	1	6	28	41	-13	19
<b>8</b>	Leafield Athletic	14	5	1	8	30	35	-5	16
<b>9</b>	Sporting Khalsa	15	5	1	9	30	36	-6	16
<b>10</b>	Doncaster Belles	16	5	1	10	24	39	-15	16
<b>11</b>	Solihull Moors	14	3	0	11	18	53	-35	9
<b>12</b>	Burton Albion	12	0	0	12	10	88	-78	0

*\*\*Please note the decision to end the season means no teams will be promoted or relegated from these tables.*

# How the tables finished

## Division One South East

		P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	P
<b>1</b>	Ipswich Town	14	11	1	2	53	11	42	34
<b>2</b>	AFC Wimbledon	14	10	3	1	30	12	18	33
<b>3</b>	AFC Basildon	14	9	2	3	44	31	13	29
<b>4</b>	Billericay Town	12	9	1	2	39	12	27	28
<b>5</b>	Leyton Orient	12	8	1	3	27	14	13	25
<b>6</b>	Enfield Town	13	7	3	3	32	17	15	24
<b>7</b>	Actonians	12	5	1	6	20	25	-5	16
<b>8</b>	Cambridge United	15	4	2	9	16	31	-15	14
<b>9</b>	Norwich City	16	3	2	11	34	69	-35	11
<b>10</b>	Stevenage	15	3	1	11	32	56	-24	10
<b>11</b>	Cambridge City	13	2	3	8	16	33	-17	9
<b>12</b>	Kent Football United	14	1	0	13	18	50	-32	3

## Division One South West

		P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	P
<b>1</b>	Southampton FC	11	10	1	0	53	5	48	31
<b>2</b>	Southampton Women's	12	9	2	1	39	13	26	29
<b>3</b>	Exeter City	12	8	1	3	38	27	11	25
<b>4</b>	Cheltenham Town	11	9	1	1	19	10	9	25
<b>5</b>	Chesham United	12	6	2	4	39	31	8	20
<b>6</b>	Larkhall Athletic	8	5	1	2	19	15	4	16
<b>7</b>	Buckland Athletic	12	3	2	7	22	26	-4	11
<b>8</b>	Brislington	11	2	2	7	22	35	-13	8
<b>9</b>	Maidenhead United	12	2	0	10	8	42	-34	6
<b>10</b>	Poole Town	11	1	0	10	11	37	-26	3
<b>11</b>	Swindon Town	12	1	0	11	15	44	-29	3

*\*\*Please note the decision to end the season means no teams will be promoted or relegated from these tables.*





# Hitting between the stix

*with Georgia Stevens*

@Stix\_Official\_9

As I'm writing, the nation is facing a potential of being in quarantine until June, football is the last thing on people's mind yet it is also at the constant forefront for many.

Football is something that keeps people together. It keeps communities and businesses afloat. It's a welcome distraction for many and for some it is the only thing at the end of the week that keeps them going.

However, when we look at the grand picture, the health, safety and wellbeing of everybody must, and should always, come first. NHS staff and key workers are the real heroes in these trying times and they are rightly getting the praise they deserve.

Now, to try and keep a sense of normality, like always, here is my recap of a very bizarre month.

As a Liverpool fan, we had games to forget in March - out of the FA cup to Chelsea followed by a defeat to Atletico Madrid in the Champions League. I had to then talk about the game alongside my colleagues and friends at RedMenTV. It was horrible, to see two potential cup runs gone in an instant. But, I would relive all of that heartache again tomorrow in comparison to what everybody is facing in these current times.

Like I said, as a fan, March got off to a pretty poor start, I was not happy to put it lightly. It was my first experience of talking on

RedMenTV after a Liverpool loss in a game that actually mattered, it was quite odd but also taught me a lot in terms of how you act in front of a camera when such things happen.

On March 6th, I was privileged enough to attend a Kick It Out Raise Your Game event at Sky Central in London. As many of you may know, or not, I completed a two week's of work experience at Sky Sports News last summer so to return to the Sky Campus and to be able to meet some of my contacts there beforehand was amazing.

The event, like any Raise Your Game event, was spectacular. Being surrounded by experts in the media field and to hear first-hand their experiences was brilliant and inspiring.

March also saw the conclusion of the SheBelieves Cup. I don't think there was any doubt in fans' minds who would come away as champions this year, and after the shambles that was US Soccer's justification of not paying their men's and women's teams equal amounts, it was no surprise to see Megan Rapinoe and co dominate the tournament and make a statement.

Football was then essentially put on hold. We played our final game in the FAWNL on March 15th. We thought it would be the last game for maybe a few weeks, with the league coming back into play around April or May.



It turned out to be the last game of the season. Period.

The FA announced on March 26th that all leagues below the men's National League and the women's Championship was to be cancelled, with all results expunged. To say that as a player this news was disappointing is a massive understatement.

To have a season ripped away so quickly is something that nobody was prepared for and was genuinely quite upsetting. I think its just the lack of closure that many teams will feel, whether they were challenging for the title, battling relegation or had a cup final looming in the distance - the fact that teams won't see an end to their hard work for the 19/20 season is a tough pill to swallow.

But, make no mistake, I want to reiterate what I said previously, health, safety and wellbeing is the main priority.

Training during a lockdown is something that is an experience to say the least. With just one form of outside exercise being allowed each day, I've had to adapt a lot of the work I was doing either at the gym, boxing gym or outdoors, to an indoor or garden environment. I'm lucky enough to have a garden so I've still been able to kick a ball, with my Dad fast becoming my training partner.

It's come full circle to be kicking a ball in the garden with my Dad, as that was how my football journey started - barely walking, size one Spider-man ball, in our yard. A lot has changed since then obviously, the ball is a size five now for starters! Our routine over the past two weeks has become finely tuned and intense, working in a small space and mastering ball manipulation and first touches.

My outside exercise has varied; sprint shuttles, distance running and endurance runs. I've taken the mindset that I've seen many have taken too during this lockdown period - to better myself in one way or another. I've dedicated myself to improving my fitness which has given me something to focus on and aim for, especially when there's so much up in the air about our next season.



