

THE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL MAGAZINE

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Welcome

Hello and welcome to Issue 62!

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It's hard writing the introduction this month without mentioning the passing of Queen Elizabeth II.

The country went dark as people mourned the loss of our longest reigning Monarch and watched a family grieve in the limelight.

As we get ready for the international games this week, I know that I for one am going to get a lump in my throat singing 'God Save the King' for the first time in a stadium full of people.

Following on from that reading the Yates report has been hard and harrowing and for anyone struggling with the information which has come to light from the report, please make sure you are talking to people and can find someone you need to talk to. Don't bottle it up.

Enjoy the issue!

Helen Rowe-Willcocks

Editor-in-Chief

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BARCLAYS WOMEN'S SUPER LEAGUE

Arsenal win North London derby in front of record-breaking Emirates crowd



Vivianne Miedema's double helped Arsenal to a superb 4-0 win against Tottenham in a North London derby that smashed the WSL attendance record.

47,367 fans packed into the Emirates to watch the Gunners sweep aside their local rivals, smashing the previous record of 38,262 when Arsenal and Spurs played at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium in November 2019.

Speaking to the press after the game, Gunners boss Jonas Eidevall said: "The game is the best advertisement there can be for people coming.

"That's what it's about, for people to come here and feel proud of the team, of the players and wanting to come here to support.

"We hope many of them come back, bring a friend and then it's a sell-out."

Tottenham manager Rehanne Skinner said: "I don't think we played our game as

well as we could have - I don't think there's any bones about that really.

"We didn't do the things that we are known for as well as we could have.

"We were a little bit tentative in our pressing and that created some challenges for us when we were on the ball.

"We didn't do ourselves justice, which is disappointing for everybody involved. But it's something we have to take lessons from and improve on for next weekend.

"We need to make sure we start quicker and better and make sure we play our way versus thinking about what they're doing.

"We also need to make sure we're communicating on the pitch. Not to make excuses, but it was difficult to hear and speak and to organise things.

It's something we absolutely have to get used to with those kinds of crowds... We will keep working on improving that."

Pundit Problems



Liam Asman.SPP

By Frankie Scott

The biggest problem for referees today is the television pundits.

After almost every big refereeing decision, they give their analysis, as if they understand why a decision has been made. And, in almost every case, they quote the laws incorrectly and misinterpret their application.

In doing so, they spread misinformation, which means that the players and managers consume incorrect information—and I truly cannot tell you how many problems this creates for me as a referee. I hear it almost every match—players saying

things like “Shouldn’t that be a red card, he was the last man?” or “That was a handball, his hand was in an unnatural position!” Both of which are things they will have heard from pundits.

To address these two statements:

1/ Whether someone is ‘last man’ does not determine whether it is a red card. It is a consideration in making the decision, but it is not the determining factor. The law is ‘denial of an obvious goal-scoring opportunity’ and there are several factors to consider. For example, they could be last man, but if the player has only just

crossed the halfway line and there are three defenders just behind this player, all three of which are faster than them, then they will probably catch the player—in which case, it’s not an obvious goal-scoring opportunity, is it? Similarly, the ability of the player in possession is a consideration—Lionel Messi will be likely to score in a situation your average grassroots player might not.

2/ The handball law is not ‘unnatural position’, it is ‘unnaturally bigger.’ I might sound like I’m being pedantic, but there is a difference. An unnatural position means your arms would have to be

in quite an obscure place—unnaturally bigger is determined by how large you make your body when you can avoid it.

The most common piece of commentary I hear is “it’s reckless, but it’s not a yellow card.” If you read the laws of the game, you’d find that the word ‘reckless’ is specifically used to dictate what a yellow card challenge is.

And this brings me onto the one of the opening matches in the Women’s Super League—Chelsea against Liverpool. A fantastic game, and a huge upset as newly promoted Liverpool come back to beat the reigning champions 2-1. All three goals were penalties, and what fantastic decisions they were! Every single one of them was spot on, and would not need hypothetical VAR to intervene should it have been available. Mille Bright’s handball in the 65th minute was also a great example of when someone makes their body ‘unnaturally bigger.’

The controversial moment, however, was when Sam Kerr, in possession of the ball, was through on goal, and was determined to be offside. The Sky Sports pundits showed a screenshot of the moment Kerr received the ball, and the pundits drew a line to suggest that Kerr should have been onside. Since then, the conclusion has been that the decision was incorrect.

Because the pundits said so.

Here, the pundits have clearly made a huge error themselves.

I screenshotted the image they showed in which they drew the line. I zoomed in. And what did I find?

They drew the line in the wrong place.

They drew the line in level with Kerr’s foot and the defender’s foot.

Yet her knee was ahead of her foot, meaning that the line should have been drawn level with Kerr’s knee.

I have zoomed in and studied this screenshot, and it has baffled my mind how the pundits can get away with misinformation like this.

