

THE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL MAGAZINE

Issue 60 August 2022



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Welcome

Hello and welcome to Issue 60!

CONTRIBUTORS

Editor

Helen Rowe-Willcocks

Writers

Simon O'Neill

Charlotte Stacey

Jamie Davies

Sian Dennis

Rosie Hall

Peter Mann

Paul Donegan

Zoe Tisdale

Jonathan Cotterill-Bolsover

Photography

Sports Press Photos

@GOTB

Paul Donegan

Martin Rowe-Willcocks

Website designer

Will Ibbetson

Business manager

Martin Rowe-Willcocks

For any enquiries email:

helen@thewomensfootballmagazine.com

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Well what a summer that was! I hope you all had a blast whether you went to games, watched in a fanzone or watched on television, it really is going to be one of those “I was there” moments!

If you want to remember the summer for ever, we still have a number of our Euro 2022 posters available at just £5. They are available on the website.

It's hard to believe that the new season is fast approaching and we have a jam packed issue for you with exclusive interviews, a look over transfer news and all the news stories you might have missed in the excitement of the European Championships.

We also welcome a number of new writers to the team. Peter Mann will be looking after the Championship and NWSL, Frankie Scott will be talking all things refereeing and Zoe Tisdale will be writing a monthly column about Northern Ireland.

Enjoy the issue!

Helen Rowe-Willcocks

Editor-in-Chief

 [@helenrw11](https://twitter.com/helenrw11)

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TWFM are up for an award!



It is an absolute privilege to be able to share with you that The Women's Football Magazine and editor Helen Summers have been made a finalist in this year's Enterprise Vision Awards.

The EVAs are the 'premier business awards for women' in the North West of England and this is the 11th year of the awards.

Helen founded the magazine in 2017 and has been running the business ever since alongside fellow director William Ibbetson.

We are delighted to have been named as a finalist in this category for our hard work in building the brand and our commitment to producing a women's football magazine which covers all levels of women's football in the UK.

How to vote:

There is a chance to vote for Helen at <https://www.enterprisevisionawards.co.uk/voting/>

Voting closes on August 12.

Also nominated from the women's football world is Helen Hardy of Foudys.

She has been nominated in the Retail Business category so make sure you put your vote for her as well.

We will be attending the awards ceremony at the Winter Gardens in Blackpool on September 23.

We will keep you informed how it goes!

Good times
never seemed
so good



EURO 2022 Breaks Attendance Records



This summer's UEFA Women's Euros broke all sorts of new records as the demand for fans to see some of the best in women's European football proves to be on the right path.

UEFA have announced that over half a million people went to the Women's Euros which set new benchmarks for future international tournaments.

Even before the Euros kicked off at Old Trafford on July 6, the women's game in Europe was breaking barriers this summer. Barcelona Femeni playing at the Nou Camp for the first time in a 5-2 win against Real Madrid smashed previous records with a 91,553 attendance – then in a matter of weeks they broke their own record when 91,648 spectators turned up to see them beat VfL Wolfsburg by scoring five goals in the UEFA Champion League.

In the build-up to the Euros, there was some criticism from players and fans alike towards some of the stadiums picked to host the matches. For example Manchester City's Academy Stadium which hosted three of the Group D games.

Before the tournament had even reached the midway point, Euro 2022 had broken the overall attendance record for the women's Euros that was set from Euro 2017 (Netherlands) at 240,055. A record beaten while the competition was still in its group stages with 15 matches left to play.

15 matches later and after England finally brought it home, it was confirmed that Euro 2022 had brought in 574,865 supporters across the 31 matches that were played between July 6th and July 31st. The final at Wembley Stadium alone between England and Germany also broke a record as being the highest attended women's European international match at 87,192 fans.

To even see the semi-finals become the highest attended at that stage of the competition, this is a

big sign for what is a very promising future for the women's game especially in England where many young girls may want to take up the sport when they go back to school after the summer holidays.

Clearly over 12 months of ticket sales at affordable prices being incredibly accessible for families proved to be a good recipe to attract football fans from across Europe to go and see some high quality women's football. Gone are the days of people showing ignorance towards the sport.

It really does set a new benchmark for future tournaments like the Women's World Cup that fan numbers are getting higher each time. The momentum is strong, the sport just needs to keep going and to continue to inspire the future generations.

Highest Attended Women's Euro Games

87,192: England 2-1aet Germany (final, 31/07/2022 – Wembley Stadium, London)

68,871: England 1-0 Austria (group stage, 06/07/2022 – Old Trafford, Trafford)

41,301: Germany 1-0 Norway (final, 28/07/2013 – Friends Arena, Solna)

30,785: Northern Ireland 0-5 England (group stage, 15/07/2022 – St Mary's Stadium, Southampton)

29,092: England 3-2 Finland (group stage, 05/06/2005 – City of Manchester Stadium, Manchester)

28,994: England 2-1aet Spain (quarter-final, 20/07/2022 – Brighton & Hove Community Stadium, Brighton & Hove)

28,847: England 8-0 Norway (group stage, 11/07/2022 – Brighton & Hove Community Stadium, Brighton & Hove)

Euro 2022: The thoughts of a happy editor



By Helen Rowe-Willcocks

The dust has started to settle around Wembley, the Lionesses have jetted off on their holidays (or gone straight back to training for those Manchester City players!), and I am slowly but surely starting to get Sweet Caroline out of my head.

Just over a week ago England secured victory over Germany to be crowned Champions of Europe and even now the thought of the final whistle still brings tears to my eyes.

The commitment, the joy and the determination every single one of those players and staff put into the tournament has been mesmerising.

Despite their rise to fame, they have remained the same caring players they have always been whether it has been chatting to fans after games or Jill Scott borrowing her teammates jacket so she could give her top to a fan at St. Marys.

Like many stood in Wembley, I could not contain the floods of tears that streamed down my face. Seeing thousands of fans screaming in delight, took me back to the first women's

football games I covered when there were only 100 fans there.

That moment signalled change for me.

But, whilst the bigger media companies continue to discuss the impact that the win will have on the Barclays Women's Supers League, I want to take a chance to talk about the lower leagues.

There are more than just 12 women's teams in the country and if you have fallen in love with the sport through the Euros

then take the time to find out about your local club. There are so many great teams out there in the lower divisions that need the support and commitment.

The Lionesses have been amazing calling on the government to sort out football in schools and at grassroots levels in their open letter, so let's hope the young girls out there will get a chance to play.

The 2022 European Championships have been lifechanging.

Not just for the players themselves but for those involved in creating the magical tournament.

There were so many records broken throughout and for me going to the different grounds and meeting fans from across Europe was wonderful. Hearing them talk about the tournament, about their team and seeing passion across the different teams was phenomenal.

Whether it was witnessing a Icelandic thunderclap, going on the German bus, watching the Dutch walk to the stadium or just sitting in Piccadilly Gardens, Manchester surrounded by pockets of fans from across Europe watching an England game, all of them were moments I will cherish.

It has been fabulous getting to meet fans from not just European countries as well.

In Sheffield we met up with a group of Canadians who had come over specially to watch the semi-finals and final of the tournament purely to celebrate their love of football.

A special note to Northern Ireland

When we went down to Southampton for the England vs Northern Ireland match we made sure we got to go down and spend some time with the Northern Ireland fans—after all we are very proud that we

cover all four of our home nations.

The moment we arrived in the Park we were greeted like long-lost friends—probably helped by the fact that the TWFM t-shirts are the exact green of the NI shirts!

We spent a lovely afternoon sat there chatting to people, watching the children playing football in the park and I wanted to say from the bottom of my heart thank you.

The NI fans and the team were such an asset to the tournament. The sheer love and devotion that you all showed were inspiring and your chanting was very loud!

For Northern Ireland's first major tournament, there was such passion and drive and not one of the players on the pitch looked overwhelmed by the situation.

It's already great to see how many of the players are making the transition over into the WSL or Championship during the summer transfer window.

Some final thoughts...

What a summer it has been.

I think it is going to take a long time to sink in just what Sarina Weigman has achieved in such a short space of time.

I am so proud of every one of the team. One of my favourite pictures is of Beth England going to Weigman at the final whistle and the joy in her face despite the fact she didn't get the chance to play a minute of football. It shows the strength and depth of the group she, and her background staff have put together.

Here's to the next chapter!



England's Greatest Footballer?



By Tony Killilea

'Football's Coming Home' may never have been sung with as much gusto and conviction as it was following England's victory in the Euros. The Lionesses' momentous success is rightly being recognised not just as an achievement for women's football but for English football in general.

Yet how many of those celebrating realise that this was a second homecoming for the women's game? It is to be hoped that Leah Williamson, Beth Mead et al will become established in the pantheon of great England footballers, male or female. But that list should also include a number of women who established themselves as football stars a century ago. And foremost among that generation was Lily Parr. There is a case to be made for Lily being regarded

as the greatest England footballer of all. She scored close to 1,000 goals in a career that spanned 31 years, playing a leading role in the Dick, Kerr Ladies team from Preston that dominated women's football not just in England but across continents.

Barbara Jacobs, in her book, 'The Dick, Kerr Ladies,' describes her as "the greatest woman footballer and the most prolific goal-scorer in English football history." She was renowned for her skilful ball control and the accuracy and range of her passing. She would regularly hit pinpoint passes from the left flank to the opposite touchline. The power of her shooting astonished those who saw her play for the first time. On one occasion in Chorley a professional male goalkeeper challenged her to score against him from the

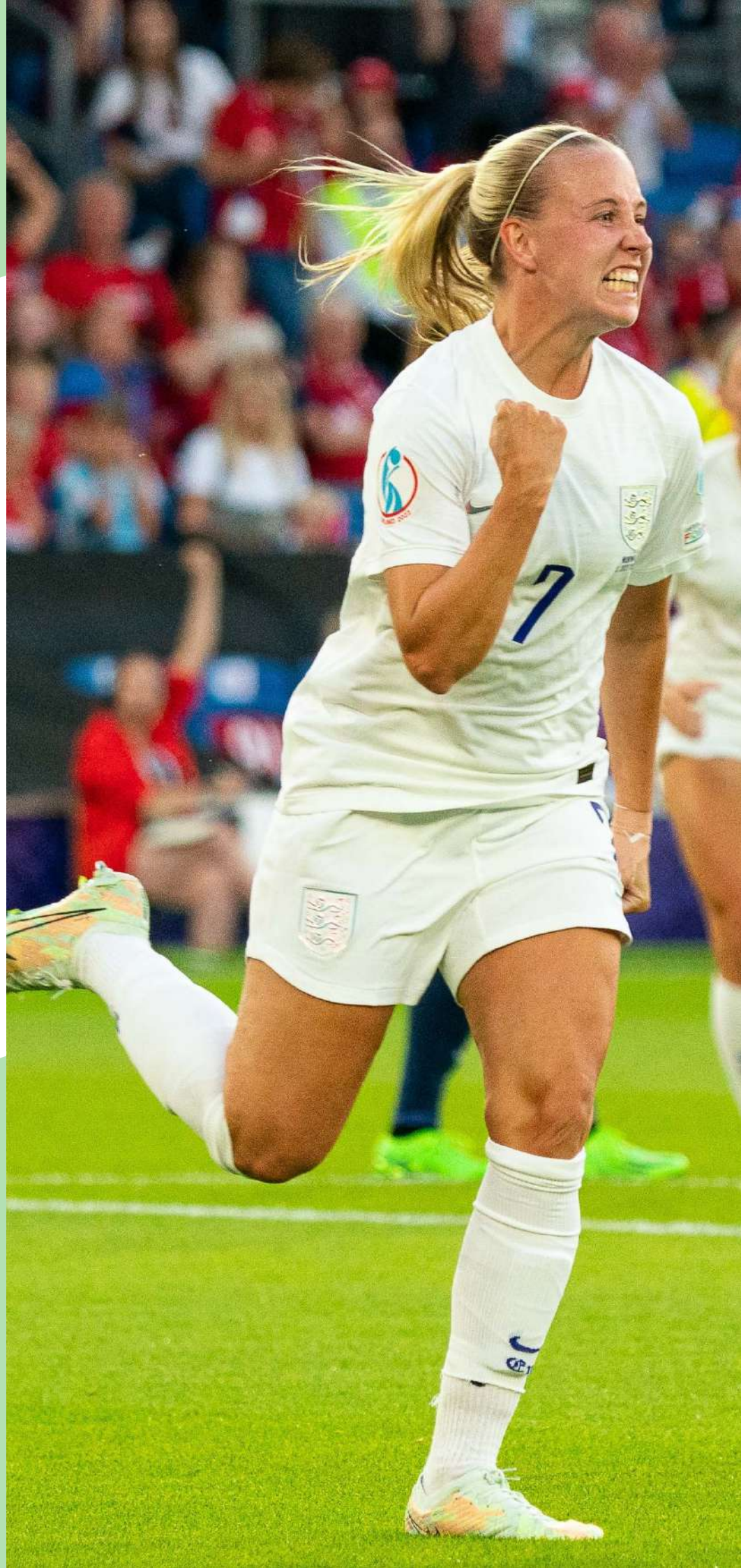
penalty spot. The keeper managed to get a hand to Lily's shot but, such was its ferocity, he was left with a broken arm. She was, indeed, a great female footballer, but many commentators have regarded her as a great player regardless of gender, and, as we shall see, she got to prove her qualities on the same pitches as men. Former England international footballer Sue Lopez said in 1997, "many said she would have reached international level if she had been a man."

Lily was born in 1905 in a particularly poor part of St Helens, the glass manufacturing town in Lancashire. The fourth of seven children, she grew up in a chaotic house that had a yard full of pigs. She learned to play football with her brothers who recognised that she was as tough as them and that she

could swear and smoke as much as they could. In her early teens she played in weekly matches for the local single men against the married men. She also played rugby league with the boys, which was probably instrumental in developing her powerful kicking ability. She was a girl of contrasting traits. Although tough she was sensitive and, as she rose to almost six feet, became self-conscious about her height, and walked with a slight stoop. Her rough manner could have been, in part, a front because she was aware of being different to other girls.

Her big breakthrough as a footballer came when she was just fourteen years old. She was already playing for St Helens Ladies when Dick, Kerr Ladies came to town. Dick, Kerr was the works side of an engineering company that had turned to munitions production during the war, and the largely female workforce were encouraged by welfare officers to play sport after work. The visitors won the game 6-1 but Alfred Frankland, the team's manager and an employee of the company, was so impressed by Lily and her teammate Alice Woods that he asked the pair to join his club.

They were thrilled at the prospect of not just transferring to the finest club in the land, but also at the prospect of escaping to a better life. A transfer to Dick, Kerr usually involved working for the company, since Alfred was empowered to offer employment to anyone whom he deemed good enough to play for his team, as well as being paid ten shillings per match.



Lily's mother Sarah was initially reluctant to let her daughter make the thirty mile move to Preston. But Alfred, recognising the huge potential of Lily, persevered and the next year Sarah relented. He assured her that he would arrange for Lily to lodge with a respectable family. Lily, keen for some privacy, added the proviso that she must have her own room.

Lily moved in with the family of Alice Norris, a reserve team player with two younger sisters. But the relationship between this 'respectable' family and their surly lodger was a match made in hell. Lily was so furious at discovering that she would after all have to share a room that Alice came home one evening to find her belongings dumped on the landing, leaving her to accept that she would thenceforth have to sleep in the same room as her sisters. The Norris family were shocked by the behaviour of the sulky, uncouth girl who not only smoked in the house but would use any convenient surface as an ash tray. And Lily, who was used to seeing joints of bacon and black puddings on the dinner table, was unimpressed at being served dainty triangular sandwiches. Alice later said that feeding's Lily's 'enormous appetite' put quite a strain on her family's resources.

When Lily joined Dick, Kerr Ladies, the team was on a meteoric rise. With the men's leagues being suspended during the war women's football had been able to gain a foothold in the country's sporting consciousness. And from being seen as something of a novelty, word soon spread that women's football was not

just great entertainment but was sport of high quality. The support that the company afforded the women helped to make the football team a powerhouse. Tens of thousands turned up to watch many of their matches which, in the days before formal women's leagues, were generally challenge matches which raised huge amounts of money for charity, chiefly for servicemen wounded in the war.

Lily played her first match for Dick, Kerr in 1920 and immediately established herself as a first team regular, playing outside left. She scored 43 goals in her first season and one newspaper declared her to be the finest "football prodigy in the whole country. Not only has she speed and excellent ball control, but her admirable physique enables her to brush off challenges from defenders. She amazes the crowd wherever she goes by the way she swings the ball clean across the goalmouth to the opposite wing." She was a fierce competitor and happy to intimidate opponents on the pitch. Anyone unfortunate enough to be tasked with marking her was likely to be accosted with such greetings as "you bugger come near me an' I'll kick you over t' bloody crossbar."

Having established themselves as the dominant team in England Dick, Kerr sought to broaden their horizons. In the autumn of 1920 Alfred arranged for the team to tour Northern France, with the Preston side representing England. But much of their experience of France was sobering. Alice Woods recorded in her journal that in Louvain they

witnessed ruined buildings, barbed wire entanglements, trenches full of water and derailed trains. They saw people living in shelters made from oil drums and at Armentieres every house was demolished. These sights were a poignant reminder of why their team had been created. Everywhere they went there were vivid reminders of the devastation that they had raised so much money to alleviate. And they all had personal connections with the war. Lily's older brother John had returned unscathed but with numerous stories of miraculous escape from death. The English team won three and drew one of the four fixtures.

The zenith of women's football in this era came on Boxing Day 1920 when a capacity crowd of 53,000 watched Dick, Kerr Ladies take on St Helens Ladies in the unofficial women's cup final at Goodison Park. Such was the huge demand to see this fixture that an estimated 14,000 disappointed people were locked out. Dick, Kerr won the match 4-0 and the team was presented with the cup by the Lord Mayor of Liverpool. This was not a one-off; two weeks later a crowd of 35,000 watched the Preston side play Bath Ladies at Old Trafford, a match in which Lily scored four goals. But the massive popularity of the women's game was setting alarm bells ringing at the Football Association and, within a year, the sport's governing body in England took steps to severely undermine the women's game and to reclaim football as a masculine activity.



On 5th December 1921 the FA issued an edict which prohibited women from playing matches at its members' grounds, claiming that football was too physically demanding for women and that not enough of the funds raised from matches was going to charity. This ban on women from playing at the stadiums where they could attract tens of thousands of spectators severely checked the rise of their game. Most matches now had to be played on recreation grounds or public parks where the number of people who could watch them was limited. Yet the desire of the women to continue to play was undiminished, as was Alfred's ambition for the team.