Away from football, another challenge has been university. Our assignments have shifted and altered ever so slightly due to the circumstances, with everything now being conducted online.

It's great that we still have access to our education, however it is somewhat difficult in a practical field to suddenly have to adapt.

However, a perfect example of adapting in these times, in terms of media, is the work RedMen are doing.

If you follow my socials, you may have seen that I've featured in a few of the remote live streams for daily news and interacting with their subscribers too.

Chris has also had some brilliant interviews with the likes of James Pearce, whilst his podcast with Paul has also provided great content during these times.

Finally, I want to take this time to promote an article I have written that I am very proud of. It is about my experience with Umbro and the Diamond FC campaign and is published under The Culture Division

([www.theculturedivision.com](http://www.theculturedivision.com)).

TCD is a great brand that are publishing some really exciting and alternative stuff in the world of football media and I'm very happy that they enjoyed my work enough to put their name alongside it.

Having more time on my hands to be writing, I will hopefully have some more stuff coming out soon.

Like I said, please take the time to have a read of the piece and as always, let me know your thoughts via twitter (@stix\_official\_9) or instagram (@georgia.stevo) <https://theculturedivision.com/diamond-fc-a-new-chapter>

I'd like to end this piece by thanking the work of those in the NHS, I'd also like to reiterate the message that everyone is spreading at the moment: Stay at Home, Protect the NHS and Save Lives.

Please look after yourselves and loved ones.



Dear Georgia,

Welcome to Umbro!

We're delighted that

You are now

Umbro



# GRASSROOTS





# What have you been doing instead of football?

We have all been trying to find new ways to keep us entertained during these unprecedented times.

Our editor Helen, for example, dragged her husband pram shopping, our web designer Will has been playing online Catan and writer Jess has been catching up on films she has missed.

So what have you all been up to?

We took to social media to find out!

## LCFC RTC

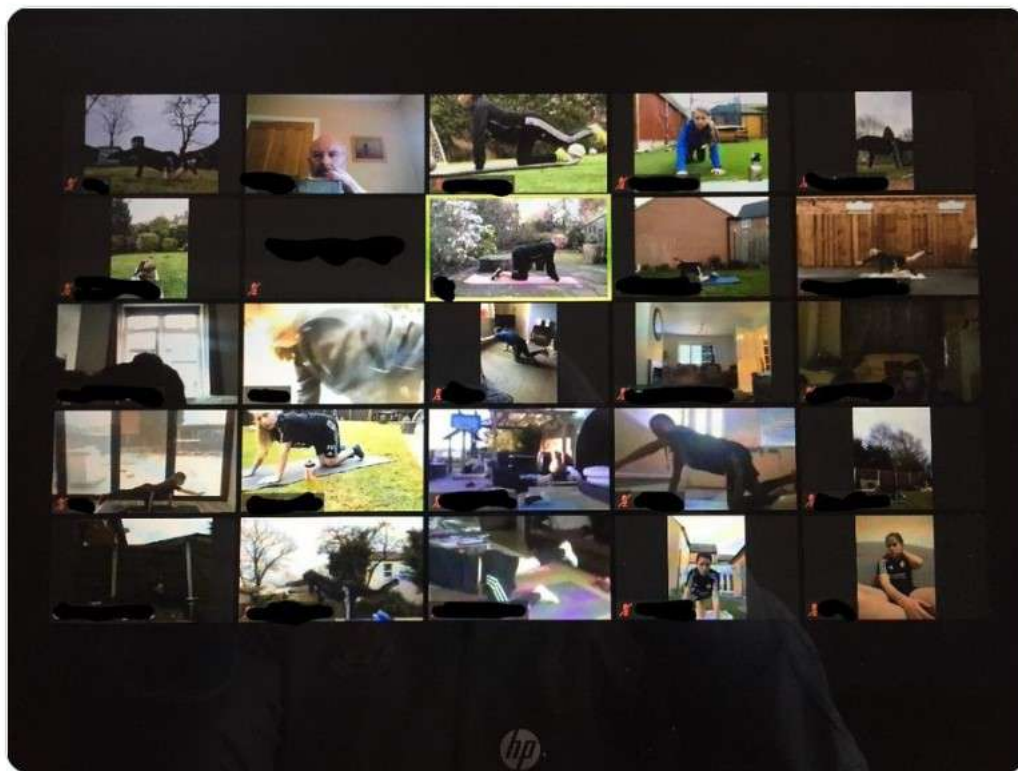
The girls at Leicester City RTC have been keeping their sessions going via zoom. It's great to see the commitment.



LCFC Girls RTC  
@LCFCGirlsCofE



Tonight our U10s & U12s continue with their S&C sessions Excellent attitude and commitment from all  
[#fearless](#)



**Martin:** Cleaning out the loft (it really is about time!).

# What have you been doing instead of football?



**Gooseberry**  
@Gooseberry13

Replying to @womensfootiemag

Playing Subbuteo with my daughter ...#retro



**Amelie (Ammo) Curtis** @ammocurtis · Mar 24

415 keepie uppies today. New record 🇬🇧🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿

4



13

**Wendy:** We would usually spend weekends running around taking our kids to footy, but instead I am watching my husband paint the wall outside. This is seismic, I have never seen it happen in 25 years of marriage!