The biggest problem is that people believe the pundits. They listen, and this influences their decisions. Everyone is now talking about how this offside decision was wrong and it was a huge decision that went against Chelsea, purely based on what the pundits purported.

For me, I say how dare you to these pundits—how dare you influence the opinions of the masses in such a way?

I believe that, if you had actually drawn the line beneath Kerr’s knee, you would have found that she was either offside, or that it was inconclusive. Because it was not a clear-cut decision as it is being made out to be.

And do you know what the frustrating part is? This will happen again.

And again.

And again.

Jacqui Oatley recently tweeted that not enough players or staff know the laws of the games or directives. That they are criticising the referees over laws and applications of laws that are either out of date, incorrect, or because of misinformation from other people who do not know the laws of the game or directives.

She could not be more correct.

If you are going to criticise match officials, and if you have the audacity to do it on national television where your opinion influences the opinions of millions of people, you owe it to the people you are criticising to know the laws.

After all, if you had a referee acting as a pundit, criticising the performances of players, I don’t imagine you’d take kindly to it. I don’t imagine you’d see them as a credible source of information, or as someone who knows what they are talking about.

So let’s remain sceptical. Let’s refuse to be swayed by the opinions of the misinformed. Let’s learn, ask questions, and listen to the answers.

Then maybe we’d have come to the correct conclusion about whether Kerr was offside.

A-Z of the WSL 2022/23



Natalie Mincher/SPP

By Charlotte Stacey

Since last time K stood for Kiera Walsh and she has sadly now gone to ply her trade in Spain, we will start part 2 with K...

K is for Khadija “Bunny” Shaw

Manchester City striker Bunny Shaw was able to show glimpses of what she is capable of throughout City’s last campaign. The Jamaica international featured in 17 WSL matches and totalled 794 minutes on the pitch in her first season in City Blue, scoring nine goals and assisting three in this time. With Ellen White announcing her retirement, Shaw is tipped to become City’s regular central striker flanked by wingers Lauren Hemp and Chloe Kelly and

this trio the potential to be a rather formidable frontline. Much like her wide teammates, Shaw is quick. Deceptively so. Shaw has the strength to power through the final third and capitalise on a gap or goal scoring opportunity. Whilst she is an important piece of the puzzle in linking play between the midfield and forward lines, what will stick out is Shaw’s fierce movement and ruthlessness in front of goal. Shaw is there to stick it in the net and that’s what she’ll do.

L is for Leicester City

Leicester City didn’t make quite the impression they were hoping for in their inaugural season in the WSL. Ambitions were high for the Foxes after their promotion but performances

fell short of the mark. This time round Leicester will be insisting on better to avoid relegation, and have appointed former Everton manager Willie Kirk as their Director of Football for Women and Girls to help sustain a motivating environment and ensure the quality of on pitch performances.

The Foxes have had some movement over the summer and have brought in WSL veterans Aileen Whelan and Josie Green from Brighton and Tottenham respectively. Leicester have also retained many of their key players, including Tash Flint, Jemma Purfield and Sam Tierney as well as both of their high performing goalkeepers Kirstie Levell and Demi Lambourne. However, it is

Leicester's zesty midfielder Shannon O'Brien who will likely catch the eye with her and formidable work rate.

L is for Liverpool

Liverpool will make their return to the WSL after being relegated into the Championship in 2020. The Reds were standout performers in the second division and earned promotion long before the season was over. With Matt Beard at the helm, Liverpool look to be in good shape ahead of their re-entry, harbouring a squad that presents a good amount of top-flight experience with young talents peppered throughout.

Existing know-how was clearly a key factor in Beard's vision for the upcoming season as he brought in seasoned players Gilly Flaherty and Shanice van de Sanden to join Rachel Furness and Niamh Fahey to provide a solid foundation. More creatively, forwards Leanne Kiernan and Katie Stengel who will be assisted by fullbacks Taylor Hinds and Emma Koivisto are able to cause a sting in front of goal.

Whilst it is improbable that Liverpool will immediately thunder their way back to the top part of the table, a consistent run of results will be crucial to avoid being part of the relegation battle, which is likely to be extremely a close one this season.

M is for Manchester City

Manchester City had a downright dreadful start to the season last year when several starting players concurrently picked up injuries and remaining squad members were used largely, and somewhat questionably, out of position. This made for a difficult period for the club with a top-three finish looking unlikely at times. However, City are never to be written off and indicative of the force we know they are, the Sky Blues rallied and pulled it together, overtaking local rivals Manchester United to take the bronze medal on the final day of fixtures.

The summer has been a busy one for boss Gareth Taylor with several key players, including Ellen White, Lucy Bronze, Keira Walsh, Caroline Weir and Georgia Stanway walking out the door. Nevertheless, their incomings are nothing short of impressive and go some way to revealing Taylor's ambitions for he wants his team to play. Spain internationals Laia Aleixandri and Leila Ouahabi, Australia's Mary Fowler, as well as Venezuelan dynamite Deyna Castellanos have all joined the Citizens. The question that immediately hangs over City as the season approaches is whether this change of personnel can jell quickly enough to secure a positive start.