If touring France was adventurous, then the next step was even more pioneering, if somewhat chaotic. In autumn of 1922 Dick, Kerr Ladies travelled to North America. The tour was to start in Canada but, on arrival, the team was informed that the Canadian ruling body, the Dominion FA, would not allow women's matches to take place, apparently following a warning from the English FA. That left only the USA and there, Dick, Kerr learned that there was no women's football and that the only matches they could play would be against men's teams. So, a series of nine fixtures was hastily arranged against the best men's teams on the eastern seaboard. Though frustrated by the appalling organisation, the players relished the chance to measure themselves against their male counterparts.

The Dick, Kerr Ladies gave as good as they got: winning three, drawing three and

and losing three games. The matches received considerable press attention. Lily was praised for “driving from the wing and the accuracy of her shots.” It was reported that she “simply electrified the spectators in the manner she dribbled.” And it was not just the press that were attracted. Among the 9,000 spectators who watched a 4-4 draw at Pawtucket there were large numbers of women who had no previous record of watching ‘soccer.’ The popularity of the sport among women was hugely enhanced and it is possible that this tour played a significant part in the swell of interest in women’s football which eventually led to the USA becoming the outstanding international team in the women’s game.

In New York, an Italian American theatre manager fell for Lily in a big way. He pursued her with gifts of flowers and theatre tickets. His wooing of her was encouraged by her teammates, who welcomed the free tickets to Vaudeville shows and appreciated the opportunity to tease Lily mercilessly about her “beau.” Lily, perhaps realising that this wasn’t the kind of love she wanted, was acutely embarrassed by the man’s attention as well as by the mocking from her teammates. In an attempt to burn off her aggravation she went to a gym to play basketball, a game she had become fond of on this tour, and twisted her knee so badly that she missed the following match at New Bedford.

The levels of fitness and athleticism that the Dick, Kerr players possessed were demonstrated before their final

match of the USA tour in Philadelphia. Four of the team took on the USA Olympic team in a sprint relay race. Lily ran the second leg in a narrow win for the English women.

Although it couldn’t regain the huge levels of success it had enjoyed before the ban, Alfred managed to keep the women’s game at a significant level in the public consciousness. He sometimes arranged matches at rugby grounds and continued to organise international tours, both for Dick, Kerr to play abroad and for overseas teams to visit. In 1925 Dick, Kerr, again representing England, beat France 4-2 at Herne Hill in London, in a match that was kicked off by star comedian of the day, George Robey. Before the match, the teams had tea on the House of Commons Terrace and a reception was given for them by the Lord Mayor of London.

The very existence of the team was threatened in 1926 when Dick, Kerr was taken over by English Electric who refused to support the women’s football team. However, Alfred and the players did not allow it to fold. He prioritised football ahead of his job at the company and resigned to start a grocery shop. He had a sister who was a matron at Whittingham Hospital, the local psychiatric establishment, for which he had helped to raise large sums of money. He used these connections to find jobs for seven or eight of the players, including Lily, who began training as an orderly. The team continued and was renamed “Preston Ladies,” though many people continued to refer to them as “Dick, Kerr Ladies.”

Lily was a great success as a nurse. The work on the psychiatric wards was physically and mentally draining, but she had the strength to cope with it. Her coarse manner disguised the big heart of a very caring person; she was viewed as eccentric but also compassionate. As was typical of someone from her background she was reluctant to show her feelings; when Kitty, a patient she was particularly fond of, died, Lily passed off her tearful face as just a symptom of a bad cold.

She was popular with both patients and staff, and it was with one of her fellow nurses, Mary, that Lily fell in love. They became a couple and bought a house together on the outskirts of Preston. The best part of a century before Jake Daniels bravely came out to the football world, Lily made no secret of her own homosexuality.

The women’s game continued to attract celebrity support and in 1937 George Formby and Gracie Fields were among the stars of the day who kicked off women’s matches. In terms of billing, at least, the highlight of that year was the match against Edinburgh Ladies at Blackpool which was proclaimed “The Championship of Great Britain and the World.” Preston Ladies won 5-1, with Lily scoring once, but only around 1,000 people watched the match and, despite celebrity approval, the glory days were over.

The Second World War did not produce the boon for women’s football which the first had done and Preston Ladies played only a handful of matches after the outbreak of war, stretching into 1941.

Travel difficulties, petrol rationing and air raids all contributed to the dearth of fixtures. Alfred's time was also severely limited as he served as an ARP warden during the war.

But peace brought a renewed appetite for women's football and Preston's first match after the war, at Glossop on 19th April 1946 against Lancashire Ladies, was watched by 5,000 people. Lily was made captain for the day in recognition of her 26 years of service to the club. At this point Lily had scored 967 of the team's total of 3,022 goals and she had missed only five matches through injury. So much for the FA's claim that women were physically unsuited to the sport.

Lily was now in her early forties and, having lost some of the athleticism of her youth, switched to left back. She used her intelligent reading of the game to compensate for her lack of speed and excelled in her new role. After a 1-1 draw

against Manchester Ladies it was reported that "Lily Parr was dominant at left back. But for her long experience and positional play, Manchester might have won comfortably." She was no longer a regular goal scorer but grabbed a goal from the penalty spot in her final match, representing England against Scotland in a game played at Carlisle on 12th August 1950. She was then forty-five years old.

Lily retired from the hospital in the early 1960s. She developed breast cancer and, in 1967, had a double mastectomy. Never losing her sense of humour, she observed, "It's taken me sixty-two years to grow these and now they've taken them off me!" Lily Parr eventually succumbed to the cancer in 1978 at the age of 73 and was buried in St Helens.

If the longevity of Lily's career cannot be explained by her diet it could be accounted for by her natural physical strength and athleticism, her great love of

the game, and the fact that she was unencumbered by marriage and children; many of her teammates gave up the game to start a family. But Lily always did stand out. On the US tour of 1922 she was proclaimed "the most brilliant female player in the world" by an American newspaper. And it was then that she showed that she could hold her own playing against male footballers. On one occasion during that tour, she was walking with Alfred along the touchline of an American football pitch where the local college team were training when the ball bounced over the touchline towards them. Lily nonchalantly picked the ball up and drop kicked it between the posts. The astonished American footballers declared it a fluke and bet she couldn't do it again. Lily again kicked the ball between the posts from the touchline before carrying on her way, not for the first or last time in her life wondering what all the fuss was about.



What's Next for the Lionesses?



By Frankie Scott

The time has come for us to return to reality following the high of England's Euro 2022 victory. But, if you're like me, you're probably sitting there, thinking... how can I?

How am I supposed to go back to sitting behind a laptop, or watching TV other than the Euros, or having conversations with strangers about the weather? How am I supposed to just act like everything is the same?

I can't. Because it's not.

Everything is different now.

56 years and a day since the 1966 World Cup victory, football has finally come home, and it was the Lionesses that did it. The image of Chloe Kelly running away from the goal, shirt in her hand, with Jill Scott following behind, will be an iconic image I will talk about to my grandchildren. In fact, I'm fairly certain that this image will be my next tattoo, and I'm certain I won't be the only one – many of us will not want to let go of that moment, and will want it permanently etched into our being.

But since life has resumed, and everyone is carrying on like normal, I suppose we should ask what's next for the Lionesses. Their legacy is already having a positive impact, with most WSL clubs at least doubling their season ticket sales, and several clubs reporting selling thousands of tickets for their opening matches.

But for the Lionesses, we have a World Cup next year that we still need to ensure qualification for.

And even though it's pretty certain that we'll be there – we'd need to lose both of our remaining qualification games and throw away a huge goal difference to miss out – there is still a lot of work to do.

We cannot get complacent.

We play Austria away on 3rd September, and Luxemburg at Stoke's stadium on September 6. Following this, we will play a friendly against USA at Wembley on 7 October 7.

Want tickets for this friendly? You can't. They sold out in just over 24 hours.

This is the reality we live in now.

A reality where the Lionesses sell out Wembley for a friendly.

So I guess the reason I can't just go back to normal, is because normal is not the same as it was. There's a new normal. Where the Lionesses are champions and bring in huge crowds for their games.

What's next for the Lionesses? It's time to turn our attention to World Cup preparation.

It takes place in Australia in July 2023, and we will surely be one of the favourites.

“We need to keep the momentum going” - Nigel Huddleston

In Trafalgar Square surrounded by excited England fans continuing their celebrations, the Under-Secretary of State at the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Nigel Huddleston is stood in his England waistcoat and tie drinking in the atmosphere. *Editor Helen Rowe-Willcocks* had the opportunity to exclusively chat to him about the government’s plans for inclusivity.

HRW: What’s the atmosphere like here?

NH: It’s an amazing atmosphere, aren’t we lucky to be here. I pinch myself on things like this. It’s been such a successful event but it’s a real icing on the cake to be celebrating the victory as well. It’s been a record tournament. The records keep going.

HRW: We are proud that we cover from grassroots upwards to all the home nations, how much do you think it’s going to make a difference for not just the top leagues but for everyone in women’s football?

NH: It’s a really good point. What we saw last night was the absolute elite players but seeing elite performers and now household names, that will inspire future generations not only elite players. There will be children watching last night who will want to play, it inspires people to get involved in grassroots as well and lower leagues. We have had growing investment in women’s football and women’s sport in general partly by clubs and partly by the government with investment in schools and facilities as well but we do need the top end like the Premier League to continue their investment. They lead from the front. They have a lot of money and we want to see a fair share of that go to the women’s game.

HRW: What do you think is the most important thing to do now for the legacy to continue?

NH: I think there are a couple of things. There



has already been a legacy—we should not underestimate the achievements already. People have been inspired to get active and enjoy sport. Not only are we loving and enjoying women’s football, it is proving to be commercially viable and commercially successful. We can sell those tickets, millions of people will watch it on television, millions of people will follow it, that will help over all with the confidence for women’s football going forwards and then lead to more commercial opportunities and sponsorship for the women’s players. That helps put the game more on par. I would not underestimate how much this Euros has already moved that needle forward. We just need to keep the momentum going. You play a role in that as well—you have a particular focus, it’s in your name—but the general media have really taken to it more than they ever have before.

The TWFM Legacy



As part of The Women's Football Magazine's legacy into inspiring the next generation, we decided to offer team's a chance to get their hands on one of our Season Tickets for FREE.

Usually costing £50, our season tickets offer a full team an annual subscription (which works out at just £2 a player for a year!).

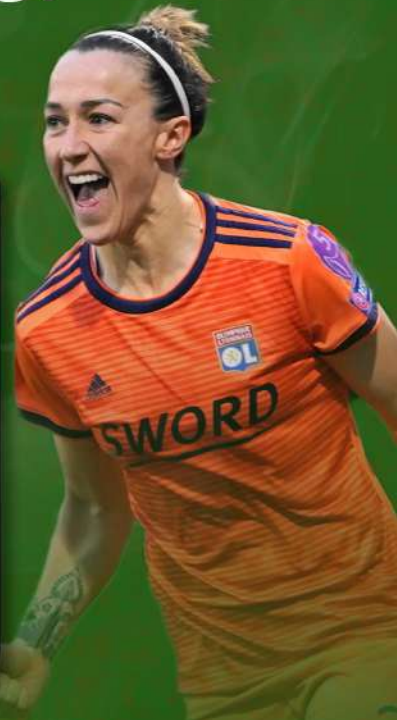
Following England's win at Wembley, we took to our social media pages and announced we were giving away 18 of our Season Tickets to teams.

It is my pleasure to announce the 18 teams are:

- Wyre Forrest Phoenix
- Salford United
- Stoneham AFC
- Astley & Tyldesley FC
- Ross Juniors U12s
- Wellington Ladies
- Bury AFC
- Bury AFC Reserves
- South Park Girls FC
- Sporting Her Football
- Walworth Wanderers Girls
- Stourbridge Girls U18s
- Girls United FA
- Goffs Oaks Girls
- Harpenden Town Women
- Chelmsford City WFC Reserves
- Ellesmere Port Town Ladies
- Airbus WFC

CALLING ALL WOMEN'S AND GIRL'S FOOTBALL TEAMS

Do you want to promote your team and inspire your players?



Our new season ticket is for you!

You'll receive:

- ❖ 25 annual subscriptions for players and coaches
- ❖ A team article in The Women's Football Magazine
- ❖ The opportunity to promote your club through our website

All for an amazing price of £50

For more information go to:

www.thewomensfootballmagazine.com/seasonticket

#InspireWithTWFN



BARCLAYS WOMEN'S SUPER LEAGUE

RIP Maria Petri: An Arsenal legend



On July 22, we heard the awful news that Arsenal legend Maria Petri had passed away.

Maria was one of those people everyone knew, her passion for the Gunners was legendary and it didn't matter if you had five seconds or five hours, she would always stop to talk to you.

Maria began following Arsenal in 1950 as a 12-year-old girl and was a regular presence at men's first-team, reserve and youth team matches and when Arsenal Ladies were formed in 1987, she took them to her heart and became synonymous with the team based at Boreham Wood.

In a statement released by Arsenal it read: "Maria often said that "Arsenal was her family" and that family is devastated today. She also said: "I shall be oh so upset when I die, I won't be able to watch Arsenal anymore."

"Well, everyone at Arsenal Football Club can't quite believe that you won't be able to give your very special support to our club

anymore. You've been one in a million and we'll never forget you Maria."

Tributes have poured in since the news was announced.

Kieren Thievam wrote: "My timeline this evening has been full of tributes to the ultimate football supporter, Maria Petri. A fan, not of Arsenal Men, Arsenal Women or Arsenal Academy - she was just ARSENAL. An example to us all. Maria, we'll miss your enthusiasm, charm and presence in the stands - RIP."

England and Arsenal's Leah Williamson took to Twitter to say: "I'm devastated to hear the news about Maria Words will never be enough to describe the importance of Maria to Arsenal Red & White Forever. Once a Gooner..."

"She will always be looking down on us."

Everyone here at TWFM would like to pass our love and support to all those who are mourning the passing.

RIP Maria.

Rebekah Stott returns to the WSL

Brighton and Hove Albion have announced the return of the New Zealand international on a two-year contract, subject to international clearance.

Stott originally joined the Seagulls in 2020 and made eight appearances, but had to cut her time short after being diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma.

Head coach Hope Powell said, "The circumstances around Stott's departure in 2021 were really difficult for everyone, no one more so than for her.

"Now she's back to full fitness and wants to have a proper go at the WSL and we are happy to have her back. Taking the emotions out of the signing, we know we're getting a really good player with proven international experience and a knowledge of the league."

Park goes on Loan

Winger Jess Park has joined Everton on a season long loan from Manchester City.

The 20-year-old, who could be classed as one of England's brightest young players told evertontv, "I'm really excited for the season. Historically, this is a club known for developing young players – which I am – and I'm looking forward to being part of that process.

Carrie Jones joins the Foxes

Midfielder Carrie Jones has signed for Leicester City from Manchester United on a season long loan.

The 18-year-old who already has three years of senior level football under her belt said, "I am really excited to work with Lydia Bedford.

What she's done for this team over the last couple of months has been positive. She wants to take this team to the next level, and I can't wait to be a part of that."

Leicester sign Simon

Leicester City have confirmed the signing of Erin Simon from Racing Louisville, subject to international and FA clearance.

The 27-year-old defender joins the WSL having spent the last two seasons in the top division (NWSL) of women's football in the United States of America.

Snøeijns joins the Toffees

Netherlands international Katja Snøeijns has completed a move to Everton on a free transfer, signing a two-year contract with the Club until 2024.

The 25-year-old striker joins the Toffees with a wealth of experience after competing at the highest level in her homeland before spending the previous two campaigns with French side Bordeaux.

Watson signs for Chelsea

18-year-old Lucy Watson joins the London Blues from Championship side Sheffield United on a two-year contract until 2024.

The winger comes with a good amount amount of first-team exposure, having made her debut for the Blades at the age of 16.

Watson will wear the number 25 shirt.

Willie Kirk is appointed Director of Football, Women and Girls at Leicester City

Former Everton manager Kirk joins the Foxes with extensive Barclays Women's Super League experience having held senior coaching positions within the women's game over several years.

The newly formed role will see Kirk work to "deliver sustained on-pitch performance, academy excellence and technical growth, while taking a leading role in creating a motivated and successful environment at Belvoir Drive."

Leicester City announce new contracts

The foxes have confirmed the extensions of four integral players, forward Missy Goodwin, goalkeeper Demi Lambourne, defender Sophie Howard as well as exciting talent Shannon O'Brien.

All players are now with the squad in pre-season training as preparations get underway for the opening WSL fixtures.

FA announce advancement in providing greater accessibility to the player pathway

Thanks to funding from the Premier League 60 Girls' Emerging Talent Centre licences have been allocated, which will see the number of young female players engaged in FA programmes across the country rise from 1,722 to over 4,200 by the end of the 2023-24 season.

The Centres will focus on will be underpinned by five key areas: better accessibility, more inclusivity, reducing the impact of early selection, more focused investment, providing more appropriate challenges.

Arsenal sign new goalkeeper

Arsenal have confirmed the signing of goalkeeper Kaylan Marckese on a permanent deal from Danish side HB Koge.

Marckese twice featured against the Gunners during last season's Champions League and will provide competition for current number one Manuela Zinsberger.

Everton duo sign for Villa

Longstanding former Everton captain, defender Danielle Tuner has signed a two-year deal with Aston Villa.

She is joined by teammate, Northern Ireland international Simone Magill who has also confirmed her move after spending the last nine years with the Toffees.

On Magill's move, head coach Carla Ward said, "she's a front-footed player with an eye for goal and someone I feel will fit in brilliantly to what we're trying to do."

The Women's Euro Final Referee and The Future of Women's Refereeing



By Frankie Scott

Several disparaging comments have been made about the Women's Euro 2022 Final referee, Kateryna Monzul, in the days following the match.

The German manager slammed Monzul in the press, Ian Wright criticised her performance live on air, and almost every podcast I've listened to since has brandished her as 'awful.'

But was she 'awful', as these pundits have purported? Football usually deals with extremes, and one or two questionable decisions of an official leads to claims that they are a terrible – but is this the case?

You can't mention Monzul without mentioning her path to the Euros. Months before the competition, she was in hiding in war-torn Ukraine, scared for her life. To follow such trauma with the achievement of officiating at a high-quality competition is a remarkable achievement.

Whatever you think of her performance, you should not ignore her story.

Just as we admire players with a harrowing back story – take Dutch striker Nadia Nadim, for example, who fled Afghanistan as a child after her father was executed by the Taliban – we must also admire the referees overcome tragedy to reach to the top level.

As for the match itself, the dismay felt toward Monzul came through the first two yellow cards she brandished, one to Georgia Stanway, and the other to Ellen White. These two bookings seemed bizarre and inconsistent, especially considering what she let go later on in the match – including a lunge from Lucy Bronze I felt was a certain yellow card. But perhaps I can offer an explanation.