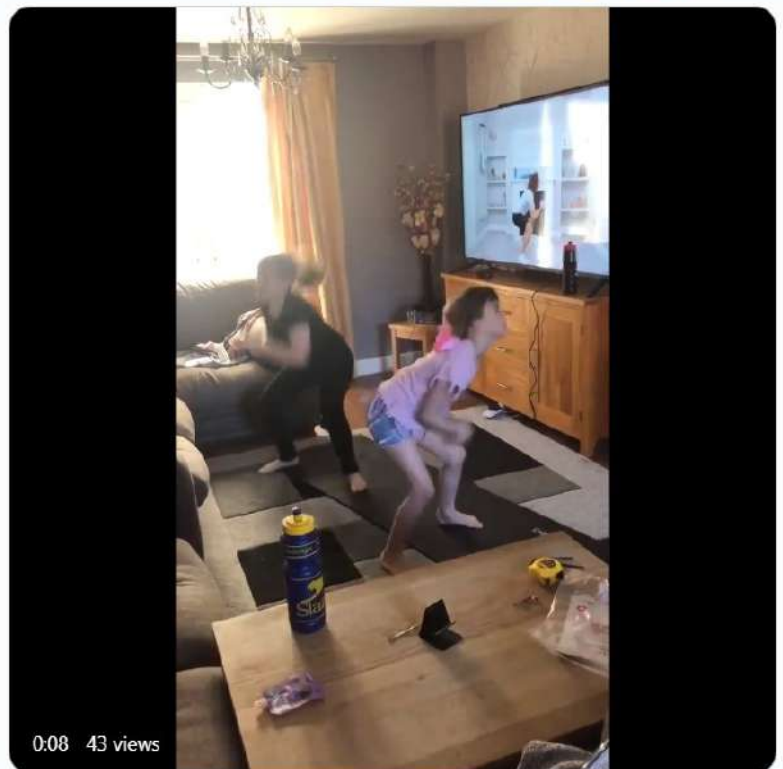
**Tony:** Just replaced real football with FIFA and Football Manager!

**Annabelle:** I have painted a net on the back fence for the kids to play in the garden. Not the same but better than nothing.



**Gill Brown** @mum2coach · Mar 25

My girls getting stuck in this morning @thebodycoach #PEwithJoe 🇬🇧



**Ian Chiverton** @pompeychiv · Mar 24

Passing, first touch and shooting drill 🔥

Nice finish 🥰⚽





# Barclays sponsors new series of Game Changers



It's been announced that Barclays are to sponsor series three of The Game Changers.

The Game Changers features trailblazing women who are knocking down barriers for women and girls everywhere.

High profile guests in previous series include Denise Lewis OBE, Baroness Tanni Grey Thompson, Chrissie Wellington OBE, Lauren Steadman, Clare Balding OBE and Dame Katherine Grainger.

Last year, Barclays announced the biggest ever sponsorship of women's sport in the UK, as the Barclays FA Women's Super League became Europe's first fully professional women's football league.

Along with this ground-breaking support for professional women's sport, Barclays also

invested in establishing the Girls' Football School Partnerships, with the aim of ensuring all girls in England have equal access to football in schools by 2024.

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

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

- **Kelly Smith MBE** - one of the greatest-ever female players and England Women's record goal scorer
- **Jacqui Oatley MBE** - leading sports broadcaster and the first woman to commentate on BBC's Match of the Day

- **Dame Sue Campbell** - Director of Women's Football at The FA
- **Jo Tongue** – Football agent, Director of Women in Football and a tireless campaigner for equality in sport and the media
- **Maggie Murphy** – General Manager at Lewes FC, the first football club in the world to pay its male and female players equally
- **Casey Stoney** - Former England captain with over 100 caps, now Manager of Manchester Utd Women
- **Kelly Simmons** - Director of the Women's Professional Game at The FA
- **Hope Powell** - Trailblazing former England Women's Football manager and the first woman to be awarded a UEFA Pro License

Tom Corbett, Barclays' Group Head of Sponsorships and Media, said: "We are so proud to be supporting this fantastic podcast series which features eight incredible women in football and reinforces our huge commitment to the beautiful game.

"We're working hard with the FA to ensure that girls have the same opportunities in football as boys, and I know this is certainly something that's very close to the hearts of all the women featured in this series."

The Game Changers is hosted by Sue Anstiss

MBE, a founding trustee of the Women's Sport Trust charity and the founder and CEO of Promote PR, one of Britain's leading sports communications agencies.

Commenting on the launch of the third series, Sue says: "This all started as a bit of a passion project for me - hoping to play my own part in raising the profile of women's sport by highlighting these amazing stories.

"It's rapidly grown into something much bigger, reflecting the demand for more stories of women in sport.

"I'm so grateful to Barclays for commissioning this special series on women in football.

"There are so many extraordinary women working in the sport – it was tough to identify just eight.

"I've been overwhelmed by the willingness of these brilliant women to share their stories and inspire others.

"It's no wonder they are all trailblazers in women's football, whether that's breaking records and winning trophies or transforming the way women's football is accessed, managed, funded and portrayed."

The Game Changers is free to download wherever you stream podcasts including iTunes, Spotify, ACast and Libsyn - <https://podfollow.com/1464596772>

THE  
GAME  
CHANGERS  
FEARLESS WOMEN IN SPORT



# CUPS





# Champions League Update



The Women's Champions League was due to be back in March but like the rest of football across the world, it has been postponed.

Uefa has updated a plan for their domestic competitions but before the statement, here is a little reminder of fixtures and the route to the final.

## **Quarter-finals (Dates TBC)**

### **Leg 1**

Lyon v Bayern Munich

Atletico Madrid v Barcelona

Arsenal v PSG

Glasgow City v Wolfsburg

### **Leg 2**

Wolfsburg v Glasgow City

Barcelona v Atletico Madrid

PSG v Arsenal

Bayern Munich v Lyon

## **Semi-finals (Dates TBC)**

### **Leg 1**

Arsenal/Paris v Lyon/Bayern

Glasgow/Wolfsburg v Atletico/Barcelona

### **Leg 2**

Lyon/Bayern v Arsenal/Paris

Atletico/Barcelona v Glasgow/Wolfsburg

### **Final**



Uefa's latest statement on April 1 said that all Champions League and Europa League matches have been suspended "until further notice" by Uefa because of the global coronavirus pandemic.

On Monday March 23, it was confirmed that the final in May had been cancelled.

The statement read: "Uefa has formally taken the decision to postpone the club finals originally scheduled for May.

"As a result of the COVID-19 crisis in Europe, UEFA has today formally taken the decision to postpone the following matches, originally scheduled for May 2020:

- UEFA Women's Champions League final
  - UEFA Europa League final
  - UEFA Champions League final

No decision has yet been made on rearranged dates.

The working group, established last week as a result of the conference call among the stakeholders of European football, which was chaired by UEFA President, Aleksander Čeferin, will analyse the options available.

The group has already begun its examination of the calendar. Announcements will be made in due course.



© Joerdeli Photography | Daniela Porcelli

# SSE Women's FA Cup

## What is the latest for the Women's FA Cup?

On March 26, a statement from the FA included the plans for the FA competitions.