N is for Noëlle Maritz

Whilst Arsenal's Noëlle Maritz might not be the first name you look for when the Gunners team news hits socials, it should be one that worries you when it's not there. The right back is a worker, her role understated and arguably undervalued as other teammates receive the glory. Maritz plays a more 'traditional' full back role, focussing less on participating in offensive plays as she does at preventing the goal scoring opportunities of opponents. This duty, for Arsenal, is particularly important as the left back, either Steph Catley or Katie McCabe, and centre-back Leah Williamson, are usually involved as supporting figures in attacking play. Maritz's responsibilities therefore, more so lie in defensive work across the thirds. There may not be skills and frills, but the Switzerland international is a chief cog in the North London machine. Maritz walks so the Mead's and Miedema's can run.

O is for Ona Batlle

Manchester United's Ona Batlle is one of the league's most inspired fullbacks. The Spain international has plainly been one of United's most consistent performers since her arrival in 2020. Batlle is highly progressive and often forges the role of supplementary winger in attacking phases of play. Pairing her pace with quick shifts of the ball, Batlle tends



to make light work of oppositions before releasing passes that feed in others. Yet, Battle packs a punch when retracting to defensive duties, tussling toe-to-toe or using her body to cut out an opposing threat. Battle is quick, slick and easy to watch, certainly one to look out for.

P is for Ashleigh Plumptre

Leicester City are in for a tough season and will have to irrefutably lock down forward lines in order to avoid falling into the relegation zone. A crucial figure in keeping their heads above water will be centre back Ashleigh Plumptre. The 24-year-old put in a top shift for the Foxes last season and was often the final buffer between opponent and goal. Plumptre is knowing and excels in using her body to cut off angles and forcing oppositions to take the more difficult route. She is challenging to compete with in the air and comes out on top in the majority of aerial duels at both ends of the pitch. Plumptre also made her senior debut on the international stage earlier this year for the Nigerian national team and has taken each succeeding international match in her stride.

Q is Quality

The debate as to whether the WSL is the most competitive league in the world continues and whilst there are, and always will be, differing opinions, the quality across the league as a whole is constantly developing. The WSL attracts some of the world's most exciting talents from across the globe and as they join these players are now becoming less concentrated to just the "big three". As this happens the competition becomes less predictable with teams lower down the table more regularly putting their foot on the pedal rather than to being forced to park the bus. This makes things all the more exciting. Certainly, new eyes experiencing the WSL for the first time will not be disappointed with the quality of football that is on show.

R is for Reading

Reading have taken a slight dip in form over the last couple of seasons, dropping from fifth to eighth since 2020. Whilst they have remained consistent in the number of goals scored, the number of goals conceded has risen quite considerably. Boss Kelly Chambers appears to seek improvement in this area

and has brought in three defenders and a goalkeeper over the summer. Newly appointed captain Emma Mukandi (née Mitchell) has also returned after giving birth to a baby girl last year and will fill the leader-shaped void left by departee Natasha Harding.

The Royals find themselves in a rather unique situation as the only remaining WSL side that is not affiliated with a Premier League club. This is a tricky position to be in as others invest heavily with resources and larger budgets. The Royals, however, with the talents of players such as Deanne Rose, Faye Bryson and Gemma Evans, have enough in their tank to see them through at least one more season in the top-flight.

S is for Shanice van de Sanden

Returning to Liverpool and to the WSL is Dutch forward Shanice van de Sanden who has not played in the English league since 2017. The 29-year-old has played for two of Europe's most prolific clubs, German side Wolfsburg and current European Champions, and proclaimed "Queens of Europe", Lyon. Van de Sanden credits her two seasons with Liverpool as

the ones that changed her as a player and states that the club is one she has always wished to return to. With the Reds seamless promotion, seasoned manager and stacked squad, now is the perfect time for the energetic winger to increase her minutes on the pitch and re-stamp her mark. Prepare to hear rousing choruses of 'Van de Sanden, plays like a dream!' around Prenton Park once more.

T is for Tottenham Hotspur

Spurs finished in fifth place last season, their highest ranking in the WSL since their promotion back in 2020. They will most definitely be looking to retain this with an aim to climb even higher this time round. Tottenham have recruited well bringing in defender Amy Turner, midfielders Angharad James, Ramona Petzelberger and Drew Spence, as well as attacking reinforcement Ellie Brazil, all of whom have experience in the top-flight.

On top of this, Spurs have secured the overseas signings of Nikola Karczewska and Celin Bizet Ildhusøy to offset their five departures that include long-term Lilywhite Josie Green.

Rehanne Skinner's side have shown significant improvement in specific areas in recent years, most notably in defence where the partnership of Shelina Zardorsky and Molly Bartrip, along with fullback Ashleigh Neville, only allowed 23 goals to pass last season. To progress, Spurs need to build these relationships further afield and create plays that hit the target more often. Again, steady improvement is noted here, but to test the big dogs more goals are needed.