What you don't know as a football fan, and what you probably won't be aware of unless you have a refereed, is the experience of 'feeling' a game. When you are on the pitch, you gain a sense for when the temperature of the game is rising and when the temperaments are

getting worse. This is not something you get on the television, or even necessarily in the stadium. It is something you pick up on as part of your game management, and it comes with experience. And when you are able to 'feel' a game well, you gain a sense for when the game needs a yellow card.

The match was becoming intense and aggressive. Germany's challenges were getting heavier. England were reacting (let's not forget Jill Scott's later outburst). Although I have no way to be certain, I do believe that the referee 'felt' that the game needed a yellow card, so she gave one. This was part of her game management, and part of preventing the game getting more heated.

I've been there as a referee. The tackles in a game are getting harder, and you need to show a card to cool the game. So you find something to show a card for. The players and the crowd might get on my back for being inconsistent, which I get – but showing that card may well have saved a heavier challenge going in that would have cost the team a

sending off or, even worse, a bad injury. So, honestly, I'll take a few moans about inconsistency to ultimately prevent something worse happening.

When this happens, the crowd don't get what you're doing to manage the game. How could they? They've never refereed. They aren't on the pitch. They aren't aware of the thought process of the officials, and if I'm honest, my experience has told me that most fans don't care.

When someone disagrees with a referee, they rarely want an explanation – they have already made up their mind. I have never explained a decision, then had a player or fan say, "Oh, thank you for explaining your thought process, I understand now." They have just continued the vitriol. And this is, ultimately, is why referees don't speak to the press. Their explanations are never going to change anyone's mind.

This is called cognitive dissonance – the concept that, when someone believes something so certainly, showing evidence in the contrary just cements that person's opinion further. Remember that 'fan' comes from the word 'fanatical.' We can't see beyond our own biases, and we rarely want to understand why a decision was made. We just want to boo the official for making it.

I will admit that, however, these two yellow cards did look like poor decisions when compared to what we expect a yellow card to be, despite the referee probably feeling they were necessary for her game management. So, let's say for sake of argument, they were two mistakes, and let's return to this labelling her as 'awful.'

A referee makes over 240 decisions a game. Those were two mistakes. If she only got 2/240 decisions wrong, then that is quite a remarkable achievement. I can't say that I get 238 out of every 240 decisions I make in my job correct.

Similarly, should Ellen White have hit two shots off target, would we be labelling her as 'awful'? No. She's one of our heroes. Those two mistakes would not have clouded our perspective. So why should the referee's?

Overall, I feel the standard of officiating was high, and that the use of VAR was generally okay. Bear in mind that female match officials aren't necessarily used to officiating in front of crowds like there were at these matches, and some of them may be new to VAR. These are humans, doing a job under huge scrutiny, and having to learn to use new technology whilst doing it.

Out of all these officials, our British match officials were among the best. Welsh referee Cheryl Foster took charge of the second semi-final between Germany and France, and managed the game brilliantly. English referee Rebecca Welch was unfortunate, in a way, that England reached the latter stages, as this ruled her out of officiating in the later games, and she would have been a strong candidate for the final.

And now, in the aftermath of the Euros, we are quite rightly discussing the impact on progress of the women's game. Ticket sales in the Women's Super League have risen in the last few weeks, and the growth is exciting. One thing we have not discussed, however, is what the FA are doing to raise the standards of officiating in the WSL.

Whilst both the Premier League and the Championship have full-time referees, most of the WSL referees also have day jobs. Whilst the FA have opened a new pathway in the women's game separate from the men's, they still use officials from the pool of National League referees. That means they are using referees from the fifth tier of men's football for the top tier of women's football. This needs to change.

Emma Hayes called for VAR in the WSL last season, but I don't

think we are there yet. There is no point having VAR if we have amateur referees. There will not be enough time to train the officials on the VAR process, or how to make the best use of it, and fans will just get increasingly frustrated with how it is used. Ultimately, full-time match officials are the next step in the progress.

Let's have referees and assistant referees who can focus on their fitness mid-week rather than another job that must take priority. Let's have referees who can set aside a longer amount of time to review clips of their performances to aid their development, rather than having to watch back clips whilst tired from a day at work.

If the FA truly believe in the worth of the women's game, then they will implement full-time referees as quickly as possible. We need to provide a space to our top officials that allows them to improve, rather than branding them as 'awful' for two decisions we disagree with. And we need to focus on development of refereeing in the WSL by giving the officials as much time as we can for them to train and review their performances.

Will it happen? Who knows.

We had high quality football and high-quality officiating through the Euros. Now it's over to you, FA. Show us how much you value our officials.

Show us how much chance you want to give them to be the best officials in the women's game, anywhere in the world.

We've got the best players. Surely this is the next step?

Sarri stays in the Super League

Former Birmingham City midfielder Veatriki Sarri has signed a two-year deal with Brighton and Hove Albion.

Sarri will add another dynamic to Brighton's ever-growing attacking options.

Boss Hope Powell praised Sarri's move, saying, "she's got a wealth of domestic experience and has played for her country. She's looking forward to this challenge and we're pleased to have her with us."

Patten stays with Aston Villa

After spending half of last season on loan to Aston Villa, Arsenal defender Anna Patten has signed on for another season with the Villans.

Patten said, "I'm really excited to be extending my time at Aston Villa. The girls have been really welcoming since I got here and I feel like this club can help me grow as a player."

Watson joins from Championship side

18-year-old forward Lucy Watson has joined Chelsea from Sheffield United on a two-year contract.

Watson has an impressive amount of domestic and international experience under her belt, having made her senior debut with the Blades at 18 and representing England in the youth categories. Watson will wear shirt number 25 for the Blues.

Pattinson joins the Seagulls

Defender Poppy Pattinson has joined Brighton and Hove Albion on a two-year deal.

Amongst other factors, Pattinson expressed excitement about working alongside head coach Hope Powell. "It's an amazing feeling to know she wants me here, she's a legend of the women's game. I look up to her, she's done a lot for the game and I can't wait to work alongside her," Pattinson said.

French international joins Chelsea

Defender Ève Perisset, who has juts represented France in the Euro's, has joined Chelsea on a three-year deal from Bordeaux.

Manager Emma Hayes said, "Eve brings a wealth of experience and is a versatile player who is able to play in both full-back positions and midfield.

"A tenacious defender, with her mentality and professionalism we have no doubt she will complement the group well."

Chelsea sign West Ham midfielder Svtkova

Creative midfielder, Katerina Svtkova has confirmed her move to the London Blues on a three-year contract.

The 26-year-old said, "I am living my dream! I have wanted to play for this club my whole life having supported the team since childhood and I really appreciate this exciting opportunity."

Foxes sign experienced WSL stars

Leicester City have confirmed the signings of midfielders Josie Green and Aileen Whelan from Tottenham Hotspur and Brighton and Hove Albion respectively.

Whelan said, “hopefully I can bring some experience in and help the team get some results.

My aim is to get on the scoresheet as much as possible and help LCFC Women finish higher up the table.”

Van de Sanden Returns

Netherlands international Shanice Van de Sanden returns to Liverpool for a second spell with the Reds.

Van de Sanden brings with her an exceptional amount of top-level domestic and international experience with nine major trophies under her belt.

On her return, Van de Sanden said, “It feels amazing to be back. Being back in Liverpool, seeing the girls, meeting the coach, it means a lot to me.

“In my head I was already waiting for them to come back into the first league, I was following them everywhere.”

Buchanan is WSL bound

Canadian international and Olympic gold medallist Kadiesha Buchanan has signed for Chelsea on a three-year deal.

The 26-year-old centre-back joins Chelsea from a successful five-year spell with serial Champions League winners Lyon. Buchanan will wear Chelsea’s iconic number 26 shirt.

Liverpool make moves after WSL promotion

Liverpool have signed experienced top-flight players ahead of their return to the WSL. Former West Ham captain and centre-back Gilly Flaherty will wear the Reds’ number 25 shirt.

Versatile former Brighton and Hove Albion defender Emma Koivisto has also joined Matt Beard’s side on a free transfer.

MacIver moves to Manchester

Goalkeeper Sandy MacIver has joined Manchester City on a three-year deal.

The 24-year-old makes the switch from Everton where she played as the Toffee’s first choice keeper.

MacIver will wear the number 22 shirt and will provide competition for England’s Ellie Roebuck. “I feel like it’s really important at this time in my career to take my game to the next level and being able to train and learn from the world-class players and coaches here will help me to do that,” commented MacIver.

Aluko joins Copa90



COPA90, the fan-first football media organisation, has appointed Eniola Aluko to their board as the company continues to further its reputation and coverage of women's football.

Eniola's role will be a dual one - as a board member helping guide the strategy and growth of the business while also being an active ambassador for COPA90's vision, leveraging her important voice in the global game.

The former Lioness, who played club football in England, America and Italy will be the board's fifth member joining company CEO Tom Thirlwall, Chairman Niall Curran, Nikhil Bahel and Jay Ayda, both of Elysian Park Ventures and Andreas Haug of Headline.

Eniola joins in a new era for the business as it seeks to build on the development of the women's game in the last few years. Bringing enormous skill and a wide range of experience, the Sporting Director of Los Angeles side Angel City FC's appointment will help deliver a global viewpoint, perspectives and experiences in her new role.

Eniola Aluko said: "COPA90 has been at the cutting edge and forefront of impactful content creation and storytelling in football, and I have always been engaged and inspired by its work. I am delighted to join the company as a board adviser at an unprecedented time for women's football around the world. I hope to deliver insight, experience and knowledgeable advice towards the

continued success of COPA90."

Tom Thirlwall, CEO of COPA90 said: "We are thrilled to have Eni join the COPA90 board as we continue to break new ground through our award-winning content and storytelling. She is a trailblazer, leading the way on change not just in women's football but in wider society and is a brilliant example and inspiration to many. To have a diverse organisation, from content creators through to the board, ensures we can truly make football everyone's game, and to have Eni's insight and contribution at all levels of the organisation will be invaluable."

Aluko begins her work with COPA90 with immediate effect.

Fifa23 to include BWSL



EA Sports have announced that players will be able to play women's club football for the first time in FIFA 23.

The new game will be the last FIFA produced by EA Sports before it is replaced by a new title.

Paris Saint-Germain superstar Kylian Mbappe and Chelsea icon Sam Kerr will appear on the global cover of the game's Ultimate Edition.

The latter's appearance is significant as Australian Kerr becomes the first woman to be featured on the cover of a FIFA title.

And the milestone couldn't be any more timely with FIFA 23 set to include women's club

sides for the first time following national teams introductions in 2015.

EA Sports has confirmed that FIFA 23 is set to be released on general sale on Friday, September 30.

FIFA 23 will also feature licensed play modes for the Men's World Cup 2022 in Qatar as well as the Women's edition the following year in Australia and New Zealand.

Furthermore, women's club teams will be included for the first time.

From launch, players have access to teams from the Barclays Women Super League

and French D1 alongside the national team roster.

According to a blog on the PlayStation website, EA aims to make FIFA 23 the "most connected, inclusive, ambitious and all-around biggest entry yet".

Women's football was added to FIFA 16 in 2015, but only included a limited selection of international sides.

The scope increased up until last year, which saw 17 international squads and the ability to create a female character for the game's Pro Clubs mode added for the first time.

OneFootball announces new multi-year commitment to elevate the women's game



OneFootball, the world's leading football media platform, has today launched a new long-term commitment to support and shine a light on women's football at both grassroots and elite level.

Ahead of the UEFA Women's EURO 2022, OneFootball unveiled its inaugural roster of inspirational 'female heroes of the game' who will front exclusive content in-app, across OneFootball's website and social channels, and at in-person events.

England players Fran Kirby and Georgia Stanway; Germany's Giulia Gwinn; Norwegian star and first-ever Ballon d'Or Feminin recipient, Ada Hegerberg; French centre-back and winner of 15 French League titles and

eight UEFA Women's Champions League trophies, Wendie Renard; and Aitana Bonmatí of Spain complete the line-up as official OneFootball ambassadors.

With women's football thriving, OneFootball aims to further progress the game by showcasing the stories, passion and skill of the ambassadors to inspire football fans around the world.

The campaign has been developed as part of OneFootball's commitment to levelling the playing field and supporting the continued growth of women's football by bringing bigger, more diverse audiences to the game. The initial partnership with the ambassadors will run through to Summer 2024.

OneFootball users will be able to access exclusive content from the ambassadors, including throughout the EUROs, where hero content from the collective and their national teams will be surfaced to OneFootball's 100 million monthly active users worldwide.

As part of its promise to bring fans closer to the game, in addition to match reports, interviews and analysis, OneFootball users in Germany will also be able to enjoy game highlights of all 31 games throughout the tournament.

English players Fran Kirby and Georgia Stanway have established themselves as icons of the game. Fran, a three-times Women's FA Cup winner with Chelsea FC has been awarded the PFA Women's Players' Player of

the Year and the Football Writers' Women's Footballer of the Year. Georgia, who is just joining Bayern Munich in the Frauen-Bundesliga, has won the Women's FA Cup three times with Manchester City. Both have represented England Lionesses at the FIFA Women's World Cup.

Supporting the women's game at a grassroots level

In addition to spotlighting elite women's football at the UEFA Women's EURO 2022 and beyond, OneFootball will also be lending its reach and scale to the grassroots game through an exclusive charity partnership with Girls United. The not-for-profit organisation runs clubs and coaching programmes empowering girls in local communities through football practices that go beyond the tactical.

They work to develop confident leaders and provide more girls with the opportunity to succeed, on and off the pitch.

OneFootball will be supporting Girls United throughout the Women's EUROs via marketing and promotional opportunities.

Berlin and London Hubs

To bring fans closer to the tournament, OneFootball will also be hosting two dedicated Hubs in key marketplaces London and Berlin.

Both the London and Berlin Hubs will be used as a hotspot to exhibit and promote female empowerment via cultural influences that relate to and are inspired by the game.

In Berlin, the Hub was hosted from 6 July at the famous BRLO Brewhouse, where football fans were able to watch UEFA Women's EURO 2022 games, alongside a live DJ.

In the UK, OneFootball took over a space at The Platform in London for a private viewing of England's opening match against Austria on 6th July.

Commenting on her new role as OneFootball ambassador, Fran Kirby said: "I'm thrilled to be joining OneFootball alongside the rest of these incredible women.

"Encouraging people - women and girls in particular - to try football or learn more about the women's game is extremely important to me.

"I look forward to working with OneFootball to raise the visibility of women's sport and motivate many more to watch and try this great game."

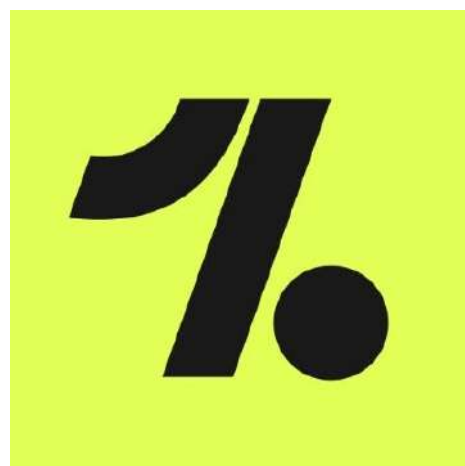
Georgia Stanway added: "As a proud ambassador for women's football, I'm delighted to be working with OneFootball alongside so many other talented players to spotlight the progress and strength of the women's game.

"I believe in representation in all its forms and I can't wait to celebrate women's football and inspire the new generation to join in by following the game."

Anne von Löbbecke, Head of Brand Marketing, OneFootball said: "Over half of our 100 million-strong community want the women's game to be more prominent in the media, and we've responded with this new multi-year commitment.

"Bringing together our incredible ambassadors to help take women's football to an even bigger audience, while working with Girls United to help inspire the next generation to play the game.

"This is really just the start. EURO 2022 is an inflection point and we're proud to be playing our part and spotlighting women's football, on and off the pitch, through the tournament and beyond."



International influx at City

Manchester City have been making some big moves in bringing in a number of high-level internationals across the transfer window.

Joining City are forward Deyna Castellanos from Atletico Madrid, left back Leila Ouahabi from Barcelona, centre back Laia Aleixandri from Atletico Madrid and forward Mary Fowler from Montpellier.

This quadruple arrival shows intent from Gareth Taylor's side, not just in clinching the league title, but challenging heavily in European football.

Manchester City sign Casparij

21-year-old Dutch Kerstin Casparij wingback joins City after two seasons playing with Eredivisie side FC Twente.

Casparij has signed on a three-year deal and will wear the number two shirt.

Le Tissier makes a move

Defender Maya Le Tissier has announced her move to Manchester United from Brighton and Hove Albion on a three-year deal.

Le Tissier is widely regarded as one of the county's finest youngsters with boss Marc Skinner commenting, "Maya is a player that we have been monitoring for a while, and as expected she is developing into one of the brightest young players."

United sign Garcia

Spanish international Lucia Garcia has signed for Manchester United until the end of the 2023/24 season.

The 23-year-old forward has joined from Spanish side Athletic Club after making 161 appearances and scoring 63 goals. Garcia said, "The fact that a club the size of Manchester United has put their faith in me is a dream come true. I already feel very much at home here."

Ramsey goes on loan

Goalkeeper Emily Ramsey has joined Everton on loan from Manchester United for the season.

The 21-year-old spent last season with Birmingham City where she made 17 appearances.

Ramsey commented on the move, "I knew it's a big opportunity when a club like Everton were interested, so it was a no-brainer for me."

United bring in WSL reinforcements

Manchester United have confirmed the summer signings of midfielder Adriana Leon from West Ham, forward Rachel Williams from Tottenham Hotspur and young midfielder Grace Clinton from Everton.

Parris joins Manchester United

England international and European Champion Nikita Parris has signed for Manchester United on a two-year deal.

Parris joins from Arsenal after successful spells with Lyon, Manchester City and Everton.

The 28-year-old winger arrives with several major titles under her belt including Women's Super League and Women's Champions League titles.

Turner and James return to the WSL

Centre-back Amy Turner and midfielder Angharad James both return to the Super League after short stints with NWSL side Orlando Pride. Both have signed for London Club Tottenham Hotspur on two-year contracts, with James having the option to extend for a further year.

Chelsea legend departs

Chelsea midfielder Drew Spence has left the club after more than a decade. During her time with Chelsea Spence has become a champion of England five times, an FA Cup winner three times and also has two Continental Cup and one Community Shield under her belt. Spence has joined Tottenham Hotspur on a two-year deal.

Spurs make several signings

Tottenham Hotspur have announced the signings of 23-year-old midfielder Ellie Brazil from Brighton and Hove Albion, German midfielder Ramona Petzelberger from Aston Villa and Polish forward Nikola Karczewska.

Arsenal trio sign for the Hammers

West Ham have confirmed the permanent signing of forward Lisa Evans after her year long loan spell in claret and blue. Fellow former Arsenal teammates, youngsters Halle Houssein and Alex Hennessy have also signed contracts with the London Club.