It said: "With the 2019-20 Emirates FA Cup, Women's FA Cup, Buildbase FA Trophy and Buildbase FA Vase all at advanced stages, we are reviewing all options as we seek to complete these competitions whenever it is safe and appropriate to do so.

"Clubs involved are close to reaching a major final and for those clubs and supporters we will do all we can to keep the Wembley dream alive.

"In respect of The FA Youth Cup, The FA County Youth Cup, The FA Sunday Cup and The FA Inter-League Cup, we are also seeking to complete these competitions if it is feasible to do so.

"We will also continue planning for FA competitions to take place for the 2020-21 season."

## Who is in the quarter finals?

The quarter-finals were due to take place on March 15.

- Everton v Chelsea
- Arsenal v Tottenham
- Leicester City v Manchester City
- Brighton & HA v Birmingham City

## When was the final meant to be?

The final was due to be on May 9 at Wembley but this date has been postponed.





# Home Nations



**THE WOMEN'S  
FOOTBALL  
MAGAZINE**

# England

## SBC20: USA 2-0 England Friday, March 6



**By Charlotte Stacey**

Having not played a match since before the turn of the year, the return of the national side has been long awaited for Lionesses fans.

For a first match after their winter hiatus, facing the USWNT had its pros and cons.

This was certainly not going to be a match to ease Phil Neville's new look squad into international duty. But it served as a prime opportunity for the Lionesses to bring their A game, to rid themselves of their World Cup hangover and to show the world champions what they are made of.

Would the Lionesses approach this match with the intent to seek revenge for that notorious semi-final? Perhaps not. But would this match provide them an opportunity to right some wrongs after a somewhat lacklustre post World Cup performance? Most definitely.

Starting elevens in and Neville's line-up was perhaps not what many were expecting. Tried and trusted Carly Telford between the posts behind an unusual, yet strong back four. No

starts for Jordan Nobbs or Rachael Daly, who was perhaps the expected right back in the absence of Lucy Bronze. Up front, the experience of Ellen White and Nikita Parris chosen over the current form of Beth England, arguably the Lionesses most dangerous striker of late. But a call up to the starting line-up for Lauren Hemp, a nuisance of a winger for any defence, even that of the world number one.

The USWNT, as expected, presented a side that meant business. World Cup standout Rose Lavelle alongside the distinguished Julie Ertz in the middle, behind a mighty attack of Tobin Heath, Carli Lloyd and Christen Press.

A late kick-off for England supporters, an urging for a solid start to the tournament was sensed. With Neville's controversial selection lining up against the world's best, it would certainly be interesting to see how this would pan out.

The first half started with the USA pushing relentless hard for the twenty minutes, worryingly finding space unmarked in the box



box and consistently applying pressure to the English back four. Yet a number of big saves from Telford and some robust blocks from Houghton and Bright kept the ball from finding the back of the net.

With the USA's constant threat, the Lionesses needed to slow the pace and regain some composure. At twenty minutes, a moment of possession for Keira Walsh in which she spotted the run of Parris sent a pinpoint pass her way. Parris' head on to goal unfortunately ruled offside. The first real chance for the Lionesses.

The rest of the half saw another couple of chances for England, yet no real threat from any finishing balls. But continuous heat from the USA saw looming threats build from nowhere, the Americans clearly hungry for their opening goal.

Yet to the Lionesses testament, the score remained 0-0 as the half time whistle blew.

The second half began a little more calmly, with the Lionesses the first to threaten the opposing goal. But responding the only way they know how; the USA began to press high up the field; every Lioness now positioned within their own half for much of the remainder of the game.

Yet even with eleven players seemingly taking a defensive role, Press managed to find space between the full backs and curled a stunning shot passed Telford. 1-0, 54 minutes.

To really assert their dominance, it was not long before the USA sunk another. A dink over the top of Houghton and Bright saw, a possibly offside, Lloyd hit the back of the net. Two nil in two minutes. With the set up of the Lionesses now hanging in the balance, a change could not come soon enough. Fresh legs were much needed to keep up with the unrelenting pace of the Americans.

Just after the hour mark, we began to see changes made for both sides. Notably Rapinoe replacing Press for the USA and Nobbs and England replacing Scott and White for the Lionesses. For the USA, their changes possibly just made as a seemingly entertaining rotation





to enjoy the fun they were having toying with England. But pleasingly for the Lionesses, their substitutes did make a noticeable impact, with their best chance of the game coming from England's touch in the box fed in from Nobbs' cross.

However, the damage was already done and the Lionesses could not claw their way back from such a defeat. As the final whistle blew, the score disappointingly remained USWNT 2-0 England.

A disheartening start to the Lionesses campaign. Many areas in which improvement need to be made with the USA seemingly pulling the strings for the most part, yet a lot for the players to take away and learn from.

Identifying the negatives in this instance is absolutely vital in working on minimising them going forward into the next two games, yet it is important to also pick out the positives.

Hemp did not make Kelly O'Hara's life easy on the wing and stood her ground with the physicality and confidence demonstrated by

the opposition. Nobbs' influence was plain to see, with communication between the players seeming to tighten up when she was on the field. In goal, Telford did everything she was supposed to do and more, a disappointing score line for her with the performance she gave.

Moving forward, it is possibly time to rethink the game plan. Playing out from the back is perhaps not always the best option, especially when playing an opposition that push so far upfield. Younger legs in the starting line up could also prove effective. This could mean a quicker and more aggressive start, setting the Lionesses off on the front foot, rather than having to play catch up.

Yet, it is easy to speculate after the event. If we cannot beat the world's best, then we must learn from them. The Lionesses will reflect on this defeat, and will use it to develop their game. But for now, with their next game just days away, they must rest themselves and continue with business as usual. On to the next.







# SBC20: Japan 0-1 England

## Sunday, March 8



**By Charlotte Stacey**

After a disappointing start to the tournament, losing 2-0 to the USA, the Lionesses would be looking to put a few things right in their match against Japan.

Having to take stock and go back to the drawing board, Phil Neville was under pressure to select a side that would make an impact early. After choosing a starting line-up that was perhaps not the best suited to the high press of the USA, Neville made six changes for the Lionesses second fixture.