U is for Manchester United

Last year, Marc Skinner's Manchester United were on the cusp of breaking into the top three and though this may not be the season they claim a spot on the theoretical podium, their summer business may well see the Red Devils knock on the door. It may be said that United do not present a squad of 'stars', however what they do possess is a certain level of quality that is fairly consistent across the board. United, for the most part, have kept hold of the core contingent of their squad which includes Lionesses Mary Earps, Ella Toone, Katie Zelem and Alessia Russo, as well as the Norwegian midfielder Vilde Bøe Risa and Spain international Ona Batlle. The biggest loss for United has been Netherlands midfielder Jackie Groenen who jumped ship to PSG at the last hour.

Where United fell short, as is a running theme, is in their stamina. The Red Devils start out positively and with a high energy but begin to run out of steam as the season heads into its latter stages. This is where Skinner has recruited well. By bringing in the attacking firepower of Nikita Parris, Lucia Garcia and Adriana Leon, Skinner can more freely rotate his forward line to lessen burnout. These additions also suit Skinner's encouragement of fluidity between the midfield and attacking lines of play and offer an exciting prospect for the Red Devils. At the back, United have also acquired Maya Le Tissier, who despite her young age, has long been recognised as one of the league's most skilful, yet versatile defender.

V is for Veatriki Sarri

Following Birmingham City's relegation to the Championship, and after showing she is WSL material through and through, Veatriki Sarri has joined Hope Powell's Seagulls on a two-year deal. Sarri was one of Birmingham's standout players last season, operating as their primary creative outlet with great influence on the game. The Greece international potted three goals last season and assisted a further two, levelling captain Louise Quinn with the highest goal involvement for the Blues.

Sarri is a lively attacking midfielder with both

progressive and defensive qualities. In possession, Sarri is difficult to keep hold of as a nifty ball carrier who likes a nutmeg or two. Off the ball, she defends from the front, intelligently taking precaution and positioning herself to block and intercept. Sarri's move to Brighton is a smart one for both parties and she is sure to be a key figure for the Seagulls over the next couple of years.

W is for West Ham

It must be said that West Ham were very impressive last season. Manager Olli Harder led the Irons to the midway point of the table before announcing rather surprising exit as the campaign came to a close. Former Hammer Paul Konchesky has since taken the helm and has a task ahead to continue this upward trajectory.

Whilst the London club released a number of players, including former captain Gilly Flaherty, they secured a whole host of notable signings. Lisa Evans has joined permanently after her season long loan and fellow Gunners Alex Hennessy and Halle Houssein have also signed. Fullback Kirsty Smith has joined from Manchester United, as well as forward Viviane Asseyi from Bayern Munich. These incomings added to a squad that is growing in confidence will likely see the Hammers through with another

consistent season. Forward Claudia Walker is probable to stand out and the fierce passion of lifelong Iron Kate Longhurst is not to be missed.

X is for Ex-Players

One of the most enjoyable aspects of the WSL's growth is that increasingly viewers are becoming lucky enough to hear the insights of players that have lived and breathed the league. Many are now in media and punditry roles and their first-hand knowledge of clubs, players and coaching staff both enriches and improves the game. Sue Smith, Siobhan Chamberlain, Fara Williams, Anita Asante, Rachel Yankey, Lucy Ward, Alex Scott and Karen Carney, amongst others, will all grace our screens and our ears once more this season, lovely stuff.

Y is for Yui Hasegawa

The move of Yui Hasegawa kept us on our toes when the midfielder signed for City very late in the day. After

losing Caroline Weir, Georgia Stanway and the departure of Keira Walsh, City needed to bring in a midfielder that would partway soften the blow – enter Yui Hasegawa. The Japan international made quite the impression in the WSL with former club West Ham last season. Undoubtedly a natural with a football, Hasegawa has the ability to track back and retrieve from deep to carry the ball through the middle third. However, where she really turns it on is in a more attacking role, roaming just behind the forward line which allows her the freedom to create.

With Walsh's exit still fresh in the mind, it is likely that boss Gareth Taylor may repurpose Hasegawa slightly to adopt more of the defensive midfield role. Whilst she is certainly capable to holding the fort, fears of stifling and performance detriment might well be raised. But, not to dwell, Hasegawa is an

excellent signing and is sure to serve City well.

Z is for Zećira Mušović

Sweden international Zećira Mušović has a big season ahead of her as Chelsea's number one. After the sad news of Ann Katrin-Berger's cancer recurrence, Mušović will step up to the plate and guard Chelsea's netted fortress as their principal goalkeeper. The Sweden international played a total of ten games in the WSL last season, allowing only three goals to slip past as well as keeping six clean sheets. Mušović also managed to register an assist last time out which, whilst also being pretty remarkable, gives good indication of her ability to read the game that lays in front of her. Whilst on the pitch Mušović has large boots, or rather gloves, to fill, off of it she is the undisputed queen of memes and has already won our hearts for unapologetically putting the dinosaurs in their place.