Chelsea sign Kaneyrd

Chelsea have confirmed the signing of Sweden international Johanna Rytting Kaneyrd on a three-year deal, with an option to extend for a fourth year. The winger joins the Blues from Swedish side BK Hacken.

Manager Emma Hayes commented, "[she's] extremely quick, direct, a great age and she's the profile player we've been looking for. Johanna will bring another dynamic to the team and we are really looking forward to her career with us at Chelsea."

Reading snap up Northern Ireland duo

Northern Ireland international goalkeeper Jackie Burns and winger Lauren Wade have made moves to Reading.

Burns joins as a free agent after mutually agreeing her release from a two-year contract at Swedish club BK Hacken that was only signed in March of this year.

Wade makes the move from Glentoran to Reading, becoming only the second player to make a transfer from an Irish League club to a WSL club.

Money talks: will England's Euro 2022 win see a boost to WSL finances?



By Sian Dennis

The Lionesses' dramatic Euro 2022 2-1 victory against 8-time winners Germany ended England's 56-year trophy drought. 17.4 million people tuned in to watch Ella Toone score a delicious chip, Mary Earps' goalkeeping masterclass and Chloe Kelly's iconic goal celebration.

It was tense. It was bitty. It was majestic. Both sides were stung. History was made. "The legacy of this tournament is the change in society", captain Leah Williamson told the BBC. "We've brought people together and got them to games. This is the start of the journey."

The final was the most-watched women's football game on UK television and the most-watched TV event so far in 2022. A further 5.9 million streamed the game on the BBC iPlayer and the

BBC Sport website and app, while a record crowd of 87,192 travelled to Wembley Stadium.

Eye watering numbers usually reserved for top-flight men's football, it is fair to say that women's football is now firmly at the forefront of the sporting world's consciousness.

Change is afoot. So, that should mean the vast disparities - such as pitch access, training facilities and resources - between male and female players should start to lessen?

Well, let's follow the money...

Mind the (pay) gap

Following their win, England's players reportedly pocketed a £55,000 bonus from a pot worth £1.3 million. On top of an appearance fee of £2,000 per match, some players took home more than £72,000 at the end of the tournament. A life-changing sum of cash, this is more than many professional

players in this country would earn throughout two seasons in the WSL.

Although the most generous scheme ever offered by the FA, the £1.3 million pot remained four times lower than the men's team who would have shared a cool £5 million if they won last summer's Euros.

Turning to the WSL, according to Telegraph Sport, the WSL's highest earners, like Arsenal's rockstar, Vivianne Miedema, and 2022's Golden Boot winner, Sam Kerr, take home around £250,000 from their clubs. No small change, this is still 50 times less than their male counterparts. Many of the top 10 men's earners in the Premier League earn upwards of £250,000 a week. For example, England captain, Leah Williamson, is reportedly worth around £200,000 a year while her male equivalent, Harry Kane, earns the same amount a week.

For the norm, on average WSL players reportedly earn £47,000 a year, however, at the bottom end of the scale, young players, on their first professional contract, are understood to be on as little as £20,000 a year. This means that young talent may be priced out of playing professional football due to limited opportunities, hiked living expenses and squashed wages.

The road to sponsorship

Women's football has in recent years started to attract significant media rights and sponsorship income. Last year, the WSL began a landmark £8m-a-year broadcast deal with Sky and the BBC while outlets such as Dazn and BeIN Sports partnered with the Women's Champions League on a similar deal.

Once more, the FA confirmed a new visual identity and name change for the Barclay's WSL ahead of the 2022/23 season, in which the rebrand will see the use of 'The FA' dropped from the title. This is a major step in giving the women's game a much more robust identity.

These financial figures, of course, remain overshadowed by the money generated in the men's game. The Premier League's media rights, for example, are worth £10bn every year. And this is only expected to grow. Can the WSL aspire to something similar? The current broadcasting deals in place are undoubtedly paying off with Sky Sports' Head of Football, Gary Hughes, stating that viewing numbers "are up dramatically from what we anticipated" as average audiences hit 125k per game (an increase of 170% on

the season before). And don't forget there's the individual sponsorship deals with players. The seeds are definitely there, but we need to maintain the current heightened level of interest to ensure longevity.

We've seen some progress over the last few years with teams signing new sponsors and increasing their wage budget, but is it enough? In short, no. There are still many steps left before we can compare them with their male counterparts in terms of salaries and exposure. The current structure won't change overnight. This is why we need more people like Chelsea's manager, Emma Hayes, and Manchester City's manager, Gareth Taylor, who are willing to speak out on behalf of their team and every other woman playing football professionally today to drive one simple key message home: football is football. The time for equality is now.

So, that's the frontline. But what about those at the top?

The FA has said it will review the pay structure. The WSL clubs have said it will be a long time before they can afford to pay their women teams at the same level as the men. They have also said that they will do everything they can to support the women's game, including using their platforms and resources to try and promote awareness of equal pay and fair treatment for all footballers in England.

Some people have pointed out that the men's game earns more because it's popular and attracts more money due to their 'superior physical abilities' and 'bigger audiences on TV' – a claim which is often met with derision by those who follow both sports. Of course in

a way they are right, but not in terms of talent, skills or physicality. It's in terms of simple maths - the men's game is more established and therefore has more lucrative sponsorship deals with higher budgets plugged into it. More money equals higher wages. If we want the women's game to be on par with their counterparts, we need to balance access to and the distribution of wealth.

Looking ahead

There's still a long way to go before women in sports can be considered equal in terms of pay. The Euros is not alone in seeing such disparity, as highlighted by Telegraph Sport's [#CloseTheGap](#) campaign earlier this year. The 2021/22 Champions League saw £1.66 billion on offer to the men's clubs, in contrast to a mere £20 million for the women, while 2022's men's World Cup will see a prize fund of £335 million. The next Women's World Cup's prize pot is yet to be confirmed but so far only at least £46 million has allegedly been guaranteed.

The big issue, however, is about more than money. It can't just be about getting pay and sponsorships; there needs to be more support for grass-roots initiatives as well as education programmes that encourage young girls into sports like goalkeeping or coaching positions at lower levels of competition.

We need to build on the momentum of the Euros and engage with top tier sponsors who respect the women's game and understand its potential to be on par (or better!) than the men's game. Only then will it truly flourish.

Simon Says

This month Simon O'Neill chats to Hannah Storey of the Aston Villa Former Players Club on her work.

Your current role is as Aston Villa Former Players Club. What does that role involve and how did this position come about?

Back in 2018, Aston Villa, alongside European Cup legend Ken McNaught, set up the Aston Villa Former Players Club. The club was formed to bring together former players under the official banner of Aston Villa and to establish a stronger connection between Villa and its ex-players.

At that time, I was working in a legal firm managing corporate events but having spent nearly nine years working in Hospitality and Events at AVFC, I had kept in contact with Ken who at the time was the Former Players Club liaison officer. I joined him in October 2019 as the events arm of the Former Players Club. In the past year Ken has moved away from the area and I have taken on the liaison role as well.

One of my main roles is to raise money for the former players' benevolent fund. The fund has been set up to help players who have fallen on hard times. This is done via fundraising events, but as we all know, events came to a standstill in 2020. During this period the former players took part in some very valuable community projects, such as calling our vulnerable and elderly fans and taking part in virtual Q&As across the globe.

Since getting back to normal the very popular Legends Tour series has been up and running, and we also hosted a darts event with fans and former players. I am currently in the process of organising 'Legends through the decades' events.

Another part of the role is liaising with our former players. I organise everything from

matchday appearances to visits into the local community. I have been working on former player engagement, and some familiar faces have joined as official ambassadors.

You have come from a marketing and events background. How did this career choice come about?

Being a lifelong Villa fan I had seen working for AVFC as the 'dream role'. One day I thought to myself I wonder if Villa have any jobs going, I spotted the vacancy for match day coordinator and thought I would take a chance, one which very much paid off. I spent many years learning and shaping the role, I was very lucky to work on match day, manage the close season pitch hire events, look after corporate ticketing, work on hospitality marketing initiatives and be involved with many unique events (such as Take That) and projects.

I have always had an affinity with the ex-players as I was fortunate enough to look after them on match day. While I was very sad to leave AVFC in 2016 I wanted to broaden my events knowledge and by working in corporate events, I feel I certainly did that. A little part of me always thought I would return to AVFC, and when my current role came about working with the former players, everything fell into place and now I feel very honoured and privileged to be in this role working with our club legends.

You attended university was the course career driven or was it part of a wider plan to enter the business world?

I would say it was part of a wider plan to enter the business world, at the time, like many 18 years olds, I wasn't sure what career path I wanted to take. The course I took covered many elements and I particularly enjoyed the

marketing side. That led me to start looking for jobs which included marketing and from there I became interested in organising events.

Would you say the role has become more open to women looking to enter the world of hospitality in the sporting sector?

Absolutely, when I first joined AVFC in 2007 the head of hospitality was a very strong female, who had a positive impact on the way I do my job now. In fact, many of my team at the time were women. I think women in sports hospitality potentially outweigh men.

If I was to consider my current role now, I am in a unique position given that I am working with ex male footballers. I am hoping that down the line I will be able to start looking after our ex female professionals.

Do you any pieces of advice for anyone looking to gain experience in the events and hospitality industry in the football industry?

Get experience at ground level, I worked as a waitress while I was at college, I have worked in various bars and pubs, and I even had a few shifts in the kiosk on a match day at Villa and West Bromwich Albion. Doing these jobs gave me valuable social skills, confidence to talk and mix with customers and colleagues a like, and a useful insight into how the hospitality industry works. Also take pride in your work whatever you are doing, make sure you do it to the best of your ability. Get stuck in!

What would your average, if you can have an average week look like as far as bookings and preparation for events go?

My weeks can vary widely. Some weeks are spent calling or meeting former players to book them in to work in hospitality on a match day or to have a general catch up to see how they are doing.

If I am in the process of organising an event, the build-up will start a couple of months in advance. Once I've decided when and where I am holding an event, I must cost everything up to make sure

at the end of it the benevolent fund will be benefiting. I liaise with catering to book a room and food offering, marketing who will design the assets, the website and social media team who will promote, ticketing who will put the event on sale and most importantly the former players who will be the stars of that event.

My proudest moment so far, was the organisation and participation in the 40th anniversary celebrations of Aston Villa winning the European Cup. The Club pulled together a spine-tingling moment at the Crystal Palace game in May which I was thrilled to be involved in.





BARCLAYS CHAMPIONSHIP

Amber Wildgust appointed as Director of Football



London City Lionesses are delighted to Welcome Amber Wildgust to the team, as the club's new Director of Football.

Wildgust joins the Lionesses following her time with Watford and Aston Villa, both in a General Manager capacity.

Indeed, when Wildgust joined the midlands side, the team had finished 9th in the 2017/18 Championship season, and yet in just two short years, promotion to the WSL had been achieved.

The role will see Wildgust work to maintain the growth of London City off the pitch, alongside the high performance standards on it.

Speaking on her appointment to the official website, Wildgust said:

"I'm delighted to start the next chapter of my career at London City.

"It is an exciting opportunity to build on the momentum of a record high finish to create strong growth on and off the pitch with the support of Diane and the board.

"Over the off season the club has shown clear

ambition and drive through the recruitment and programme which has been built for the players.

"I am really looking forward to working with Mel, the support staff and players each and I am confident that success awaits for everyone at London City."

Chair, Diane Culligan, said of Wildgust:

"We are absolutely delighted to have Amber join us, as our Director of Football.

"I have been watching her career progress and have much admired her leadership approach, can do attitude and career achievements to date.

"At London City Lionesses, the only independent women's club at this level in the UK, we are super excited to have another young talented woman at the helm.

"We look forward to watching the impact she will no doubt have at this special club, as she works alongside our with tremendous group of staff and players, on the next stage in our growth and development."

Busy summer at Birmingham

After being appointing Darren Carter as permanent manger and bringing in Jo Potter as assistant head coach, Birmingham City have been busy in the transfer market.

Siobhan Wilson (Crystal Palace), Martha Harris (Manchester United), Mollie Green (Coventry United) and Lucy Thomas (Coventry United) have all joined the club.

Also joining on loan are Tara Bourne (Manchester United), Fran Stenson (Arsenal), Charlie Devlin (Leicester City) and Ashley Hodson (Liverpool). Leaving the club are Rebecca Holloway, Veatriki Sarri, Marie Hourihan, Emily Whelan, Lucy Whipp, Sarah Ewens and Cecilie Sandvej.

Eight new faces at Robins

Bristol City have had a busy summer so far with eight new players joining the club and nine leaving. Joining are Fran Bentley (Manchester United), Olivia Clark (Coventry United), Jodie Hutton (Aston Villa), Chloe Mustaki (Shelbourne), Shania Hayles (Aston Villa), Elyssa Boddy (Leicester City), Vicky Bruce (SC Sand) and Emily Syme (Aston Villa). Flo Allen retired whilst Satara Murray, Izzy Cook, Maisy Collis, Simran Jhamat, Ava Kuyken, Sophie Whitehouse, Mel Johnson and Gwen Davies have all left The Robins.

All change at Charlton

Charlton Athletic have signed Angela Addison (Tottenham Hotspur), Freda Ayisi (Lewes), Corinne Henson (Watford), Emily Simpkins (Brighton & Hove Albion), Sophie O'Rourke (Lewes), Heidi Logan (Lewes), Tegan McGowan (Chelsea), Poppy Soper (Chelsea) and Mel Johnson (Bristol City). Sian Rogers has joined on loan from Aston Villa.

Leaving The Addicks are Jess King, Anna Filbey, Sophie Hillyerd, Becky Jane, Vyan Sampson, Hollie Olding, Elisha Sulola, Megan Wynne, Elise Hughes, Sophie Quirk, Lois Heuchan and Natalia Negri.

Rovers summer signings

Gemma Donnelly has made two signings so far for Blackburn Rovers this summer.

Defender Evie Smith has joined from Liverpool whilst midfielder Faith Nokuthula signed from Brighton & Hove Albion. Aimee Hodgson, Chelsey Jukes, Chloe Dixon, Katie Anderson, Erica Cunningham, Amaya Coleman-Evans and Annabel Blanchard have all left Rovers.

New manager Lee Burch has signed two new players so far at Coventry United.

Midfielder Cara Milne-Redhead has joined from Seton Hall and goalkeeper Mia Smith from Watford. Anna Colville, Fran Orthodoxou, Becky McGrother, Mollie Green, Olivia Clark, Phoebe Warner, Lucy Thomas, Grace Riglar, Katie Wilkinson, Naomi Hartley, Olivia Fergusson and Nat Johnson have all left over the summer.

Durham make new signings

After announcing they were turning to a full-time operating model earlier in the summer, Lee Sanders has signed a few players so far for Durham.

Joining are Georgia Robert (Sheffield United), Tatiana Saunders (Lewes), Jess Clarke (Sheffield United) and Saoirse Noonan (Shelbourne). Abby Holmes, Nicki Gears, Kathryn Hill and Danielle Brown have all moved on.

Five new signings at Lewes

Scott Booth has made five signings so far for Lewes after being appointed manager in May.

Josie Longhurst (Brighton & Hove Albion), Emily Kraft (FFC Frankfurt), Sophie Whitehouse (Bristol City), Amber-Keegan Stobbs (Watford) and Nat Johnson (Coventry United) have all joined.

Emma Thompson has joined on loan from Chelsea. Leaving the club are Georgia Timms, Lucy Ashworth-Clifford, Shanell Salgado, Tatiana Saunders, Freda Ayisi, Ini Umotong, Nicola Cousins, Sophie O'Rourke, Heidi Logan and Ellie Noble. Zoe Cross has also retired.

Fab 15 for Crystal Palace

Crystal Palace announced 15 new players in one go!

Joining The Eagles are Fran Kitching (Sheffield United), Fliss Gibbons (Brighton & Hove Albion), Chloe Arthur (Aston Villa), Anna Filbey (Charlton Athletic), Rianna Dean (Liverpool), Annabel Blanchard (Blackburn Rovers), Kirsten Reilly (Rangers), Natalia Negri (Charlton Athletic), Paige Bailey-Gayle (Leicester City), Hollie Olding (Charlton Athletic), Ellie Noble (Lewes), Elise Hughes (Charlton Athletic), Polly Doran (Melbourne Victory) and Shauna Guyatt (Chelsea).

Chloe Peplow has joined on loan from Reading. Bianca Baptiste, Hannah Churchill, Grace Coombs, Leanne Cowan, Millie Farrow, Sophie McLean, Kate Natkiel and Siobhan Wilson have left Palace.

United duo move to the USA

Sheffield United's Matilda Taylor and Sam Sharrocks are moving to the USA after accepting scholarship opportunities.

Taylor made 11 appearances for the Blades whilst Sharrocks made her sole appearance against Watford in March. Both players had come through the club's academy before moving up to the senior team.

Joining London City Lionesses for the 2022/23 season are Lois Joel (West Ham United), Millie Farrow (Crystal Palace), Lois Heuchan (Charlton Athletic), Lucy Shepherd (Washington Spirit), Hermione Cull (Arsenal) and Sarah Ewens (Birmingham City).

Hannah Short, Lily Pursey, Kenni Thompson, Annie Rossiter, Alli Muprhy, Mollie Rouse and Brooke Nunn have all left the club.

United make key signings

Sheffield United have signed Rachel Brown (Nottingham Forest), Sophie Haywood (Aston Villa), Bethan Davies (Huddersfield Town), Naomi Hartley (Coventry United) and Grace Rigler (Coventry United). Marie Francis-Jones has signed on dual registration from Manchester City and Sophie Barker has joined on loan from Leicester City.

Both Sophie Walton and Kasia Lipka retired during the summer. Matilda Taylor, Sam Sharrocks, Fran Kitchen, Lucy Watson, Ocean Rolandsen, Jess Clarke, Georgie Robert and Jess Reavill have all left The Blades.

Countdown to Championship is on



Sports Press Photo

By Peter Mann

A dozen clubs, twenty-four matches, and, after a summer of change in the Barclays Women's Championship, they're ready to go again on Sunday 21 August, fighting for the title claimed by Liverpool Women, last time around.

Two local affairs will kick-start the new season, Melissa Phillips' London City Lionesses, runners-up last time around, welcoming Dean Davenport's Crystal Palace Women, who finished in fourth, to Princes Park, whilst in the north-east, Lee Sanders' Durham Women, who were sixth, welcome Sunderland, who finished in ninth, fronted by Melanie Reay, to Maiden Castle – it already promises to be some opening day.

What about the comings-and-goings since last season finished? Well there's certainly been plenty of action on that front. Crystal Palace, seemingly pulling out all of the stops in order to better last seasons' fourth place finish and maybe push for promotion, Dean Davenport and his coaching team welcome a somewhat impressive, fifteen new signings to Hayes Lane.