A youthful forward three consisting of Lauren Hemp, Beth England and Chloe Kelly would hopefully see a pick-up in pace up front.

Although an inexperienced top line, having three standout WSL players lining up together was surely not going to hurt England's chances. A midfield made up with the spirit Georgia Stanway, the vision of Keira Walsh and the creativity of Jordan Nobbs, looking likely to support the forward three well.

At the back, perhaps a more robust defensive

line. Starts for Rachel Daly and Demi Stokes, alongside the more consistent pairing of Steph Houghton and Millie Bright. A start for pegged number one Ellie Roebuck in goal; real opportunity for Roebuck to show what she can do after Carly Telford's outstanding performance on Friday.

Looking at the line-up, it was perhaps a much more comfortable selection for supporters to get behind. Yet, even with this, the Lionesses would need to graft to take a win against this competent Japanese side. Donning their berry blush kit, the Lionesses lined up in New Jersey to try their hand once again.

A quick start for Japan saw them test their luck with a shot just fifteen seconds after kick off. But fast to react, Hemp gave England their first chance of the match the other end three minutes in. A slightly sloppy start for both sides. Japan taking the upper hand quickly again, the Lionesses left too much space with a moment of untidy defending, meaning Roebuck had to get a strong hand on the shot to send it wide.





The first half on the whole was pretty evenly sided, with nothing much to separate the two sides in terms of possession and chances. Both sides making promising attacks but neither one taking advantage of their position. The Lionesses finishing ball not managing to hit the target, and Japan's long shots not quite hitting the mark. England perhaps looking the more likely to score towards the end of the half, patiently building up for that opening. Yet it remained all square at half time.

A change in tempo was needed from either side to get things moving to start the second half. A mistake at the back by Sugita saw Walsh manage to send a ball England's way, yet with a tight angle to work with England could not finish it. At the other end, a well timed reverse ball saw Japan with possibly their best chance of the match; Houghton dealt with the threat well and sent it packing.

A triple change at the hour mark saw the Lionesses take on a more experienced formation.

Toni Duggan, Leah Williamson and Nikita Parris coming into the fold and making an immediate impact. Parris drawing a foul in a dangerous area; the set piece delivered well by Duggan, yet once again the Lionesses not able to make anything from it. Japan were certainly not willing to go down without a fight, and a looming danger presented by Tanaka saw Bright and Houghton have to make a number of blocks in succession.

England and Stanway off, Ellen White and Lucy Staniforth on, the Lionesses were now hungry to break the deadlock. Another mistake at the back by Japan handed the ball to Duggan, who swiftly slid the ball into the box to White. White's clinical finish prevailed once again, absolutely proving why she is so dangerous in an England shirt. The Lionesses took the lead at 83 minutes. Their opening goal looking to open the floodgates, the Lionesses did threaten more heavily in the final few minutes, yet they could not convert any more chances. Full time whistle blown, Japan – 0, England - 1.

A much calmer performance from the Lionesses today, yet perhaps still not quite as organised as one would have hoped. The starting front three saw plenty of the ball which is hopeful, their team mates managing to provide them with the service to attack. Unfortunately, both England and Hemp missed chances that domestically perhaps they would have scored, however the gravitas of the occasion should be considered in this instance. International football is a step up from club level, even for players with such form.

Defensively a much more settled display, Bright and Houghton not leaving an awful lot for Roebuck to do, especially during the second half. Yet Roebuck stepped up valiantly when needed. Duggan and Nobbs proving to be the Lionesses standout players today,

excellent movement and accurate passing consistently seen from both. Duggan in particular lending herself to a number of the Lionesses attacks.

Overall, a more settled game for England, who were possibly unlucky in being caught out a number of times with Japan playing them offside. A much better keep of possession and an entirely improved cohesive unit compared with their last game. But more work needed to be done in finishing in the final third. Perhaps not the most convincing win, but an important one nonetheless. Now calls the time for the Lionesses to amp it up in preparation for their next game, against a rather devilish looking Spain.







# SBC20: England 0-1 Spain

## Wednesday, March 11



### By Charlotte Stacey

Coming off of a win from Sunday's game against Japan, England supporters were hopeful that the Lionesses would end their SheBelieves campaign on a high.

With a more convincing penultimate performance, the Lionesses would be looking to achieve the same in their final fixture against Spain. With Spain laying second in the table, and both England and Spain having three points each, the winner of this match was looking likely to place second, with Japan and USA still to play the final game.

Realistically with it looking unlikely that they would defend the title, a silver ranking would leave the Lionesses with a good feeling before heading home.

True to his word, Phil Neville made eight changes to his starting line-up. Captain Steph Houghton and midfielder Keira Walsh being rested, meant a start for Abbie McManus, and a mix up in the middle. Leah Williamson moving forward to play alongside captain for

the night Jill Scott. Jordan Nobbs, Nikita Parris and Toni Duggan sitting just behind goal scorer Ellen White, who alone is leading the line. Beth England and standout player Lauren Hemp both out of the squad for the final game with injury and illness respectively.

For Spain, seven changes to their line-up, with the very dangerous Jennifer Hermoso surprisingly starting on the bench. Top goal scorer of the tournament Lucia Garcia starting up front. Looking at Spain's performances, they have certainly impressed.

Keeping the USWNT at bay until the bitter end and somewhat unexpectedly giving as good as they got, the Lionesses needed to approach this game with a headstrong mentality and a pressing momentum. With temperatures soaring in Texas, at 5:15pm, the first of the final game was underway.

Spain began to press very early with Garcia putting Carly Telford under pressure in the first minute. But the Lionesses soon turned it around with a string of chances throughout the



the first half. The first big threatening play came from Parris, whose strong run, finished with a naughty nutmeg, couldn't connect a ball to teammate. By 15 minutes, the Lionesses had another go, Rachel Daly's class touch led to a quick flick on from Jill Scott into the path of White. White unfortunately gets too much on it and sends it over the bar.