Deanne Rose picks up early injury

Reading have confirmed that striker Deanne Rose ruptured her Achilles in their tie against Manchester United.

Rose will now undergo a period of recovery and commented on the setback, "I really don't have many words to describe the disappointment that I'm feeling.

"However, I have the determination, faith and a mindset to come back stronger both mentally and physically."

Leanne Kiernan is out

Liverpool's star forward Leanne Kiernan sustained an ankle injury in the Reds opening match against Chelsea at Prenton Park.

Kiernan has already undergone surgery and is expected back "early next year".

Kingsmeadow is full

Chelsea took on Manchester City in front of a sell-out Kingsmeadow.

After spending much of the first half on the back foot, the London Blues went on to win 2-0 through Fran Kirby and Maren Mjelde much to the delight of their home fans.

Record crowd descends on the Emirates

Over 47,000 fans descended on the Emirates to see Arsenal take on Tottenham Hotspur in the North London Derby earning a new WSL record. Arsenal went on to win 4-0 in emphatic style with goals from Beth Mead, Vivianne Miedema and Rafealle Souza.

Duggan has news

Everton forward Toni Duggan has announced on social media that she is expecting her first child.

Everton have confirmed Duggan will miss the remainder of fixtures this season.

A statement from the WSL side said: "Toni will be supported by Everton's medical staff in the coming months as she continues light training."

We extend our congratulations to Toni and her family at this exciting time.

Record crowd at Leigh Sports Village

Manchester United had their highest attendance for a match at Leigh Sports Village on the opening weekend, as 5,315 spectators witnessed their win over Reading.

The Red Devils have won both of their games so far.

Liverpool earn new club records

A huge 27,574 spectators made their way to Anfield to see Liverpool take on Everton in the Merseyside Derby.

Although the Toffees put on a dominant display beating the Reds 3-0, the crowd was in full swing in support for the home side.

Liverpool also broke another attendance record the week before when they played Chelsea in front of a 3006 supporters at their home, Prenton Park.



Clean sheets for Arsenal

Arsenal have kept a clean sheet in each of their last eight WSL, the most ever earned by one side in the competition.

Goalkeeper Manuela Zinsberger has started the season strongly, keeping clean sheets against both Brighton and Hove Albion and Tottenham Hotspur.

Daly on a roll

Aston Villa's Rachel Daly has scored in each of the WSL's opening matches starting off her stint with the Villans in style.

The England international has potted three goals so far since her return to the English league, helping Villa earn their current third place standing, one above defending champions Chelsea.

FA Player sees record number of viewers

23,366 fans tuned in to see Arsenal beat Brighton & Hove Albion on the opening night of the season. Commentary for the match was provided by Michael McCann who provided valuable insight to both teams and the league to the record number of streams.

The game surpassed 20,046 viewers that tuned in to watch the FA Women's Conti Cup match between Arsenal and Manchester United back in January.

Chelsea vs West Ham



By Paul Donegan

Chelsea came from behind to beat London rivals West Ham 3-1 on Wednesday evening.

Dagny Brynjarsdottir gave West Ham the lead early in the game. Sam Kerr hit the post twice during the first half before Fran Kirby equalised five minutes before the break. Kerr and Millie Bright scored for the hosts during the second half. They had a chance to extend their lead further but Lauren James saw a penalty saved by Mackenzie Arnold.

Chelsea made two changes from their win over Manchester City at the weekend. Katerina Svitkova came in for her debut and Eve Perisset made her first

start in place of Maren Mjelde and Lauren James. Following their loss to Manchester United on Sunday, West Ham also made two changes with Grace Fisk and Abbey-Leigh Stringer coming into the starting eleven in place of Jess Ziu and Honoka Hayashi.

There was a minute's silence before match for groundsman David McKnight who had passed away over weekend.

The away side took the lead in the 3rd minute when Kirsty Smith swung in a corner and unmarked Brynjarsdottir headed in.

Kerr was just unable to get onto a through ball in the 5th minute, and then was caught offside two minutes later as Chelsea started to create opportunities. In the 10th minute, Bright saw a looping effort from a corner saved brilliantly by Arnold.

Two minutes later, Kerr saw her cracking shot from 20 yards hit the post and bounce away. Chelsea appealed for a penalty in the 15th minute when Kadeisha Buchanan went down in the area but referee Tom Reeves played on.

Kerr had another chance in the 20th minute but her shot from the edge of the area went wide. The hosts had

another penalty appeal, this time for handball, turned down in the 33rd minute. A minute later, Guro Reiten saw her shot across goal go just past the post.

The post was hit again by Kerr in the 35th minute. The referee had a word with Arnold after this for slowing the game down too much.

Chelsea did equalise in the 40th minute. Reiten's cross found Kirby who controlled then sliced the ball into the corner of the net. That makes it three goals in three games for Kirby this season.