In fact, of the positions that have been strengthened, the goalkeeper's post seems to have been the most popular, Championship clubs seeing thirteen of those entering the fray. This includes the move of Mia Smith to Coventry United Women from Watford Women. Smith is no table for having collected the 'Championship Save of the Season' award last time

around, making a point-black stop from Sunderland Women's Keira Ramshaw's headed attempt on goal.

League newcomers, Birmingham City Women, relegated from the Women's Super League (finishing two points adrift of Leicester City Women), and Southampton Women, promoted from the Southern League (following a play-off win over Wolverhampton Wanderers Women), have brought in fifteen new players between them.

Darren Carter's Blues have made eight new signings, although half of those are on season-long loan deals, welcoming, amongst others, two from Manchester United Women (Tara Bourne and Martha Harris) and one from Liverpool (Ashley Hodson); Marianne

Spacey-Cale's Saints on the other-hand have brought in the New Zealand international defender, Ashleigh Ward (who worked as a Strength & Conditioning coach for the women's rugby team whilst at university), and Welsh international winger Megan Wynne, (after more than a decade at Watford, and spells at Millwall, Tottenham Hotspur, Bristol City, and, most recently, Charlton Athletic). Wynne is among four attacking players to land on the South Coast.

Blackburn Rovers Ladies, Coventry United Women and Sunderland Women have been fairly inactive in regards summer transfers, just half a dozen between them, the latter stacking up on the experience factor though with the arrivals of Tyler Dodds (from Glasgow City) and Abby Holmes (arriving from neighbours Durham).

Lauren Smith has brought a number of internationals to boost the Robins' hopes for the new season as Jamaican Shania Hayles, Olivia Clark of Wales, and Fran Bentley, who makes her loan move from Manchester United a permanent one, are being joined by the experienced American defender, Vicky Bruce at Bristol City Women. Bruce has previously played in Scotland, Iceland, Cyprus, Sweden, Denmark, and Germany.

Among the nine signings for the Addicks, Charlton boss, Karen Hills, has snapped up

Chelsea Academy starlet, and Welsh U19 international, Tegan McGowan, highly-regarded shot-stopper Poppy Soper (dual registration with Chelsea and Plymouth ending), the experienced Emily Simpkins (played for Doncaster Belles, Leicester, Nottingham Forest, and Birmingham), alongside a trio of signings from Lewes (Heidi Logan, Sophie O'Rourke and Freda Ayisi); Lee Sanders at Durham Women meanwhile, welcomes England international (50+ caps) Jess Clarke and the experienced duo of Tatiana Saunders (played in Iceland and France) and Georgia Robert (Leeds, Millwall, Lewes, London Bees, Sheffield United, and a spell stateside in-between).

Fifteen new players have winged their way to the afore-mentioned Eagles, Dean Davenport's Palace side having a new-look feel for the new campaign, bringing in two keepers, three defenders, six midfielders, and four forwards, including Rianna Dean (Liverpool), Kirsten Reilly (Glasgow Rangers), and Polly Doran (Melbourne Victory, Australia).

A stand-out signing in the Championship this season could well be at Lewes as Scott Booth, who only took over managerial duties in May, has brought in Emily Kraft, a forward previously with FFC Frankfurt in Germany (Kraft holds dual-nationality, Germany

and Republic of Ireland). London City Lionesses have themselves added both international and American league experience to their look with Melissa Phillips adding Scottish internationals Sarah Ewens (U17 & U19 level) and Lois Heuchan, England Youth 'keeper Hermione Cull (formerly of Arsenal) and two with extensive spells stateside in Lucy Shepherd and Lois Joel (gained success stateside before signing for West Ham United).

Finally, Sheffield United, Neil Redfearn's Blades bring in seven new players ahead of the new season, one of whom is the dual-contract signing of Manchester City's 19-year-old full-back, Maria Francis-Jones (who joined City last season from Cardiff and spent part of the last campaign at Blackburn) and the experienced trio of Rachel Brown (ex-Nottingham Forest, she'll find some familiar faces in Sheffield including Bex Rayner), Sophie Haywood (Aston Villa), and Sophie Barker (Leicester City).

The opening day fixtures, on Sunday 21 August are as follows – Southampton Women vs Charlton Athletic Women, London City Lionesses vs. Crystal Palace Women, Durham Women vs. Sunderland Women, Coventry United Women vs. Bristol City Women, Blackburn Rovers Ladies vs. Sheffield United Women, and Birmingham City Women vs. Lewes Women

Championship's newest side bring in new players

After winning promotion, Southampton and manager Marieanne Spacey-Cale have been active in the transfer market.

Joining The Saints are Paige Peake (Ipswich Town), Beth Lumsden (Oxford United), Sophie Harris (Leicester City), Megan Wynne (Charlton Athletic), Lexi Lloyd-Smith, Katie Wilkinson (Coventry United) and Ashleigh Ward (Actonians).

Alisha Ware, Caitlin Morris, Katie Rood, Kirsty Whitton, Sara Luce, Shannon Sievwright and Shelly Provan all left the club over the summer.

Four in for Sunderland

Mel Reay has made four signings so far for Sunderland this summer.

Abby Holmes, Nicki Gears and Danielle Brown have all joined from Durham whilst Tyler Dodds sign from Glasgow City.

Eva Blakey, Maria Farrugia and Daisy Burt have left The Black Cats.

Asante joins Bristol City

Anita Asante has joined Bristol City as first team coach.

The 37-year-old announced her retirement from playing at the end of last season after a successful playing career which included winning 71 caps for England and being part of the Team GB side at the 2012 Olympics.

Speaking to Bristol City's website, Asante said "I'm delighted to be here and have the opportunity to work with a great crop of players.

"It's a really motivated group and the staff have welcomed me in so I'm hoping I can use my knowledge and experience from my playing days in my coaching journey."

Coventry United appoint Lee Burch

Coventry United have appointed Lee Burch as their new manager and Sian Osmond as assistant head coach.

Burch has previously managed Millwall Lionesses, Yeovil Town and London Bees in the top two divisions.

Osmond had worked with Burch at London Bees before taking over from him as manager there.

Coventry have moved to a part-time set up for this season following further financial concerns.



Sheffield United to play at Bramall Lane



Sheffield United Women is delighted to announce Neil Redfearn's Blades will be playing all their domestic home league games this season at Bramall Lane.

As the club enters its fifth season in the Barclays Women's Championship, United will be returning to the heart of the city at S2 for all league and cup matches in the 2022/23 campaign.

Zoe Johnson, United Women General Manager, said, "It was fantastic for the players to get a number of opportunities across last season to play at Bramall Lane.

"The move shows how connected this club is and how dedicated we all are to our women's team.

"Every time we play at the Lane it gives our supporters a chance to watch our

women's team represent the club in this historic stadium.

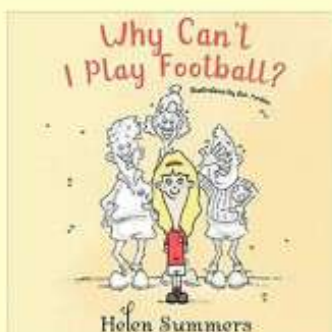
"To call Bramall Lane our home is a special moment for everyone involved."

Season tickets are now on sale for Sheffield United fans.

Season tickets will be priced at £60 adults and £40 concessions, while men's season ticket holders can purchase them at a 20% discount, with adult season tickets available for £40 and concessions priced at £32.

Sheffield United's first Barclays Championship game at Bramall Lane will be against Durham on August 27.

The season starts on August 21 away at Blackburn Rovers after an away friendly at Durham on August 14.



Children's book out now

In this book, Sarah is a young girl with a dream. All she wants to do is play football but when the boys in the park tease her and tell her she cannot play, she does not know where to turn. Written in verse with bright supporting illustrations the story explores how Sarah's mum finds a way of helping her learn from the experience. After doing some research, her mum shows her that anything is possible when she puts her mind to it.

Available at Amazon, Waterstones and all good book stores

Xero and Lewes F.C. team up to help level the playing field in women's football



Xero, the global small business platform, today announced a new three-year partnership with Lewes F.C. to empower the club to reach its objective of greater equality in the women's game. Through Xero's support, the club will highlight the importance of financial sustainability and the vital role it plays in achieving an equitable playing field.

The partnership is the club's largest and longest of its kind and comes as the East Sussex-based 'Rooks' marks its fifth anniversary of becoming the world's first gender equal

club, having made the decision to split its playing budget and resources equally between the men's and women's first teams in 2017.

Since then, Lewes F.C. has enjoyed a string of successes: both teams have been promoted, men's attendances have risen 82 percent, and women's attendances have increased stratospherically by 367 percent. Interest in women's football is at an all-time high, as evidenced by record breaking crowds at the UEFA Women's EURO 2022, but there is still plenty of work to be done off the pitch.

Xero aims to go beyond traditional sponsorship and support from the back, helping Lewes F.C. focus on what it does best and continue to be the catalyst for tangible change within the women's game. The partners firmly believe that strong financial management has a direct impact on a club's ability to fuel the pipeline for talent and increase recruitment from school age groups. In effect, better numbers off the pitch result in better numbers on the pitch.

In fact, Xero's partnership is already having a positive influence. The club is

hiring for two new brand roles: a Commercial Manager to focus on generating revenue and work towards being financially sustainable, and a Communications Manager to help transform the way they talk to fans, owners and supporters.

The multi-faceted partnership will include:

- **Knowledge sharing:** Xero's backing and efficient small business software means Lewes F.C. will be able to invest more time in advising other clubs on their own governance and equality goals and help more people come together to make the sport more inclusive.
- **Grassroots club support:** Lewes F.C. staff will also visit or host grassroots clubs within Sussex County Football Association region to help further their equality and financial viability objectives and further their development with the help of Xero's expertise.
- **Gender equality and financial viability content:** Expect to see Lewes F.C.'s non-playing staff star in a content

series on how to develop and implement equality and financial viability.

- **Business networking events:** Xero will create the "Xero small business networking club" in association with Lewes F.C. with regular events hosted by Xero staff at both Lewes FC and at other venues.
- **Tickets, hospitality and branding:** Look out for a pop of Xero blue on match days on and off the pitch, as it features on the shirts (sleeve and back), as well as the club's famous corporate beach huts.

Maggie Murphy, Chief Executive Officer, Lewes Football Club, added: "We're focused on creating a welcoming, inclusive club that's sustainable for the long term, which is impossible to create without brilliant partners, like Xero who were great from the start.

"It was the first time, a potential partner dug into our club strategy in detail and asked how we fund our safeguarding officer or accountant – the quiet but necessary nuts and bolts of the club – without whom we could not function.

"What the partnership also does is provide validity and legitimacy for the women's game.

"With a brand like Xero coming on board, it's a message to the wider world that it's a space worth investing in. I'm confident with the help of Xero we'll continue to make great strides towards equality."

Kate Hayward, Director of Operations at Xero, said: "Lewes F.C. has made revolutionary strides in the women's game.

"We both understand the strength of community, and we believe in the power of women's football but also its relationship with small business communities. Improving the financial health of clubs can make a difference and our sponsorship will help Lewes F.C. tell genuine, authentic stories about the importance of financial sustainability in a way that will benefit the wider women's game.

"We believe that together we can grow the game."



THE FA NATIONAL LEAGUE

Maidenhead United hunt for new manager



Maidenhead United Women are on the lookout for a new manager following Kieran Beesley's decision to step down after a short period in charge.

The Magpies achieved their highest-ever finish in the FA Women's National League Division One South West last season, the fourth tier of women's football in England, led by Ryan Taylor.

Beesley replaced Taylor in July and was set to lead the Magpies through the 2022/23 campaign now made up of 12 teams including AFC Bournemouth, Cardiff City, and newly-promoted Moneyfields FC.

However, a statement on Maidenhead United's website revealed that the women are now on the hunt for a new boss.

"Manager Kieran Beesley has recently stepped down after a short period in charge of the side and the club are keen to appoint a new manager as soon as

possible to work with a skilled, motivated and hard-working group of players who have achieved such success in recent times," it read.

"Interested candidates are invited to send their CV to mulfc_fixtures@hotmail.com.

"The team are also always keen to strengthen their playing, coaching and backroom staff whilst volunteers on a match day are always sought after. The team have a wonderful principal sponsor in Kensington Mortgages but they are always looking for additional sponsors to come on board.

"If you'd like more information on how to get involved on a journey with the club and with this team of inspiring women, please do contact us via mulfc_fixtures@hotmail.com."

‘Once a Stokie, always a Stokie’



By Jonathan Cotterill-Bolsover

Stoke City are a club that have graced the third tier of women's football for nearly a decade since the transformation of the system into the National League, a club that has not been shy on trophies since its formation in 2001. We caught up with 1st Team Coach, Lou Roberts, to talk about the past, present and future of the Potters Women.

‘Once a Stokie, always a Stokie’ is how Roberts describes players past and present who play for the club, a club that has a history of long serving staff and seemingly having the ability to retain players over long periods of time. The retirement of Katie Naylor and Emma Henderson at the end of

the season, who between them had served 14 years for the club, is perhaps a good indicator of the commitment that the club gains year after year.

‘We are a family at Stoke’, says Roberts, ‘Why do we build such strong foundations? My head says that we are perfectly positioned in such a place that we capture players for a 50 mile radius. My heart says that we are a family, people stay because the environment for players is so good, we fight every minute for each other on the pitch, we have a tight knit group of players who work for each other.’

In reality it is more than likely a combination of both, the capture of talent from around

the region can only be matched by providing a good environment for the players.

Roberts points to the ‘working class roots’ of the region that run through the city that engrain what Stoke are all about.

‘Our hard work and determination is what defines us’, adds Roberts, ‘we are a club that takes care of everyone involved from the players to the staff’.

At the conclusion of the National League season, the announcement of investment via the Premier League of up to a million pounds per season will have raised a few eyebrows, for Roberts, she feels that this a real opportunity to grow the game and is realistic

to the opportunities this will offer.

‘My understanding is that there will not be a chunk of cash dropped into clubs pockets, but a source of valuable resources’, she added, ‘as a club we will be looking to maximise that opportunity, in particular the commercial plan which can help maximise revenue for the club’.

When considering the gap between tiers two and three of the game, there does remain a huge gap between the two, the lucrative heights of the Super League and Championship seem well out of reach for most National League clubs, but that is a gap that is slowly shrinking, according to Roberts, who feels that more and more clubs are looking to teams above and studying the models in order to bring themselves closer to the top leagues.

‘Southampton achieved that this year, I watched them and thought to myself that they were ready for Championship football, they were ready as a team and they were ready as a club. That promotion was the culmination of years of hard work to get them ready for that and that gives inspiration to us all that this can be done’.

Turning to club matters, Stoke are a team with a plan, currently undergoing changes that will see a new long term structure put into action at the club, Roberts is highly optimistic of what she describes as a ‘transition phase’, but also describes a ‘buzz around the club’ that is akin to the triple winning team when she recalls

‘we felt like winners that could achieve anything’.

‘Taking the team on as interim (on the departure of the former Head Coach) was an amazing experience, we had many highs and lows. However, league tables don’t lie and we were in a relegation dogfight for a lot of the season’.

‘But we knew, that if we could change the culture slightly, if we could engage the players a little bit more we knew we could get a real buzz about the football club again’.

‘The exciting thing is that we have a group of players that we believe in and they believe in us, we have consistency and continuity in the staff. When you enjoy spending time together then the work is a lot easier and we enjoy spending time with each other and the players, it creates a spark and everybody enjoys being a part of it’.

Roberts describes the current situation as ‘perfect timing’ with the club and the team really aligning with the same goals and all parties buying into the same strategy, the transition period coming at a time when everything appears to have fallen into place at the right time. But what exactly are the ambitions for the club?

‘The new five year plan is now in place, it is really important that we have a transparent plan and a strategy that we work to. It was key to me that we had to ask to what we are all trying to achieve? My personal plan would be to working with Stoke in the Championship or WSL. The reality is that may not be possible for the next three to

five years, but remains to be an ambition’.

This a sensible approach from a level-headed coach that takes a well-rounded view on her club, her own career and the progression of women’s football. Lou Roberts personifies the approach that will help the game grow, to grow it right, at the right pace, with a sensible outlook and with a realistic perspective that means that success can not be forced overnight with instant success. Instead progression on all levels must be nurtured to its own natural pathway.

But what comes across the most from this intelligent coach is her enjoyment of the process. ‘I am loving my coaching journey right now’, a lesson that we can all learn no matter what our role in the game.



Q&A with Cardiff City Ladies



Cardiff City Ladies

By Jamie Davies

While the summer was quiet before the new season begins, we had good chance to sit down with Jamie Philip to learn more about his role and the club.

Cardiff City Ladies are getting ready for their new league campaign in the FA Women's National League Division One which starts on the weekend of August 21st.

Unfortunately, Philip and his side found themselves relegated at the end of last season after finishing 11th out of the 14 teams competing in the FA Women's National League South.

However, with a bit of time off, the only way is looking forward

for the team from South Wales as our very own Jamie Davies had a chat with the manager.

JD: Before we get going, what are your thoughts on the record breaking crowds at the Women's Euros?

JP: It is not just at the Euros but also at all levels including the kids now. Even in schools, the participation levels are getting higher including our new training centre. It is all being filled up from girls even at the ages of 5 or 6 all the way up to 16 which is great to see. When you have Women's football for free on BBC it is crazy how everything just blows up, the game is everywhere. It happened at the Women's World Cup a few years back (2019) and it has maintained – it is not like

Wimbledon where there is a hype around for just a couple of weeks. It is great to see the attendances at this summer's Euros but also great to see loads of girls getting involved as well.

JD: The new season is around the corner, what are your aims for the new season?

JP: We're excited for the new season. We've had a pretty extreme training schedule so far and we are in the middle of a restructure in terms of off the pitch. On the pitch everything looks to be in a good place, we have got everything we have asked for including our coaches using GPS data which will track everything on what we are doing.

We are aiming for promotion and that is what we are here for despite feeling a bit bitter of what happened last season and we just want to get back up as quickly as possible.

JD: What's it like when a new season begins from a squad's perspective? Because these days football just never stops!

JP: It's all a bit weird especially in the women's game because a lot of the players are on one year contracts so you don't see anything longer than that. Towards the end of a season you start to have those contract talks with some of the players and to see where they are at for the following season. Everyone kind of goes away for a break normally at the end of May and at the start of June. We didn't at all have a break with the club staff this year because we had so much to do, we just went straight into planning including the structure and what things can we improve on the pitch. We tell the players to of course not eat too much, look after your bodies, here's what our pre-season schedule will look like and so on.

JD: What are the match days like for Cardiff City LFC in terms of atmosphere?

JP: We have done a lot of work behind the scenes trying to engage with the schools. At the end of last season, we sent little offers to our academy players to come and see us play as the last home game of the season was actually our most attended match which was great to see. We know across Wales on a Sunday that there are so many

games even youth games so it is hard for some people especially for young players to make the kick-off. We want to get more fans to come and support us as the players really feel it on match day.