Spain did manage to find a few little passages to threaten, most notably a ball over the head of both centre backs looking for Garcia, yet nothing coming of it. The Lionesses pushing again with some very demanding runs from Parris, Nobbs and White, saw England find a hopeful rhythm for the most part of the first 45. Around the half an hour mark, a characteristic Williamson – Nobbs link up, saw Nobbs feed a ball into White. White's shot is saved and comes out to Parris, the rebound again blocked.

A very good chance for England. The Lionesses certainly looked to be the stronger side at the end of the first half and should have converted those chances to open the score line, but as it stood, at half time the match was goalless.

With Spain coming into the second half on the back foot, changes needed to be made. A triple change of Putellas, Corredera and Cardona, for Sosa, Ouahabi and Caldentey, saw them start with a much more experienced feel.

For England, Houghton replacing Bright for the final 45. The Spanish changes certainly made an impact, with a sneaky run down the right getting the better of Daly threatening within five minutes of the restart. Telford not having much to do in the first half was now being heavily tested, Spain hammering their attacks, warning the English back four.

A lapse of concentration from Duggan meant Spain were almost able to capitalise, taking out McManus and Houghton, Telford's mighty save kept the score line level. A wake-up call for the Lionesses. With substitutes peppered throughout for both sides, it was youngsters Chloe Kelly and debutant Alessia Russo that ended up shaking things up for England at 70 minutes. A sparkling first minute for Kelly saw her win and direct in a dangerous corner, the



rebound returning to her, but possibly rash in her decision, she placed her shot wide. A flash of quality for the Lionesses in the second half.

Spain continued to press hard, drawing England back into their own half for much of the remainder of the game, playing now as we had expected in the first half. At 83 minutes another Spanish attack went out for a corner. Perfect delivery in, perfect head to the ball. Telford no chance. Putellas put Spain ahead with under ten minutes to go. One last go at either end, with Garcia whizzing one wide of Telford, and Parris getting a foot to Kelly's free-kick, but neither managing to get it over the line. The final whistle blew, England – nil, Spain – 1.

A pleasing first half set the Lionesses in good stead, there was confidence and creativity up front, and solidarity at the back, with Spain not even managing a shot on goal. Excellent long passes flying from Williamson and Bright, and a relentless work rate shown by White and Parris. England were perhaps unfortunate not to have scored, yet they have the quality to finish those chances and they must execute this.

The Spanish half time team talk, along with their power from the bench, saw them restart as a completely different team. England seemingly lured into a false sense of security very much found themselves on the back foot and panicked. A few careless mistakes and

some sloppy passes and Spain were able to amp up the pressure with ease. Yet even so, there were individual performances that excelled. McManus made a number of timely challenges that saved the outstanding Telford from having to work harder than she already was. Kelly and Russo's arrival saw the hunger of two players determined to make difference, and this was noted.

It is worth mentioning that the officiating of this game was questionable at certain points. The referee pulled back play and blew up a number of times cutting short the advantage for both sides. Parris in particular suffered because of this. Yellow cards came out far too quickly for challenges that were fair, and at one point Greenwood's set piece was called up for no apparent reason.

But in spite of this, the Lionesses performance should have been enough to at least get on the scoresheet. Neville's tactics perhaps once again questionable, with Spain ending with a more experienced team, and England finishing with a lesser one. But credit to Spain, they brought out the big guns and it paid off.

A bitter end to a disappointing campaign for the Lionesses, but some big individual performances to applaud. Now calls the time to regroup and refocus. We have the tools, let's use them.





# SHEBELIEVES CUP

## Other results

### Spain 3-1 Japan

Putellas 8; Garcia 48, 78;  
Iwabuchi 44



### USA 1-0 Spain

Ertz 87

### USA 3-1 Japan

Rapinoe 7; Press 26; Horan  
83; Iwabuchi 58







ELIEVES CUP

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CHAMPIONS



# Scotland win Pinatar Cup



Scotland Women have won the inaugural edition of the Pinatar Cup.

The round robin tournament consisted of four teams—Scotland, Northern Ireland, Iceland and Ukraine.

Scotland started their tournament with a 3-0 win over Ukraine thanks to a brace from Martha Thomas and a goal from Claire Emslie.

In the second game, Shelley Kerr's side took on Iceland, who are ranked 18th in the world.

The game was a tight one but it was Abbi Grant's goal on 55 minutes which proved to be enough for Scotland.

Scotland's final game came against Home Nations' rivals Northern Ireland.

The game did not get off to an expected start as they fell 1-0 down in the first five minutes but a quick response from the Scots got them back into the game.

Goals from Grant and Erin Cuthbert gave them a 2-1 lead at half-time.

The game was goalless in the second half but it was enough to give them a 100% record in the tournament and the chance to lift the trophy.

Scotland head coach Kerr told the BBC: "I'm delighted overall. It's difficult to stay focussed and put in three exceptional performances.

"They put us under pressure early on in the game but it was a great response.

"They showed great character to bounce back and score two goals, and we ended winning the game quite comfortably.

"We are disappointed to concede but overall it's been a fantastic week."

## Full Results

March 4	Northern Ireland	0-1	Iceland	14:00 GMT	Pinatar Arena, Murcia
	Ukraine	0-3	Scotland	18:00 GMT	Pinatar Arena, Murcia
March 7	Scotland	1-0	Iceland	14:00 GMT	Pinatar Arena, Murcia
	Ukraine	4-0	Northern Ireland	18:00 GMT	Pinatar Arena, Murcia
March 10	Northern Ireland	1-2	Scotland	14:00 GMT	Pinatar Arena, Murcia
	Iceland	1-0	Ukraine	18:00 GMT	Pinatar Arena, Murcia







# New BBC documentary on Glasgow City



A new BBC ALBA documentary about the founders of Glasgow City FC reveals they nearly gave up the club when their personal circumstances made it difficult to carry on.

Carol Anne Stewart 'Cas' and Laura Montgomery set up the football club in 1998 to create opportunities for women and girls in the football world.

Denied a pathway into football when they were growing up, the formidable duo were determined to change things for the future generation of girls.

Stewart, 53 said: "I just remember thinking, 'I've just got to change it. I've just got to do something to make this possible and keep pushing forwards so that it is possible because it's not fair."

Montgomery, 44 added: "Even as a young kid, I would never accept that girls shouldn't be allowed to do something .... even though everyone perceived that as the norm, I certainly didn't perceive it as the norm and I set out to change it."