Both sides had chances before the break. Lucy Parker's effort for the Hammers from 30 yards went well over whilst Erin Cuthbert's deflected shot was caught by Arnold as the home side had the last effort of the half.

Chelsea had chances early in the second half with Bright heading wide from a free kick and Kerr heading another opportunity over.

Kerr did give Chelsea the lead in the 58th minute when following a bit of a scramble from a cross, she put the ball into the net from about 6-yards.

Chelsea made it 3-1 in the 62nd minute when a Svitkova corner was headed in by Bright.

Second half substitute Lauren James saw her powerful shot go over in the 69th minute. West Ham's first chance of the half came

in the 76th minute when Thea Kyvag's shot from 25 yards was saved.

Chelsea immediately went up the other end and James was brought down in the area and a penalty was given. James took the penalty herself but Arnold dived to her left and saved it low down.

Niamh Charles saw her low shot saved in the 78th minute as Chelsea looked to extend their lead further. Bethany England also had a chance for the home side in the 81st minute but her header was off target.

There were no more clear chances as Chelsea won 3-1 and moved up to fourth in the league, level on points with three other sides, but they have played a game more. Speaking to the press after the match, Emma Hayes said there had been a great reaction to going behind so early and they needed the half to break West Ham down. Hayes also said Chelsea moved the ball well, dominated in the second half and could have won by a bigger margin. They don't play until after the international break now when they are away to Everton in the WSL on 16th October.

West Ham manager Paul Konchesky told the press it was a fantastic performance from his side and they were disappointed and gutted with the result. Konchesky felt they could have dealt better with Chelsea's two

second half goals. West Ham's next league game is away to Aston Villa on 15th October.

Line ups



Chelsea
(4-2-3-1)

Berger, Perisset (Charles 63'), Bright, Buchanan, Eriksson (c), Cuthbert, Fleming, Svitkova (England 63'), Kirby (James 63'), Reiten (Rytting Kaneryd 72'), Kerr (Cankovic 72')

Unused substitutes

Musovic, Nouwen, Ingle, Carter,

Goals – Kirby 40', Kerr 58', Bright 62'



West Ham
United
(5-3-2)

Arnold, Shimizu, Parker, Cissoko, Fisk, Smith (Ziu 69'), Stringer (Kyvag 69'), Longhurst, Brynjarsdottir (c), Asseyi (Walker 83'), Evans (Flannery 87')

Unused substitutes

Hillyerd, Atkinson, Filis, Houssein

Goal – Brynjarsdottir 3'

Bookings – Cissoko 48', Ziu 74', Parker 76'

Referee – Tom Reeves

Attendance – 2,842

Five Signings to Watch in the Barclays WSL

By Charlotte Stacey

As usual, the summer transfer window has been a busy one in the Women's Super League with clubs taking the opportunity to reinforce their squads ahead of the season. As the league kicks off, it's time for us to introduce five summer signings to keep an eye on.

Rachel Daly – Aston Villa



Natalie Mincher/SPP

Pulling off what is arguably the most surprising signing of the window was Aston Villa with the acquisition of England international and newly crowned Champion of Europe Rachel Daly. The former Houston Dash captain joins Villa on a three-year contract after being with the NWSL outfit for six years.

Known for her versatility, Daly is able to comfortably operate as a fullback noting her impressive performances for England over the Euro's under Sarina Wiegman. However, it

is unlikely that Daly will perform this role for Villa given the number of defenders within their ranks. Aston Villa manager, Carla Ward has already indicated that she intends to use Daly's "talents up front".

As a central striker, Daly is extremely lively and attentive to her positioning both in open-play and from dead balls. The 30-year-old has a true 'striker's' finish from open play, as well as being quick to pounce on rebounds or spills from the keeper. Villa look to be shifting up a gear this season and Daly will provide them with some much needed firepower.

Veatriki Sarri – Brighton and Hove Albion



Karl W Newton/SPP

After Birmingham City were relegated last season, it was a concern that midfielder

Veatriki Sarri would no longer be playing in the top-flight. Luckily, Hope Powell saw her potential and the Greece international has signed with Brighton and Hove Albion.

Sarri stood out as one of Birmingham's key players, drawing level with Lousie Quinn as the player who contributed the most to scoring opportunities. The 24-year-old attacking midfielder is a workhorse with both progressive and defensive qualities. In possession, Sarri is difficult to keep hold of as a nifty ball carrier who likes to dummy oppositions.

Out of possession, Sarri tends to defend from the front, intelligently taking precaution and positioning herself to block and intercept higher up the pitch to lessen the load on the backline. The Seagulls have been crying out for a creative outlet to tie the front and back lines field so Sarri's introduction is a smart move on both ends.

Kadeisha Buchanan – Chelsea

Canada international and Olympic gold medallist Kadeisha Buchanan joined Chelsea from European Champions Lyon on a three-year deal early this summer. Buchanan has a plethora of accolades behind her for both club and country, including five Champions

League victories and five French League titles.