JD: Do you think Cardiff City LFC being in the English setup is a better path than the Welsh system?

JP: I really do as it really helps with recruitment in terms of player's and their quality. Players want to aspire to climb up the pyramid up to the WSL (Women's Super League) and it is doable so not impossible while the Welsh Premier League and the Welsh leagues are a bit of a difference. It's the same thing every season even the Welsh Cup is the same thing every season. In England we have the FA Cup and the League Cup and all of the rest of the stuff so in terms of recruitment it's definitely more attractive.

JD: How long have you been in coaching for Jamie?

JP: I started coaching when I was 16 which was 14 years ago and I've done a bit of everything from youth football to academy football and a bit of recruitment at professional clubs and then Under-21s started to get going. Then I went to China as a teacher but would soon get involved with a local football team out there, which was Shenzhen that I believe Sven-Goran Eriksson had just left the club as the Manager by the time I arrived. Ended up coming back home doing full time coaching over here.

JD: What would you say to a young girl that may want to go into football as a career?

JP: I would just say do it because the earlier you start you get all those social skills and make friends in the process. If you want to make it then it isn't really too difficult as long as you focus and get involved at an early age and practice and do well. Just do it and don't wait.

JD: Who is your favourite women's footballer?

JP: Probably has to be Fran Kirby as even now her story is incredible to come back from her condition and play at the Euros.

JD: Who has inspired you as a coach?

JP: It has to be Thomas Tuchel now by what he is doing for Chelsea especially by winning the Champions League in his first few months at the club.

JD: Final question from me, three words to describe your feelings going into the new season?

JP: Focused. Bitter. Excited.

We wish Jamie Philip and his squad the best of luck going into the new season from The Women's Football Magazine!



Hull City's new manager prepares for season



By Jonathan Cotterill-Bolsover

Experienced manager, Chris Hames, has recently joined Hull City Ladies after spells at Bradford City and Sheffield FC Women. As he prepares for the challenge ahead, he reflects on where women's football is, particularly in relation to the National League and the national game as a whole.

Hames immediately hits as a very well spoken coach who gives an impression of 'wearing his heart on his sleeve', his passion and commitment to the groups he works with shines through both in his demeanour and his social media output, a guy that commits everything to the here and now, yet never forgets his routes, always there for a kind word of support to a former player.

His holistic, player centric approach is a reflection on where the game is going. Creating welcoming environments 'well before a ball has been kicked' in order for players to enjoy and fully immerse themselves in the experience is a strategy that works for Hames.

'The women's game is at a crossroads, people themselves need to be valued as a person now, gone are the days where we turned up to do a role and that's it', says Hames.

'We are beyond the times when we scream and shout at people in a changing room at half time. It is not about the process, it is about the person, building people up'.

'Sometimes a person has to deconstruct to understand themselves and build themselves back up again' adds Hames, spoken with his

there is still a dark side to the women's game that still lingers large, social media and face to face abuse and intimidation, perhaps enhanced with the recent success of the Euros in the country. But how do we start to combat this?

'I imagine that the people that comment are the loud minority, trying to make a noise to get reaction. But one fact remains, everybody who comments has a mother, some will have wives and daughters. When these comments are made, they cannot connect the dots'.

'My personal view is to always ignore them, it's a tough thing to do and perhaps against the convention, but what is really exciting is the amount of games I have been too that have full families, parents, boys and girls. In time this will become the norm for everybody and time will show the changes that can be made'.

With negativity aside, Hames exclaims his excitement for the future, the way that the game is currently forging its own path and forming its own identity is a clear sign that the game has a foothold in society, an opinion perhaps anchored into what has been an unpredictably high love for the Euros, way beyond what would have been expected during its planning stages.

Whatever the direction our game takes, the modern holistic management style of Hames is something we can and should take note from, a new future is now the present and we must adapt in order to carry in growing in the way that we have.

FA Women's National League Opening Fixtures

Northern Premier Division August 21			Southern Premier Division August 21		
Boldmere St Michaels	vs	Huddersfield Town	Billericay Town	vs	London Bees
Derby County	vs	Burnley	Cheltenham Town	vs	Plymouth Argyle
AFC Fylde	vs	Brighouse Town	Crawley Wasps	vs	Milton Keynes Dons
Liverpool Feds	vs	Wolverhampton	Ipswich Town	vs	Portsmouth
Loughborough Lightning	vs	Stoke City	Oxford United	vs	Bridgwater United
West Bromwich Albion	vs	Nottingham Forest	Watford	vs	Gillingham
Division One North August 21 KO: 14:00			Division One Midlands August 21 KO: 14:00		
Bradford City	vs	Middlesbrough	Leafield Athletic	vs	Leek Town
Chorley	vs	Barnsley	Lincoln City	vs	Doncaster Rovers
Leeds United	vs	Hull City	Northampton	vs	Wem Town
Merseyrail	vs	Newcastle United	Sheffield FC	vs	Stourbridge
Norton & Stockton Ancients	vs	York City	Solihull Moors Foundation	vs	Long Eaton United
Stockport County	vs	Durham Cestria	Sporting Khalsa	vs	Peterborough United
Division One South East August 21 KO: 14:00			Division One South West August 21 KO: 14:00		
AFC Wimbledon	vs	Hashtag United	AFC Bournemouth	vs	AFC St. Austell
Actonians	vs	Chesham United	Cardiff City	vs	Portishead
Cambridge City	vs	Queens Park Rangers	Exeter City	vs	Keynsham Town
Cambridge United	vs	Norwich City	Larkhill Athletic	vs	Southampton Women's
Hounslow	vs	Ashford Town (Middlesex)	Selsey	vs	Swindon Town
Wymondham Town	vs	London Seaward			



GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL

My Top Trumps to support women's and girls' grassroots football



Card games brand named as a partner for women's club AFC Acorns.

On the eve of the women's European football championships, the leading personalised card game brand, My Top Trumps, announced its commitment to the women and girls grassroots game with support for Surrey-based, FA Accredited football club AFC Acorns.

Although only two years old, the upcoming football club already boasts seven women and girls teams. It launched its venture to grow and raise the women's and girls game during the first lockdown of Covid in 2020. Since then, the number of youth teams has been increasing while winning trophies and promotions at the senior level.

My Top Trumps, the popular card game that currently provides personalised sporting decks, will create a unique AFC Acorns deck of cards and other products to commemorate the partnership and support the women's first team, which has enjoyed back-to-back promotions since its inception and is now joining tier 5 of the national football pyramid. With clubs such as Fulham and Millwall due to play the Surrey club in the 2022/23 season, My Top Trumps decided it wanted to support the football club and its impact on the local community.

My Top Trumps spokesperson said: "Women's and girls' football is a

growing and exciting sport; it impacts the community and challenges society on topics such as diversity and inclusion. We are delighted to support AFC Acorns with their long-term plan to grow and raise awareness of the women's and girls' game."

"We have seen the impact that the My Top Trumps game brings to all walks of life, and it has an educational value delivered subtly but used within the grassroots game, could have a positive impact on younger players, coaches, volunteers and spectators receiving the national governing bodies messages."

AFC Acorns, which has an ambitious plan to build up its youth ranks, also intends to launch a fund to support women and girls getting into football. Aimed at players from low-income backgrounds or fallen into hardship and those looking to further their education in football at local academies/ foundations or even abroad.

Acorn's club chairman, Chris Minn, said about the partnership: "We are delighted that a brand and product like My Top Trumps can see what we are trying to achieve for women's football and the wider community. Of course, any support for our outstanding first team is amazing; they are flying the flag for the football club and the local area." Chris continued: "We also see value in My Top Trumps supporting growth and education with the youth teams and the stars of tomorrow".

Is Your Football Club Prepared for Sudden Cardiac Arrest?



Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) can happen anywhere, any time. When it does, the victim's best chance of survival is immediate CPR and a rescuer with an automated external defibrillator (AED). The European Resuscitation Council (ERC) recommends the availability of AEDs in places where access to emergency services may be delayed. A playing field falls into this category. Early intervention can increase survival. It is extremely important for football clubs to have AEDs available on-site in case of an SCA event.

The Facts



350,000

patients are affected by out-of-hospital cardiac arrests each year in Europe¹



10%

Decrease in survival for every minute of delayed defibrillation²



5%

Chance of survival if a victim collapses and nothing is done until emergency services arrive³

SOME COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS OF SCA IN FOOTBALL: “Footballers are healthy; we don’t need an AED on our field.”

Sudden cardiac arrest doesn’t discriminate. It can strike people of any age or fitness level. In Europe, more than 350,000 patients are affected by SCA every year. Most SCA events occur in public places. “There are no SCA hazards on our playing fields.” Sudden cardiac arrest can be brought on by many factors. Taking a fall, being hit by an object or any other trauma to the body can trigger a cardiac event.

Additionally, the football pitch may be far from a hospital, police station or fire station. When an ambulance is called for a life-threatening illness, injury or other emergency, the standard response time should be between 7 and 18 minutes. For a victim of cardiac arrest, help may come too late. Every minute that passes without treatment decreases the victim’s chance of survival by 10%.

Futhermore, playing fields are often located in more remote areas. If the field is equipped with an AED, anyone on-site could use it to provide immediate high-quality CPR and a potentially life-saving shock. While on a playing field, you should never be more than a 3-minute round trip from an AED to ensure effective and rapid treatment when a medical emergency occurs.

This could mean multiple AEDs are needed for large sites to ensure that no matter where an incident takes place, an AED can be located and retrieved for the victim’s best chance of survival.

Are you prepared? Football is about community! Be prepared to treat players, supporters, families, friends and staff with a ZOLL AED.

More information:

<https://info.zoll.com/en-gb/fundraise-to-purchase-a-zoll-aed-for-your-football-team>



Euros fire power worker's football passion



A Hertfordshire women's football club has netted funding from a local power company at a time when the sport has never been more in the spotlight.

Hitchin Town Women's Canaries FC has received a £250 Team Sport award from UK Power Networks, the company which distributes electricity across the East of England.

The donation was arranged by Hollie Lewis, who works as a planner for UK Power Networks in Borehamwood, and is savouring England's hosting of the women's Euro 2022 tournament.

The Lionesses have reached the semi-finals after Georgia Stanway's extra-time winner over Spain.

Hollie first played football as a teenager, but with the popularity and infrastructure of the women's game nothing like the level it is at now she drifted away from the sport before returning in 2019.

She said: "I have played for Hitchin Women's Canaries Football Club

now for almost three years. I used to play football when I was younger and stopped around 16-years-old and decided to try get back involved with the sport for fitness reasons.

"I began training with Hitchin and then signed for the Canaries team to play in the Beds and Herts league. It has been a great to be involved and watch the team grow and develop, it's a team with a real family mentality.

"This Team Sports grant will really help us as a lot goes into the running of the team, our committee and manager do a great job for us so really nice to be able to help them out.

"It is a great time to be involved with women's football at the moment with England hosting the Euros.

It's great to see so much visibility of the women's game, we didn't have this kind of publicity when I was younger and I think it would have made a huge difference.

"I was one of two girls in my primary school playing in the football team with all the boys and then going on football camps with Arsenal in the summer.

"You didn't have women's football on mainstream TV or any kind of professional women's teams.

"It's so good for the girls youth to now see England playing in front of tens of thousands of spectators all helping to inspire girls and women to play football.

"Hopefully now young girls can see that they can make careers out of their love of playing football and the support and encouragement is out there to become the best they can and they could even one day be the next England Captain!"

Callum Ellis from HTWFC, said: "This grant is huge for us at the level we play.

"We are currently seeing many football teams disband due to the lack of sponsorship for teams to fund their seasons.

"We predict our season will us cost over £3000 to complete and with the rate of inflation it will not be long till we may have to start questioning our future.

"This award helps our women with subscription costs, referee fees, pitch and training fees.

"I am so grateful for UK Power Networks' contribution. It helps us stabilise our future and

encourage more females to take up the game they love and providing something new for those who have never played before.

"We have two teams competing within the Beds & Herts Women's Football League and we have over 50 players registered to our club.

"Without grants and companies helping clubs like so women's football will not exist to the level it is now."

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

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

PepsiCo teams up with Women in Football to inspire the next generation of female coaches



**WOMEN IN FOOTBALL COACHES
SUPPORTED BY PEPSICO**



**WOMEN IN
FOOTBALL**



PEPSICO

PepsiCo, through its global brands Pepsi MAX® and Doritos, today announced a unique new partnership with Women in Football, a network of professionals supporting women in the game, which aims to attract, inspire, and improve the representation of female football coaches across the UK.

As part of the year-long commitment, Pepsi

MAX® and Doritos will sponsor 45 aspiring female coaches on the Football Association's 'Introduction to Coaching' course, opening the door for talented women across the country to build careers in football.

Globally, while there are more female football coaches than ever before, 72% of head coaches in women's football are male,

and not one Premier League side currently has a female coach as part of its men's first team staff. Research from Women in Football has also found that 66% of women in the industry have experienced gender discrimination on at least one occasion.

To further help alleviate this disparity, in addition to coaching courses, the partnership will give the chosen female coaches

access to group training sessions and networking opportunities to help build a lasting community and strong bonds amongst this cohort of talented women.

Nominations for the FA course are open to all women, 18 and above, with a passion for coaching across the UK.

**To be considered, entrants can apply in writing, telling Women in Football in 50 words or less why they should be selected to receive one of the 45 coaching bursaries.*

Kelly Simmons OBE, Director of Women's Professional Game with the FA, said: "The game is on a tremendous growth trajectory, and it is critical that we help to identify and support more female coaches who can inspire girls and women to play, enjoy and excel in football.

The partnership between Women in Football and PepsiCo is a really exciting development for the women's game."

Women in Football CEO, Yvonne Harrison, added: "Almost three quarters of our members told us they want more support for the development of women in leadership roles, which underlines why

partnerships like this are so important.

"Creating opportunities for women in coaching can have a positive ripple effect on female representation in football as a whole, with more role models for young women to look up to.

PepsiCo's support through its global brands Pepsi MAX® and Doritos can help us make a real difference as we work to level the playing field."

Fiona Tomlin, Chief Marketing Officer at PepsiCo UK & Ireland, said: "As a global company, we want to use our platform to help women thrive in the game, from the players leading the line-up at UEFA Women's EURO 2022, to talented coaches looking to break into football.

"We believe that the women's game should be just as valued and celebrated as the men's game, and this partnership with Women in Football is one way we're hoping to make a meaningful and long-term difference to champion female participation at all levels."

The partnership with Women in Football will also help educate

PepsiCo's 4,500 colleagues in the UK about female participation and leadership in football through a series of courses, conferences and volunteering opportunities.

Alongside the Women in Football partnership, PepsiCo is marking its long-term commitment to women's football by partnering with UEFA Women's Football until 2025, and specifically sponsoring the UEFA Women's Euros 2022.

To celebrate the Women's EURO 2022, PepsiCo is encouraging the nation to show the same level of support for the women's game as with the men's national team, with the launch of a heavyweight marketing campaign activated through Doritos, Walkers Max and Pepsi Max, across digital, social, PR, POS, OOH and





CUP COMPETITIONS

Your Complete Guide to the Women's Champions League 2022/2023



By Rosie Hall

With the excitement of a fantastic Euros tournament this summer over, it's time to focus our attention on the 2022/2023 season. The Women's Champions League once again returns, treating us to some of the best women's football on the planet. From the mini-tournament to the knockout stages, here's everything you need to know!

UWCL: The Stats

- 71 teams to take part
- From 49 different associations
- 4 teams to enter straight into the

16-team group stage

From Round 1 to the Eindhoven Final: What to expect

As with last year's competition, Round One will be played as a knockout mini-tournament. There are four groups, with each having a 'semi-final' and a 'final.' The winners of these knockout mini finals will be the teams that progress to the next round. The recent draw promises some interesting games, including a potential final between Manchester City and Real Madrid, and another between Ajax and Frankfurt.

These games will be played later this month, from the 18th August.

Moving onto Round Two will be the 4 winners of the Round One finals. They will go on to play a knock-out tie, across two legs, to determine qualification for the group stage.

By early October, we'll get a real sense of how the tournament is going to play out with the group stage draw set to take place on October 3rd live from Nyon, in Switzerland.

Following this draw, the group stage will start in late October and continue through November and December.

Quarter-finals will then be played in March, with the semi-finals to follow in April. The epic final is then set to place at the PSV Stadium in Eindhoven, Netherlands.

Who is likely to impress?

Following on from a thrilling 2022 final which saw Lyon reclaim their place at the top of Europe, the 2022/23 competition is set to be an exciting one. But other than the holders - who aren't likely to want to give up the title easily - which teams are likely to impress in next

season's tournament?

Let's take a look at 3 teams who should be set to have a great tournament:

Barcelona

To say that Barcelona had an incredible season would be an understatement; they sold out stadiums, broke attendance records, and finished the season without losing a single game in the league. Many thought the Champions League was a done deal, Lyon had other thoughts.

This year, Barcelona Femini have a point to prove. Losing the Champions League final put a dent in their otherwise incredible season. With some cracking new signings including Lioness legend Lucy Bronze, could this season see them come back stronger to reclaim the crown?

Chelsea

Chelsea Women continue to dominate the Women's Super League in England, this year claiming the WSL title for the third season in a row. With arguably one of the best managers in the women's game and a fantastic

defensive record in the league, the scene is set for them to impress on the European stage this upcoming season.

Wolfsburg

Tournament winners in 2013 and 2014, Wolfsburg lost out on a place in the final this year after being knocked out in the semis by Barcelona. Since then, however, Wolfsburg finished the season in style as they went on to win the DFB Cup AND claim the Bundesliga title. With Germany national team captain and Wolfsburg striker Alex Popp having a great Euros tournament, this upcoming UWCL campaign could be a special one for the team.

You can enjoy the Women's Champions League from August 18th, when the mini knockout style tournament kicks off!

Who are you backing?

Tweet us

@womensfootiemag.