The trailblazers rebelled against patriarchal constraints to create Scotland's most successful women's football team, winning 13 League titles in succession and reaching the UEFA Women's Champions League quarter finals twice.

However, in exclusive interviews for the programme, they have revealed that they were very close to giving it all up at the height of the club's success in 2016.

It was around this time that Stewart and Montgomery were dealing with crippling personal issues.

Montgomery's partner of 16 years, Kat Linder, was struggling with mental health illness and Stewart's brother was diagnosed with a terminal illness – Motor Neurone Disease (MND), and they discussed whether they could continue running the club because they wanted to be there for their loved ones.

Stewart said: “The Christmas before Kat died ....we both said, 'I'm really struggling here, I can't get on' and Laura said 'I think I might have to give it up ....because I need to be around for Kat to help and support her' ... and I said, well what do we do?”

Montgomery's brother sadly died in August 2017, aged just 48, and in February last year Stewart received the devastating news that her partner Kat had tragically taken her own life.

Stewart said: “The day Kat died is the worst day of my life and always will be. Kat was my world.

“When you lose that one thing that is the real reason to get you up in the morning, you realise that you don't get as much enjoyment out of stuff ...when something good happens to me or something quirky, the only person I want to tell it to, is Kat, but...she's not there to tell anymore and it's...it's really challenging I really miss her.”

Writer, producer and director Margot McCuaig, said: “Since childhood, Cas and Laura have pushed against stereotypical perceptions that football is a man's game and have worked hard to break down gender barriers.

“In realising their ambition to create their own football club they have subsequently created opportunities for girls to follow their dreams in a welcoming environment.

“Their ongoing work ethic has been consistently remarkable and this film goes some way to providing an insight into Cas and Laura's role, not just as trailblazers in women's football, but as pioneers creating a transformation in Scottish society.”

Glasgow City FC face challenges in the future due to ever increasing competition but it comes as no surprise that Laura and Cas have a plan up their sleeve.

*The Women Who Built Glasgow City will be shown on BBC ALBA on Sunday, April 5 at 9pm. It will be available for 30 days on BBC iPlayer.*







# Wales

## 2-0

# Estonia

Wales put in a dominant performance at the Racehorse Ground to beat Estonia 2-0 in a friendly.

It was the first time Wales were back in Wrexham in over six years with Estonia managed by former Wales boss Jarmo Matikainen.

Wales had several chances in the first half with Kayleigh Green at the centre of the action.

Green was denied by goalkeeper Karina Kork inside 10 minutes when she tipped her effort around the post at full stretch and the sides went into half-time equal.

An attacking Wales secured the win thanks to second half goals from Megan Wynne and substitute Nadia Lawrence.

Wynne, on loan at Bristol City from Tottenham, opened the scoring with her debut international goal before Lawrence converted Angharad James' fine cross.

Ludlow told BBC Sport Wales: "We give lots of respect for the Estonian team under relatively new management in Jarmo Matikainen.

"We know how good a job he did with us and they are far more organised than they ever have been.

"There were times tonight for us where we could have been more clinical in our decisions but across the board it was good competition for us.

"It was what we needed at this point in time."



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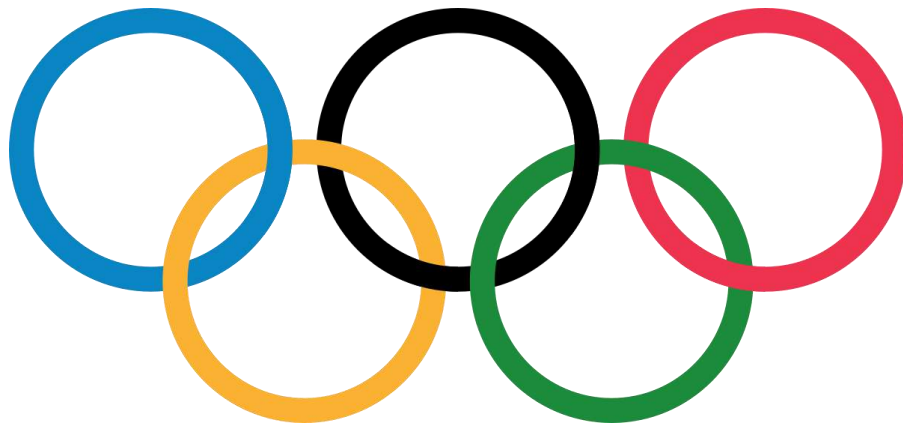






# Tokyo 2020

## postponed



The Tokyo Olympic Games has been postponed and moved to 2021 due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

The International Olympic Committee's (IOC) executive board met on March 30 to make the decision that it will be held between July 23 and August 8, 2021.

The Olympics will still be called Tokyo 2020 despite taking place in 2021.

The Paralympic Games, originally due to start on 24 August, 2020, will now take place between 24 August and 5 September, 2021.

The FA's director of women's football, Sue Campbell, said:

"The health of everyone - players, staff and supporters - is our foremost concern and our international sporting calendar must respect and respond to that priority above all else. We are therefore fully supportive of the IOC's decision to postpone the Olympic Games.

"With the Home Nations coming together as Team GB Women's Football, we have been planning for - and very much looking forward to - the Olympics this summer.

"However for the time being our shared focus must be on staying safe, looking after our friends and loved ones, and following the advice of Government and our incredibly committed and brave frontline health professionals.

"Of course our minds are also focused on the UEFA Women's EURO and we are in constant dialogue with UEFA in respect of that tournament. We know all our partner organisations have the health and wellbeing of athletes and support staff at the heart of their decision making and we await further information from UEFA in due course.

"Rest assured we can look forward to celebrating our sport in happier and safer times to come."

# 2021 Euros moved to 2022



The Women's European Championships—set to be held in England in 2021—will be moved to the summer of 2022.

Fans and teams have been awaiting news of whether it would be moved after both the men's European Championship (2020) and the 2020 Tokyo Olympics were postponed to 2021 due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Three European teams—England, Netherlands and Sweden—have already qualified for the Olympics.

The 2021 Euros is still in the qualifying stages—which have also been postponed.