The 26-year-old Ballon d'Or nominee will be the first person to wear Chelsea's infamous no. 26 shirt after the retirement of John Terry.

Buchanan is a physical and athletic centre-back who is willing to throw her body on the line and is known to put in strong challenges.

However, the Canadian also boasts a technical side with good ball-playing ability and a passing scope. Buchanan partly bridges the skillsets of Magda Eriksson and Millie Bright, whom she will likely be playing alongside as Emma Hayes rotates between 3-4-3 and 4-3-3 variations. With ample top-level experience and undeniable on-field quality, Buchanan is an excellent addition for the Blues as they go forward in their quest to conquer Europe.

Jess Park – Everton (loan)

Manchester City winger Jess Park has gone out on a season long loan to Everton this season. The 20-year-old will gain valuable experience and earn much deserved regular minutes with the Toffees,

whilst also helping the Merseyside outfit make good on their disappointing campaign last time out.

Park made a handful of appearances for City last season and impressed each time she was on the grass.



Already displayed is her excellence in 1v1 situations, showcasing enough silky trickery and ball control to wobble even the tightest of backlines. She is also exceptionally fast which enables her to make runs off the shoulders of fullbacks which will prove to be useful in times of transition. However, what stands out above the rest as Park's most appealing quality is her maturity.

Park has a level-head meaning she keeps her wits about her and typically makes good on-field decisions. Whilst these may not always be the right ones just yet, the very fact Park takes the time to assess her situation before taking action is encouraging. Park will be an asset to Everton this coming season and will do much to improve their performances of last year.

Maya Le Tissier – Manchester United



Finally, with one of the best moves of the window is Manchester United who have clinched young defender Maya Le Tissier on a deal running to the end of the 2024/25 season. Le Tissier is widely regarded as one of the league's most promising players having made her debut for former club Brighton and Hove Albion four years ago, aged just 16.

She has also made represented England at U15, U17, U19 and U23 level and it is anticipated she will receive a senior call-up imminently.

Le Tissier is a versatile defender having played in all positions across the backline. It is probable that she will operate more frequently as a centre-back for United as regular full-backs Hannah Blundell and Ona Batlle are unlikely to be dropped. Le Tissier can be 'aggressive' when defending and closing in on opponents to drop to their weaker foot or to cut off avenues of play. Yet, she is also progressive and plays positive passes that spur on attacking spells for her team. The acquisition of Le Tissier is certainly a statement and shows the Red Devils' ambition for the future and in finally breaking in to the top three.

United we Stand

The Diary of a nine-year-old United super fan

By Lydia Charles



Manchester United VS Reading

Saturday, September 17 was amazing!

We won 4-0 against Reading. It was the first match of the season too. The first match was meant to be Tottenham Vs Manchester United but it was postponed due to the death of the Queen. At the start of the of the match we held a one-minute silence in honour of the Queen; the respect for the Queen was outstanding everybody kept silent and knew how important it was.

The Barmy Army were singing their songs proudly and loudly like usual, almost all the players have their own song. I am looking forward to learning the new songs for the new players: Lucia Garcia, Maya Le Tissier, Aissatou Tounkara, Adriana Leon, Rachel Williams, Nikita Parris and Grace Clinton. I was sad to see all the old players go. The question is will Mark Skinner play the new players in this game?

The players were on form and we scored the four goals in the first half, Manchester United played great as a team, their passing was good and all their shots were incredible. I was so excited, and I can tell you all the Barmy Army



and everybody else was too. The players that scored the goals were Katie Zelem and Maya Le Tissier and Alessia Russo scored twice and Alessia Russo scored once which makes four, they were all goals in the first half there were no goals in the second half, it was an amazing start for Manchester United. There were over 5,000 fans there It was the first time almost all the stands except the standing one was open. The atmosphere was incredible. Last year the average was only 1,500 fans.

I loved the match my voice is still a bit sore from shouting and singing, I had my



hotdog like usual which was delicious and began to sing my heart out going to watch Manchester United helps me improve my football and makes me love even more every time I go. I am looking forward to watching Manchester United at their next match either on TV or going.

Lydia makes debut for PNE

Everyone at TWFM would like to congratulate Lydia on making her debut for Preston North End U10s.

During the summer, Lydia had trials and both Manchester United and Preston North End and chose to join the Lancashire side.

We are really excited to be heading down to watch Lydia at a game this month!



BALLERÉ × VALDERRAMA'S

Valderrama's by James Cochran to host a new inclusive space for women's football



Fresh off the back of a game-changing summer hosting packed-out watch parties for every Women's Euros game, Baller FC is taking over the lower level of Valderrama's - London's hottest new sports bar in the heart of Islington - to create the first purposely designed inclusive space for women's football fans to enjoy more glorious wall-to-wall football.