Champions League fixtures

Women's Champions League round 1: August 18, 2022					
Sarajevo	9:00	Birkirkara	Valur	10:00	Hayasa
Kharkiv	10:00	Lanchkhuti	Dinamo-	10:00	FK Lokomotiv
Benfica	11:00	Hajvalia	Gintra	13:00	KuPS Kuopio
Paris FC	13:00	Sevette FCCF	Flora	14:30	Qiryat Gat
Apollon	15:30	RFS	Olimpia Cluj	16:00	Glentoran
Pomurje	16:30	Shelbourne	BIIK-Shymkent	17:00	Split
Twente	17:00	Anenii Noi	Breznica	17:00	Spartak Myjava
Fortuna	18:00	Eintracht	Ferencvaros	19:00	Rangers
Anderlecht	19:00	UKS SMS Lodz	Juventus	19:30	Racing Union
Glasgow City	19:35	AS Roma	Zurich	20:00	KI
Real Madrid	20:00	Sturm	Man City	20:00	Tomiris-Turan
PAOK	14:30	Swansea	Ajaz	13:00	Kristianstads
St. Polten	16:00	ZFK Ljuboten	IL Sandviken	16:00	ALG Spor

Road to Eindhoven

Round 1 (one-venue mini-tournaments)

Draw: 13:00 CET, 24 June, Nyon

Semi-finals: 18 August

Final/third-place play-off: 21 August

Round 2

Draw: 13:00 CET, 1 September, Nyon

First leg: 20/21 September

Second leg: 28/29 September

Group stage

Draw: 13:00 CET, 3 October, Nyon

Matchday 1: 19/20 October

Matchday 2: 26/27 October

Matchday 3: 23/24 November

Matchday 4: 7/8 December

Matchday 5: 15/16 December

Matchday 6: 21/22 December

Quarter-finals

Draw: 13:00 CET, 20 January, Nyon

First leg: 21/22 March

Second leg: 29/30 March

Semi-finals

Draw: 13:00 CET, 20 January, Nyon

First leg: 22/23 April

Second leg: 29/30 April

Final (PSV Stadion, Eindhoven)

3 or 4 June tbc

My 'Road to Wembley'



By Paul Donegan

Something slightly different from the ground guides that I normally write but thought I would write a piece looking back at my last two seasons attempts at watching a match in every round of the Women's FA Cup and complete a 'road to Wembley'.

Of course, Covid has got in the way both times, but over the two seasons (19/20 and 20/21) I watched a match in every round. From the extra preliminary to Wembley Stadium to watch the 20/21 final. I am not going to go into great detail about every match, but I've chosen to pick out a few of the highlights from along the way.

So what made me come up with the idea of doing this? I actually think there were a number of reasons. Firstly, I have always loved the FA Cup.

Some of my early memories of football and going to watch non-league matches in men's football were when the team I supported got through to at least the first round and played a league team, occasionally causing an upset. It certainly has that magic where teams from across the pyramid, from WSL down to the regional leagues in the women's game, all play in the same competition and have that dream of getting to Wembley for the final, or maybe knocking out a higher level side

along the way. It was something I started to think about doing whilst in France during the World Cup in 2019 as I thought it would be a fun thing to try and do. I hadn't heard of anyone trying to go and watch a match in each round of the women's FA Cup before. I had mostly been to watch WSL and Championship level matches before this, with the occasional National League match on international weekends thrown in, so I had hadn't been to watch much women's football further down the pyramid.

I also had a friend on Twitter who was trying to do the same thing so it would be nice to follow each other's progress.

I didn't have any set rules, such as following on the winning side from one round to the next, rather just to go to a match in each round. Also, the groundhopper side of me likes going to different football grounds, so it might be a chance to visit a few new ones and not potentially the same one for a few rounds in a row.

My 19/20 season 'road to Wembley' got off to a late start as on extra-preliminary round day, I was at Lewes watching a Championship match from one of the beach huts at The Dripping Pan. The extra-preliminary round match will come the next season. So, on the 1st September 2019, I travelled to Horley in Surrey to watch Oakwood v AFC Littlehampton in the Preliminary Round. Oakwood won 6-0 and in the next round, the first round qualifying, they were drawn away at Clapton Community. Having seen videos of Clapton's support in the previous round (and again in this current season), this was the match I decided to go and watch in this round. It was played at Clapton Community's Stray Dog ground in Walthamstow and the Clapton fans were brilliant as they sang, drummed and flags were waved for the whole match. But this is where Clapton's 19/20 FA Cup campaign came to an end though as they lost 3-2 to Oakwood in front of 261 supporters. Not a bad attendance for a match between two tier 7 sides!

In the second qualifying round, I went and watched Maidenhead United v Bowers

& Pitsea. I saw my first upset here as tier 5 Bowers won 2-1 against a side who play in the level above them. In the third qualifying round, I headed to Suffolk to watch an East Anglia derby between Ipswich Town and Norwich City. Ipswich won 6-1 against their rivals in front of 667 fans. They would eventually get through to the fifth round where they would lose away to Manchester City. The first round was next and the day after being among the 77,768 at Wembley Stadium for England v Germany, I went to west London, and a slightly smaller crowd, at the Middlesex FA to watch Actonians v AFC Wimbledon. This one finished 2-1 to Actonians.

In the second round, on a cold afternoon, I went to Romsey in Hampshire to watch Southampton Women's play against Milton Keynes Dons.

Southampton Women's won the FA Cup eight times between 1971 and 1981 and are the second most successful side in the competition after Arsenal. After 90 minutes and extra time, the scores were level at 1-1 so it went to penalties. Southampton won the shoot-out 3-2 and knocked out a side who play in the level above them. Southampton would reach the fourth round where they lost to Championship side Crystal Palace. In the third round, I watched Watford v Plymouth Argyle with Watford winning 5-0.

The WSL and Championship sides entered the cup at the

fourth round stage. I decided to go and watch Tottenham against Barnsley in this round, with Barnsley already having won 5 games to reach this stage. This was to be the end of Barnsley run though as Tottenham won 5-0. I also saw Flora, my Twitter friend mentioned earlier, and her partner Ben at this match.

The fifth round was due to be played on Sunday 16th February but because of Storm Dennis, several games were moved, including Chelsea v Liverpool, and a few others were postponed. One of those remaining as on, and within easily travel distance of north London by the Sunday morning, was Crystal Palace v Brighton. There was heavy rain but Hayes Lane has a 3G pitch so this isn't normally a big issue. By the time I got to Bromley, the rain was torrential but the match was still on as I checked on Twitter just before getting off the train. It took about 20 minutes to walk to the ground but during this time the match had been called off because of the rain. The following evening, I went to the Chelsea v Liverpool match which Chelsea won 1-0 and 9 days after it was meant to be played, and on a very cold evening, I went to the rearranged match between Palace and Brighton which Brighton won 3-0. So, in the 19/20 FA Cup, I finished going to two matches in the fifth round!

However, this was to be the end of my 'road to Wembley' in the 19/20 FA Cup as Covid meant the quarter-final

matches were called off (had tickets and transport all booked to go to Leicester v Man City) on the Friday before they were meant to take place. The cup finished in the Autumn with all the matches being played behind closed doors with Manchester City winning the final 3-1 against Everton. I had managed to see a match in every round up to and including the fifth apart from the extra preliminary.

The 2020/21 FA Cup started in September 2020 and I managed to tick off the extra preliminary round this time as I started another attempt to complete a 'road to Wembley'. In this round, I went and watched Banbury United v Swindon Supermarine which Swindon won 2-1. In the preliminary round, I went and watched Hackney v Dulwich Hamlet that was played on Hackney Marshes which is famous for Sunday league and grassroots football, a bit different to Wembley where the final is played. After walking around for a bit trying to find the right pitch it was being played on (there were at least 3 other women's matches taking place there that Sunday afternoon), I watched Dulwich win 6-2. After baking hot and sunny conditions for that match, it was a really wet afternoon for the first qualifying round when I watched Dorking Wanderers against Ashford Town Middx. Ashford won this won 7-1.

In the second qualifying round, I went to Canvey Island to watch Hashtag United play against my local side, Enfield



Town. Enfield scored twice in the second half to win 2-0. The third qualifying round was scheduled to take place on November 1st 2020 (19/20 FA Cup Final day), but the match I was thinking of going to, plus a few others, were postponed and eventually played at the start of December after the lockdown. When the Cup restarted, I watched Enfield Town again, this time away to Luton Town. In foggy conditions, Enfield Town won the third qualifying round tie 2-1. The following weekend was the first round, and I watched Harlow Town lose 9-2 at home to Ipswich Town, with the score having been 8-2 at half time.

The second round was meant to take place on 3rd January but due to Covid/weather etc, only one match from this round took place on that day.

Then there was another lockdown and all non-elite sport stopped again, and the FA Cup was suspended. There was mention of matches being decided by the drawing of lots

or coin tosses (I was fuming about this) so they could get up to the stage where the WSL/ Championship sides entered but this idea seemed to be quickly dropped! When the FA Cup restarted at the end of March, supporters were still not allowed into grounds so the remaining matches in the first and second rounds and all in the third, fourth and fifth rounds were played behind closed doors. I did manage to watch a few streams of matches from these rounds but not sure if they count towards my 'road to Wembley'?!

The quarter-finals, semi-finals and final were again held over until the Autumn and by this time supporters were allowed back into grounds. With my 19/20 run ending at the fifth round, the 20/21 run continued with the following round, the quarter-finals! I went and watched Brighton & Hove Albion v Charlton Athletic. Charlton were the only remaining side from outside the WSL left in the cup but had turned full-time over the summer. It was Brighton who

won 1-0 though. I went up to Manchester to watch Manchester City v Chelsea in the semi-final. Chelsea won this 3-0 to get through to the final. The less said about my return journey on trains from Manchester the better!

So that gets me up to the final at Wembley Stadium. Arsenal v Chelsea. It was also going to be a bit of a special final as it was being played on the 5th December, the day that marked the 100 year anniversary of the FA banning women playing on their pitches which lasted for 50 years. This final would also celebrate 50 years of the cup. Chelsea won 3-0 with Fran Kirby scoring early in the first half and Sam Kerr scoring twice after the break.

I am not sure if I will have completed a proper 'road to Wembley' as I've not been to a match in every round during one season, but over the course of two Covid hit seasons, I went to watch at least one match in every round!



Races for the 2022/23 Vitality Women's FA Cup top scorer awards set to begin



Top scorers in the Emirates FA Cup and Vitality Women's FA Cup were crowned for the very first -time last season, and the Golden Ball, in partnership with Mitre, is set to return in both competitions during the upcoming 2022/23 season.

Last season's winners, Marske United's Adam Boyes and Liskeard Athletic's Chloe Williams, received the respective awards from football icons Ian Rush and Faye White following the 2021/22 Emirates FA Cup and Vitality Women's FA Cup Finals at Wembley Stadium Connected by EE, after scoring 11 and 12 goals apiece.

The Emirates FA Cup begins with the Extra Preliminary Round across the weekend of Saturday 6 August 2022, with non-league players having the chance to emulate Adam and lay down a marker before the likes of Mohamed Salah and Erling Haaland enter in the Third Round on Saturday 7 January 2023. The top scorer award will be presented after the Final at Wembley Stadium on Saturday 3 June 2023.

The First Round Qualifying of the Vitality Women's FA Cup will kick-off on Sunday 11 September 2022, before Women's Super League

players such as Sam Kerr and Vivianne Miedema enter the fray in the Fourth Round Proper on Sunday 29 January, when they gain the opportunity to stop Chloe from retaining her title, and be crowned after the Final at Wembley Stadium on Sunday 14 May 2023.

The @EmiratesFACup and @VitalityWFACup channels will post updated standings of both awards after each round of the Emirates FA Cup and Vitality Women's FA Cup.

Last season's Emirates FA Cup top scorer, Adam Boyes, said: "It's an honour just to play in the Emirates FA Cup, so to outscore some of the best players in the country and be recognised for it at Wembley Stadium was an unbelievable experience that I'll be hoping to replicate this season."

The Vitality Women's FA Cup top scorer from last season, Chloe Williams, added: "I'd never imagined at the start of the season that it would end with walking out at Wembley Stadium. Giving everyone the chance to win this award makes it extra special, and I'll be looking to add another to my mantel piece."





HOME NATIONS

Introducing Marks & Spencer as the Official Formalwear Partner For The England Teams



This August, we are proud to introduce Marks and Spencer as the Official Tailor of the England Senior Men's & Women's Teams. Spanning three years, this partnership builds upon our longstanding relationship with The Football Association, dating back to 2007 when M&S became the Official Suit Supplier to the England Senior Men's Team. This partnership with The FA champions in-house designed collections across men's & womenswear, which will be worn by the England Teams and available for our customers to shop from August.

With so many credible and inspiring role models across the England Teams, led by such principled managers, it's easy to understand why fans have reconnected with England. Both style and football can be exhilarating when players and people are expressing themselves, and these modern and progressive England Teams reflect so many of our own brand values and attitudes. This formalwear partnership is a call to action and a celebration of individuality, creating a collection that's more approachable, diverse and relatable - bridging the gap between the players and our valued customers.

THE FA WOMENSWEAR COLLECTION

The Womenswear collection will debut in 2023 ahead of an exciting summer tournament in Australia & New Zealand. Similarly, it will focus on a smart-separates aesthetic and comprise of a carefully considered collection of co-ordinating tailor-

ing which will be available to shop online and in selected stores.

Maddy Evans, Director of Womenswear comments; "We're really proud of our partnership with The FA and incredibly honoured to be dressing the talented and inspiring England Senior Women's Team. We've created a collection that feels contemporary and unexpected, with tailoring pieces that challenge the traditional idea of 'power dressing'. We are redefining 'smart', making it much more relevant for the modern woman, with relaxed shirting and woven pop overs, slim and wide leg trouser options, all styled back with classic buckle loafers and versatile wardrobe staples such as the essential trench and car coat. We'll be cheering the team on every step of the way!"

THE CAMPAIGN

We launch our supporting marketing campaign online and in selected stores on the 4th of August, featuring six players wearing a selection of key styles from the collection. Including Harry Kane, John Stones, Ollie Watkins, Conor Coady, Declan Rice and Fikayo Tomori. .

Anna Braithwaite, Director of Marketing comments; "After the recent success of both the men's & women's teams, it's clear to see a new England has stepped forward."

The Lionesses and the Legacy



By Rosie Hall

As the final whistle blew at Wembley, the roar of the crowd was heard up and down the nation. The confetti fell down and the lyrics to Three Lions rang around a record-breaking crowd. It was only when the players stood to lift the trophy that the enormity of their achievement began to sink in.

After a month of pure grit and determination - they had done it. 56 years of hurt and the Lionesses brought football home.

But, as England legend and national treasure Ian Wright correctly said, if there is no legacy after this, what was it all for? “If girls are not allowed to play football in their PE class just like the boys can,” he said live on BBC Sport after the

semi final win against Sweden, “then what are we doing?”

And he’s right. This win marks an important moment not just for women’s football in England but for the entire sport; with both the men’s and women’s World Cups set to take place over the next year, could this be the start of a shower of trophies for a country that has so far been unlucky in our past quests for silverware?

We spoke to football fans up and down the country about what this win means for the women’s game going forward and what legacy our Lionesses are set to leave behind.

Andy Slater, a life-long Man Utd fan and founder of the Barmy Article fanzine, first took an interest in the women’s

game when Man Utd were reformed in 2018. “Even in these 4 years that I’ve been a fan, there’s been a huge shift within and towards the game,” he says.

“Support has evolved, bigger numbers are traveling to away games, and real rivalries have developed.” Andy feels strongly about the legacy the Lionesses leave, feeling that despite the win, it shouldn’t matter where we end up. “The legacy of the tournament shouldn’t depend on England’s success. The size of the crowds and the enjoyment it’s brought to many should be built on.”

Andy isn’t the only person we spoke to who remarked on the size of the crowds.

Caragh Skipper, a Crystal Palace fan and contributor to

the 'Back of the Nest' podcast, has found the sheer size of the audiences to be quite emotional. "I reached out to a woman I went to school with; back in the day we were the girls obsessed with football and wanting to play with the boys.

"We had a conversation about how much of a triumph it feels to see girls watching this tournament with no doubt whatsoever that football IS for them."

It's not just the young women, either. Caragh points to the sense of inclusion that this Euros has created for women of all ages: "This tournament has given me a real sense of belonging in football that I haven't experienced before.

"I think a lot of [women] who love football always have that feeling of being a bit of an outsider.

"But seeing the women on the pitch as well as the coaches, the officials, the pundits - it really has solidified that we belong."

Caragh goes on to raise a significant point however - one that has been shared by squad member Nikita Parris, around the diversity needed within the women's game.

"We need the legacy of the Lionesses to be that we answer the difficult questions," she says.

"The sense of belonging this tournament has given some, isn't the same feeling it's given other women due to the lack of diversity. The lack of diversity in this England team is glaringly obvious."

Of course one of the most important things about the success of the Lionesses this

summer is the way it will inspire so many women and girls to feel comfortable taking up football - or in Ellie's case, getting back into it! Man United fan Ellie fell out of love with football as a result of the bullying and harassment she received for being a girl who enjoyed the sport.

"The fact this tournament has been played on home soil has really helped me and my confidence grow," she says. "I've sang, I've danced, I've just been the happiest I've been this summer. I feel I can get back into the sport I love more than ever. Thank you, girls."

Just one single occurrence of this is special enough, but it's not hard to see that Ellie's feelings are felt by the whole nation.

Twitter was flooded with pictures of young girls watching the Lionesses lift the trophy and Cheshire West and Chester Council have already pledged to provide more footballing opportunities for girls.

On the other side of this, it's important to note that there is still work to do in allowing women and young girls the same footballing opportunities as men. Arsenal fan and former grassroots player Leigh shared with us that just last year, she was turned away from a 5-a-side tournament and told she wasn't allowed to play on the basis that she's a woman.

"Girls aren't allowed to play in this," the Ref said as he ran over frantically blowing his whistle. "I felt really disappointed," Leigh told us.

"I hadn't played football in a while and was really looking

forward to it. Being told 'no you can't play because you're a girl' was just a massive kick in the teeth. Things need to change big time if we want more women involved in the game."

The Lionesses have taken it upon themselves to do more to tackle this exact problem. Off the back of their win, they wrote an open letter to the government asking them to do more to let girls play football; the letter stated that only 63% of girls currently have the option to play in their PE classes.

This, coupled with their incredible win over Germany, solidified this team in England's sporting history forever.

These women have truly done something that will create a ripple effect for many, many years. But now it's over to us. As Gabby Logan so perfectly said during the BBC1 coverage of the final:

"They brought football home. Now it's up to us to keep it here."



ORRECO announces continuation of relationship with FA

orreco

Orreco, a global leader in bio-analytics and performance for elite athletes, is proud to announce the continuation of its relationship with The FA.

Seeking to better support the health of England senior women's squad, Orreco's Female Athlete team will continue to work with the Lionesses through this summer's UEFA Women's European Championship and until after the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup.

The relationship sees Orreco continuing to provide England's senior team with its FitrWoman app and FitrCoach platform. This is designed to help the players and performance staff of The FA monitor and better understand players' menstrual cycles and the potential effects on performance.

The company will also work closely with England players, coaches and performance staff providing individualised player reports, action plans and strategies to help manage and optimise symptoms and performance related to the menstrual cycle. They will also look to extend their education and resources to support the England development teams promoting positive female athlete health.

Kay Cossington, The FA's Head of Women's Technical, said: 'We are constantly monitoring all aspects of our players' health and well-being, not just to maximise performance benefits but also to ensure we are providing them with the best possible care and support. This approach runs throughout our Lioness pathway from U16 level to the senior squad.