For the home nations, Scotland are second in Group E, Wales are second in Group C, and Northern Ireland are fourth in Group C.

England manager Phil Neville was set to lead the Team GB squad and England in the

Euros but his contract is set to run out in 2021.

The FA have yet to say whether Neville's contract will be extended.

European football's governing body Uefa announced a series of decisions about its competitions on Wednesday following a meeting of its 55 member associations, but it is yet to confirm that Euro 2021 will become Euro 2022.

The Danish FA did, however, say on its website that the postponement had been announced during the video conference.

There are still decisions to be made about when the tournament will take place, largely because of the Commonwealth Games, which are set to take place in Birmingham from 27 July to 7 August.



# Around the World





# News from around the world

## Melbourne City win W League for fourth time

Melbourne City beat defending champions Sydney FC 1-0 to win their fourth W-League title in five years.

Despite the Coronavirus the Australian women's 2019-20 season reached a conclusion on March 21.

The game was held behind closed doors with just a handful of family and friends allowed into Melbourne's Rectangular Stadium.

Captain Steph Catley's goal after 15 minutes was enough to keep City unbeaten for the season – 11 wins and one draw in 12 regular season fixtures.

Three-time champion Sydney fought well and had a chance for a penalty but it was turned away despite the ball appearing to hit Catley's outstretched arm.

American forward Veronica Latsko had the best chance for an equaliser after 48 minutes when she went through one-on-one on Lydia Williams but the keeper got enough on the shot to allow Ellie Carpenter to clear the ball off the line.

**Full time:** Melbourne City 1-0 Sydney

**Melbourne:** Lydia Williams, Emma Checker, Lauren Barnes, Rebekah Stott, Yukari Kinga (Milica Mijatovic), Aivi Luik, Emily van Egmond, Steph Catley, Ellie Carpenter, Kyah Simon (Ally Watt), Claire Emslie

**Unused Subs:** Melissa Barbieri, Rhali Dobson, Tyla-Jay Vlajnic

**Sydney:** Aubrey Bledsoe, Ellie Brush, Alanna Kennedy, Lindsay Agnew, Ally Green, Teresa Polias, Ray Taylor (Mackenzie Hawkesby), Natalie Tobin (Amy Sayer), Remy Siemsen (Princess Ibani), Veronica Latkao, Sofia Huerta

**Unused Subs:** Angelique Hristodoulou, Trudy Burke







# News from around the world



## Irish Women's League to return in June

The FAI has made plans to resume the 2020 Women's National League on the last weekend of June.

The return date is a week after the scheduled return of the SSE men's league.

Each of the nine teams will play 16 games, with the Women's Senior Cup to run in tandem with the league season.

It has been announced that the League Cup will be deferred for a season.

Peamount United are defending champions after finishing two points clear of Shelbourne who claimed the League Cup.

Peamount were beaten 3-2 by Wexford Youths in the Senior Cup final.

Athlone Town, Bohemians and Treaty United have all joined the league for the first time in 2020, which was originally set to kick-off on Saturday March 14th.

All football in Ireland has been postponed in the country due to coronavirus.

## Orlando Pride sign England midfielder Jade Moore

England midfielder Jade Moore has left WSL side Reading to join Orlando Pride on a one-year deal.

The 29-year-old will join the NWSL side when the season gets underway after it was postponed due to coronavirus.

Moore reunites with former Birmingham coach Marc Skinner.

He told the official website: "She possesses a great skill to travel quickly in small spaces, control the pace of the game and her ability to not only read the game well but destroy attacks before they start will bring a much needed dynamic to our midfield.

Moore, who has earned 50 England caps since her debut in 2021, featured 54 times for Reading since joining the club in 2017 following the collapse of Notts County.

She added: "This is a fresh challenge.

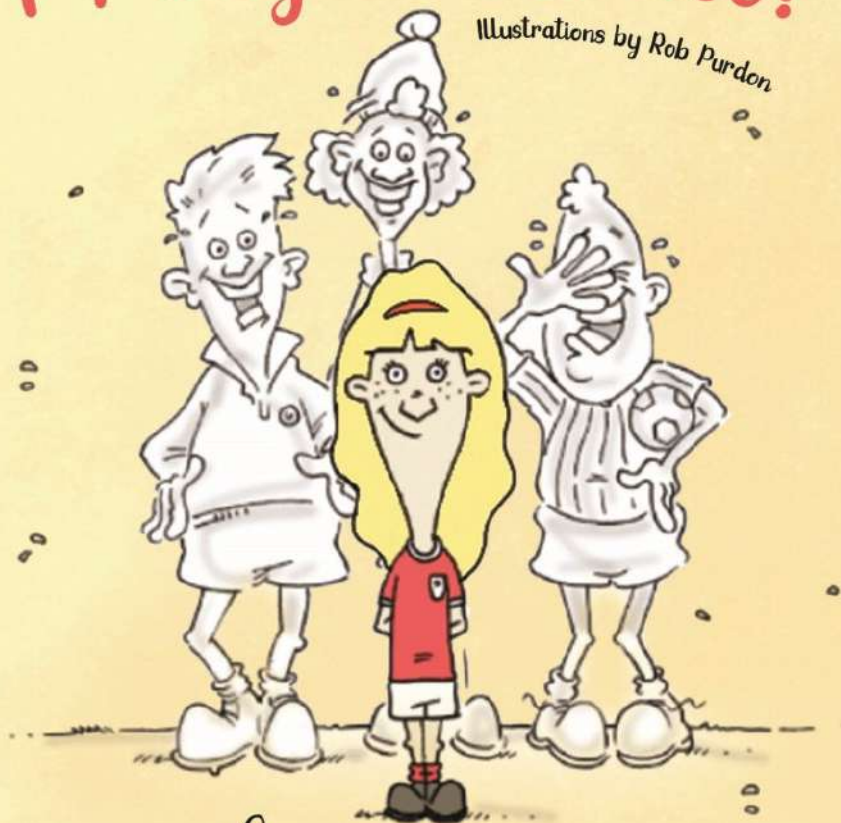
"I'm really excited about that, coming overseas and taking me out of my comfort zone to play against different players and play against the best players in the world."



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