"Having a better understanding of players' menstrual cycles and the potential effects on how they perform is a part of our wider education strategy on female player health and we are pleased to be able to continue working with Orreco on this important work."

Orreco Sport Scientist and Female Athlete Lead, Dr Georgie Bruinvels said: "We are delighted to work with The FA and England senior women. It is so exciting to continue our collaboration together to advance the science of elite performance for women in sport.

"Our FitrWoman and FitrCoach platforms are being deployed to help harness the power of female physiology, so the phenomenal Lionesses players can perform their best on any given day of their cycle."

Euro winners to face World Cup champions



UEFA Women's EURO 2022 winners England are to play the United States at Wembley Stadium on Friday 7 October 2022 in front of a sellout crowd.

The game is subject to securing FIFA Women's World Cup qualification in September.

The high-profile international against the reigning World Cup holders would be the first meeting of the two nations at Wembley Stadium.

It would also mean Sarina Wiegman and her victorious squad get a quick return to the scene of Sunday night's celebrations when a 2-1 defeat of Germany in front of an all-time EURO record crowd of 87,192 saw them crowned European champions.

The Lionesses need a point away to nearest group rivals Austria on Saturday 3 September or, failing that, a victory at home to Luxembourg at Stoke City on Tuesday 6 September to confirm their spot in Australia and New Zealand next summer.

England are five points clear of Austria, the only other team that can still top the group, with two matches remaining for both sides. With a surge in demand for the Luxembourg fixture in recent days, more than 20,000 seats have been sold in the first sale window.

A new date for the remaining tickets to go on sale for Luxembourg has yet to be confirmed.

With just a month between the September games and the proposed US date, which will have an evening kick-off, the decision to go on sale now was made to help fans to have as much notice as possible for their travel plans.

It will also allow the US - who just edged past England in the 2019 World Cup semi-finals on their way to retaining the trophy they also won in 2015 - the chance to confirm their own autumn schedule.

England head coach Sarina Wiegman said: "It is really exciting to have the chance to play the US at Wembley if we can make sure of qualification for the World Cup. It would be the perfect game for our squad to meet another strong team after so many tough games in the Euros. It is good we enjoy the moment we are in after this wonderful summer, but we know we still have to work to do to take the next step forward.

"As a team, we take nothing for granted with our goal of reaching the World Cup and whoever we play at home in October it will be special to have another Wembley fixture. After the positive experiences we have had this summer, it will be great to welcome as many fans as possible so that we can say thanks again for their incredible support."

Hampden Park set to host new women's Scottish Cup



Words: ScottishFA

Ahead of the 150th anniversary of the national game, and the 50th anniversary of the first-ever official Scotland Women's National Team match, against England, the Scottish FA is proud to announce it will launch an ambitious new national women's cup competition this season, with both semi-finals and the final taking place in 2023 at Scotland's National Stadium, Hampden Park.

Discussions will move at pace with participating clubs, broadcast partners and sponsors to provide a compelling national cup

competition commensurate with the new-look Scottish Women's Premier League competitions as we enter a new, professional era for our domestic game.

The governing body launched its bespoke women's football strategy, Accelerate Our Game, in 2021, with the vision to harness the power of women's football, by changing perceptions, and empowering people to inspire the nation, transform lives and build an inclusive, respected and successful game.

Already, Hampden Park has become the new home

of the SWNT, the domestic league has been revolutionised in a collaborative process involving the Scottish FA, SPFL and Scottish Women's Football, whilst the football development team have rolled-out the UEFA Playmakers participation programme in partnership with Disney.

Ian Maxwell, Scottish FA Chief Executive: "This has been a momentous week for women's football across Europe due to the record-breaking success of the UEFA Women's EUROS.

"My congratulations go to the Lionesses and the friends and colleagues at the English FA for the historic achievement.

"The power of football has no border, and we will be inspired by the achievements of the Lionesses, just as many girls and women in Scotland will have been inspired by the players on show throughout the tournament. I know this will also refocus the efforts of Pedro Martinez-Losa and his players to qualify for next year's FIFA World Cup.

"The creation of a new national cup competition is another significant step forward for women's football in Scotland and we look forward to working with clubs, broadcast and commercial partners to create something special 50 years on from the first-ever SWNT match and as we look forward to celebrating 150 years of our national game.

"I would like to thank SWF for their drive in helping to raise the standards of girls' and women's football and look forward to working collaboratively with SWF and the SWPL with the common aim of enabling every girl and woman in Scotland to access our

national game and realise their dreams within it."

Fiona McIntyre, SWPL Managing Director and outgoing Scottish FA Head of Girls' and Women's Football:

"This announcement is another significant milestone on an exciting journey for women's football at elite level in Scotland. Tomorrow, we will formally launch the new SWPL, complete with new brand identity and vision, ahead of the weekend's kick-off.

"At a time when Scottish football prepares to celebrate its rich history, both in the men's and women's games, it is appropriate that we commit collectively to bold new competitions that reflect the progress and ambitions for women's football.

"Having witnessed England's success in the UEFA Women's EURO final, and worked closely with European football's governing body to implement their learnings and best practice across my remit at the Scottish FA and now SWPL, I believe today's announcement is another monumental moment for women's football in Scotland."

Vivienne MacLaren, Chair of Scottish Women's Football, said: "We all want the same thing – the progression of women's football in Scotland.

"There have been some really positive steps taken across the game and it's important we capitalise on the collective enthusiasm and momentum.

"We are proud to have played our part and will continue to do so, in partnership with the Scottish FA, SWPL and anyone who has the best interests of the sport we all love at heart."



BE Football Programme inspires girls to take part in Wales



Words: Wales FA

Our BE Football programme has enabled and inspired 84% of girls in participating schools to play football in their PE lessons.

As the legacy of the Women's Euro 2022 tournament comes into focus, the issue of girls playing football in PE lessons has become a hot topic.

But research commissioned by our programme partners, the Youth Sports Trust, says our bespoke schools programme, designed to inspire teenage girls using the power of football to develop life skills through football-related activities, is having a huge impact.

FAW Head of Women's and Girls' Football Lowri Roberts said: "This timely research highlights the importance of bespoke programmes to cater for the needs of teenage girls to encourage them to play and get involved in football.

"Once these girls have experienced football, they grow their understanding of the positive values of the game at a time when women's football has never been more visible to them.

"This is an exciting time for women and girls' football and the BE Football programme will inspire more girls to enjoy the game and benefit from enhanced life and leadership skills that the sport offers and make themselves their best selves in the process."

Before the programme was created in 2020, only 49% of girls in the 38 schools involved said they were playing football in PE lessons. But, since the programme was introduced to their schools, that figure has shot-up to 84% in the last 12 months.

The research has also revealed that since BE Football was launched...

- 49 % of young people have taken part in more football activities over the past 12 months
- Young people's engagement with football activities has increased in all areas.
- Girls are starting to feel more confident that they are good at football.
- Football Influencers report improvement in their skills, in particular their leadership, teamwork and communication skills.
- 100% of teachers have been inspired and motivated to improve the delivery of football within girls' PE.

Further data from our BE Football schools says participants have led an average of 54 girls' football lessons, within curriculum time, for pupils in year seven, eight and nine.

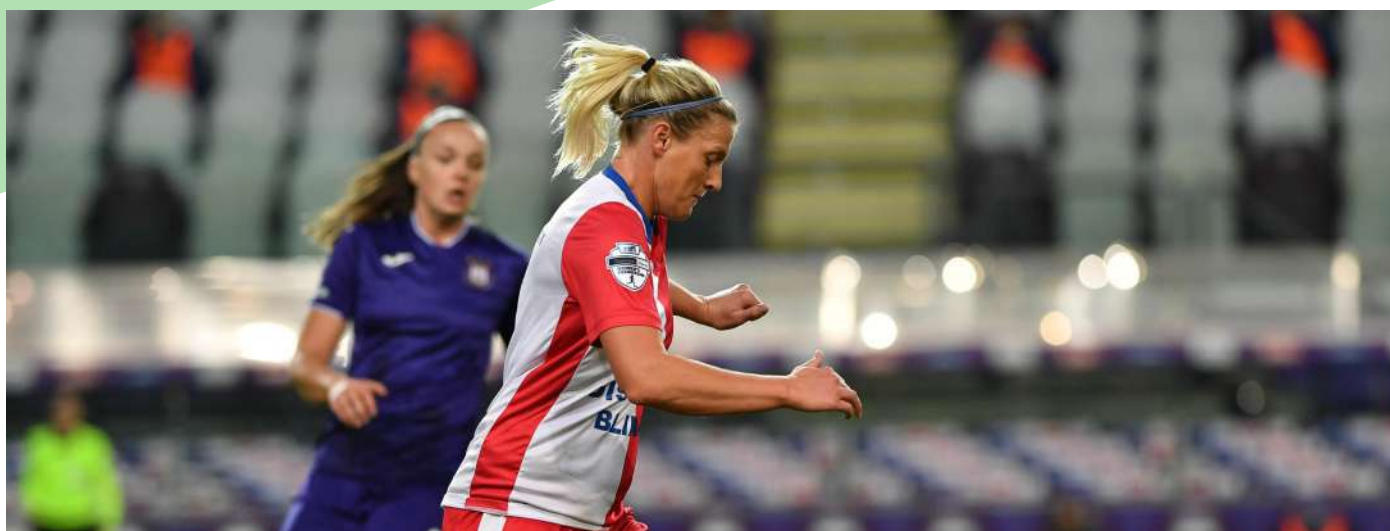
These lessons have engaged an average of 204 young people per school, 9% having a special education need or disability and 17% from ethnically diverse communities. The research says 38% of these pupils had never played football regularly before.

Now 29% of schools have also extended the delivery of BE Football to pupils in year 10 and 11.

Teachers leading the programme have also benefited from the Be Football training, gaining new knowledge to adapt their teacher approach and feeling inspired and motivated

We're currently looking for new schools, across Wales, to join the programme.

Northern Ireland's Hutton announces her retirement



Northern Ireland star Ashley Hutton announced her retirement after their 5-0 European Championships defeat to England.

Hutton, who made her international debut in 2005, made her 115th and final appearance in green as a late substitute for Julie Nelson at the St Mary's Stadium.

The 34-year-old, who plays for Linfield ladies, was part of Kenny Shiels' squad having only recently returned from a lengthy lay-off after suffering an ACL injury last year.

Hutton played a key role in Northern Ireland's journey to the Euros, her stoppage time equaliser against Wales in Newport helping secure a play-off for the finals.

Kenny Shiels and his players went on to seal their country's first ever appearance at a major finals, bowing out after defeats to Norway, Austria and England in what was a tough group.

Speaking to the press after the game, Hutton said: "It's been 18 long years and I've enjoyed every single moment of it.

"It was just a great feeling to put on the Northern Ireland jersey. I had my family, partner, friends and the fans here so there was no better way to bow out."

The Irish FA wrote: "What an inspiration. Thank you, Ashley", while broadcaster Denise Watson tweeted: "What an amazing career. Such a servant to Northern Ireland."

Northern Ireland midfielder Chloe McCarron described Hutton as a "legend" while striker Simone Magill, whose tournament was ended by a knee injury sustained in the opening pool game with Norway, tweeted: "One of the best."

Former Northern Ireland captain Sara Booth, now head of women's football competitions with FIFA, also took to social media to thank Hutton for her contribution to football here.

'It's Coming Home!

By Zoe Tisdale

They think it's all over, it's only just begun! With the Three Lions song still ringing in our ears let's just pause to reflect on the huge success that the Women's Euros 2022 tournament has been. Record attendances have been documented, history has been made and records have been broken, and they said no one wanted to watch women's football!

On what planet?

Being a Northern Ireland fan, to be in the crowd when 37 year-old Julie Nelson scored her first ever goal at a major championship for NI against Norway is the stuff dreams are made of, the celebrations were unprecedented, and rightly so. Nelson is the longest serving player for her country and is also the oldest player to find the net in the tournaments history! I hope she has since celebrated as much as the green and white army fans did that night!

That match however, was also tinged with sadness as Simone Magill, one of NI star players suffered a serious injury and had to be withdrawn with what we now know was an ACL injury. Our thoughts and prayers are with Simone for a speedy recovery.

NI, who were the lowest ranking team at the tournament unfortunately didn't manage to pick up that all elusive win but they certainly didn't disgrace themselves in their performances.

A 5-0 defeat against England, ranked 8th in the world, who then went on to win the tournament is no mean feat and shows that the work that Kenny Shiels and his coaching staff have put in to develop the team is paying off. With plenty of promising young players coming through, the future certainly seems bright for the NI squad.

Then there were the fans, the GAWA, arguably the best fans in the world! I have to say, what struck me about the atmosphere at the matches and the fan zone was the family feel. Children of all ages, kicking footballs, decked out in their teams kit, making memories, memories that will last a life time. There were

all ages in the crowd, singing, laughing and joking, it felt like we were one big family. One big family on a mission to be the loudest and proudest fans in the world and we didn't disappoint. Even when it wasn't a NI match, the NI supporters in the crowd could be heard singing "Green and White Army" over the other two sets of fans on the television.

After the NI versus England match the NI players showed their appreciation to their '12th player' taking the time to dance, join in with the fans' rendition of 'Sweet Caroline', taking selfies, signing shirts and autographs like they always do. You would have been forgiven to think that NI had won the match but what the NI players have achieved for such a small country, players that have only been training full time for six months prior to the tournament is monumental. Hats off to every single one of them, they are role models to a whole generation and have inspired boys and girls to play football.

They are game changers, history makers and have proved that hard work, grit and determination pays off and to always follow your dreams, one day they may just come true

What now? Now is the just the beginning, not the end. Massive congratulations must go to England on winning the Euros, and the style in which they did it. I don't think there was a dry eye in the house when hero Chloe Kelly scored in extra time against the Germans to win England's first major competition.

It was a record attendance at Wembley for a European Championship final and also record breaking viewing figures for a women's game.

We must now push on and invest in the game at grassroots up. We must break down the barriers that prevent more girls playing and make it inclusive and accessible for everyone.

Lets get girls football in PE as part of the curriculum, let's make it the norm for girls to play football.

Let's just have 'kids' playing football.





AROUND
THE WORLD

NWSL: All you need to know about the US league



By Peter Mann

At the third time of asking, women's soccer (football to us brits) is taking off in the United States, the current association, the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) at the stage of its tenth anniversary now.

The turn of the millennium would see the short-lived Women's United Soccer Association (WUSA, 2000-03), the world's first, women's soccer league where players were to be paid as professionals, unfortunately, low-figures, across the board, saw operations grind to a disappoint halt at the end of the third season.

Fast-forward a couple of years and that of the Women's Professional Soccer (WPS, 2007-12) league sprang forth, the first season being that of 2008-09 with Los Angeles Sol defeating Washington Freedom at the Home Depot Center, in

Carson, California, in front of more than 14,000 spectators.

However, in early 2012, the league announced the suspension of that season, citing internal struggles, and ongoing legal battles as reasons for its demise; the answer though, has arrived in the shape of the NWSL, a league which, ten years on, continues to go from strength-to-strength.

When the NWSL came to fruition, eight teams would kick-off its inaugural season, they being Boston Breakers (2013-17), Chicago Red Stars (2013 – present), FC Kansas City (2013-17), Portland Thorns (2013 – present), Seattle Reign (2013-18), Sky Blue (2013-20), Washington Spirit (2013 – present) and Western New York Flash (2013-16).

There's been a few name changes, clubs have come and gone, since that debut season, but, on the whole, the

league continues to flourish, under the guidance of its current Commissioner, Jessica Berman, she having officially began her four-year term in mid-April.

Mid-April, 2013, would be when the first match in the NWSL would occur, a 1-1 draw between FC Kansas City and Portland Thorns, at the Shawnee Mission District Stadium, in Kansas; a sell-out crowd of more than 6,700 would witness the season opener as Renae Cuellar created history in netting the first ever goal.

The game would be but a few minutes old when Cuellar struck, beating the visiting 'keeper, Karina LeBlanc, in a one-on-one, whilst Christine Sinclair (third on all-time scorers list, ninth for most appearances), who is still with the Thorns, equalised from the penalty spot midway through the second period.

The Thorns won the inaugural championship, defeating Western New York Flash 2-0 in the decider with goals from Tobin Heath and Christine Sinclair, the Flash meanwhile, they'd win the first Shield, whilst Kansas City's Lauren Holiday would be top scorer with twelve goals.

Kansas in fact would become back-to-back champions in 2014 and 2015, with North Carolina Courage gaining a back-to-back double in 2018 and 2019, among many, other successes.

There's been plenty of success stories along the way as well, since that first match back in 2013, the Thorns being at the centre of most of it as they, and the recently added North Carolina Courage (founded in 2017), lift trophies at home, and internationally.

The Thorns, currently guided by Rianne Wilkinson, have lifted two NWSL Championship (2013, 2017), two NWSL Shield (2014, 2021), one NWSL Challenge Cup (2021), one NWSL Community Shield (2020) and, on 21 August 2021, lifting the International Champions

Cup, sealing a cup treble that season.

Taking over the rights of, and relocating, the now-dissolved Western New York Flash, North Carolina Courage have certainly set the bar since arriving on the scene in 2017, putting themselves ahead of the field, on the field, with a trophy laden era at the Sahlen's Stadium.

Initially led by Englishman, Paul Riley, the Liverpool-born coach spending his entire career stateside, from the early eighties in college, through a ten year playing, alongside a managerial career which spanned from 1986 through to 2021, his assistant at the Courage, Sean Nahas, taking over in September 2021.

The trophy haul, to date, for the Courage, sees two NWSL Championship (2018, 2019), three NWSL Shield (2017, 2018, 2019), one NWSL Challenge Cup (2022) and one International Champions Cup (2018).

Both the Courage, and the Thorns, defeated Olympique Lyonnais Feminin, 1-0, in the Champions Cup final with the Thorns representing In this year's edition, alongside

Sonia Bombpastor's Lyon, Eva Espejo's C.F. Monterrey, and Emma Hayes' Chelsea.

Now, during the current, 2022 season, five of the NWSL founder members are still present with those of the Chicago Red Stars, NY/NJ Gotham (originally Sky Blue), OL Reign (originally Seattle Reign), Portland Thorns (Shield holders), and Washington Spirit (defending champions), being joined by that of Angel City, Houston Dash, Kansas City Current, North Carolina Courage (Challenge Cup holders, originally Western New York Flash), Orlando Pride, Racing Louisville, and San Diego Wave, making for a twelve team league.

Into the second half of the season there's a tight battle at the top of the NWSL between San Diego, Portland, Houston, OL Reign, Chicago and Kansas City, whilst the Challenge Cup was collected by the Courage, with a 2-1 win against Washington Spirit.



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