Introducing Baller FC at Val's, the sister space to Valderrama's - a tailor-made football clubhouse with an interior celebrating women's football culture, fashion, art and music - featuring a bespoke mural by artist Jade Spranklen (Sprankenstein Studios) encapsulating iconic women's football moments, dual screens so fans can witness every minute of the footballing action, and Baller basement post-match parties hosted by Soccermom DJs + special guests so the party can continue long after the final whistle.

Baller FC founder, Rachel Gould, "Baller FC at Valderrama's is all about building on the success of the Euros and continuing to put Women's football rightly centre-stage in a dedicated, welcoming space which we have christened 'Val's'! We're so excited to be showing every televised WSL game on a

Sunday, Champions League games & all England internationals - we met some incredible fans over the Euros, and we can't wait to keep doing our bit to grow this amazing women's football community this coming season"

James Cochran, Founder of Valderrama's, "This is a HUGE signing. We are so excited to be the new home of Baller FC. It's the perfect match for what we wanted to create here at Valderrama's: a safe and fun space to enjoy sports, delicious food and unique cocktails all in one."

Baller FC will be at Valderrama's every WSL Sunday showing every televised game.

On Friday October 7th, as the WSL breaks for international duty, Baller FC will resume its Lionesses love affair as the newly crowned European champions take on the USA - reigning World Cup champions - in a heavyweight winter World Cup warm up contest at a sold-out Wembley stadium. Baller FC will be showing the match LIVE at Val's and hosting an after-party with guest DJs until midnight.



 **BARCLAYS**
WOMEN'S
SUPER LEAGUE

	Club	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
1	Arsenal	2	2	0	0	8	0	6	6
2	Manchester	2	2	0	0	6	0	3	6
3	Aston Villa	2	2	0	0	6	3	3	6
4	Chelsea	3	2	0	1	6	3	3	6
5	Everton	3	2	0	1	4	1	-2	3
6	Liverpool	2	1	0	1	2	4	-3	3
7	Brighton &	2	1	0	1	2	5	-3	3
8	Tottenham	2	1	0	1	2	5	-3	3
9	West Ham	3	1	0	2	2	5	-3	3
10	Manchester	2	0	0	2	3	6	-3	0
11	Leicester City	3	0	0	3	1	5	-4	0
12	Reading	2	0	0	2	1	6	-5	0

Table correct as of October 3, 2022



BARCLAYS CHAMPIONSHIP

New fan engagement plan



The FA will meet twice per season under formalised supporter engagement protocols created alongside the Football Supporters' Association.

The meetings will give supporters' groups in the women's game the opportunity to discuss key issues across all relevant FA-run leagues and teams - from the Barclays Women's Super League to the Barclays Women's Championship, National League levels and the national team.

The FA and the FSA, along with supporters' groups from its Women's Game Network, will identify the most important and topical issues in the women's game with all parties contributing to the agenda. The minutes will be published by the FSA, along with any jointly agreed actions.

Kelly Simmons, FA director of the women's professional game, said: "This is an important step forward to formalise the work we do with the FSA to embed the supporter voice within the decision making process.

"We look forward to continuing to work with the FSA and its members in the season's ahead."

Deborah Dilworth, FSA women's game network manager, added: "After a stunning summer of football this is a great time to announce this new level of supporter engagement between the FSA and FA.

"This was a key aim of our recent Women's Game Strategy so we're really pleased to have got to this point - and there's still plenty of work ahead."

The Barclays Championship brings pure entertainment



Richard Callis/SPP

By Peter Mann

The opening couple of months have certainly been both exciting, and entertaining, in the Barclays Women's Championship, and, with clubs now heading into an international break, the nominations for both the Player, and Goal of the Month awards, for August, have been announced.

And there's some pretty good goals among those six strikes, two of which came against Sunderland, through Birmingham City duo, Harriet Scott and Siobhan Wilson both finding the net against the Black Cats; Scott's was to be a right-foot volley from behind, into the far left of goal, whilst Wilson's came on the end of a run through the centre of the park before being played out left, the attacker bursting into the box and firing home.

Annabel Blanchard's goal for Crystal Palace, against Coventry United, would see her control well with her left before cutting inside her marker, and firing home with her right; Southampton's Laura Rafferty was on the end of a cross into the box before finishing with a right-footed chip into the top corner.

Amy Rodgers' goal for London City Lionesses, against Charlton Athletic would see a short, bursting run and right-footed shot into the far corner; with the sixth of the goals belonging to that of Corinne Henson for Charlton when facing London City after good work down the right and a low cross is flicked home.

As for the four, Player of the Month nominees, there is defender Louise Quinn (Crystal Palace), forward Molly Thorpe (Birmingham),

midfielder Emily Simpkins (Charlton), and forward Jesse Woolley (Bristol City).

Going into the international break, it's Bristol City who have the early leadership with ten points having won three and drawn one of their opening four matches, all of which have come in tight affairs – Coventry (A, won 1-0), Blackburn Rovers (H, won 2-0), Sunderland (H, won 1-0), and, in their last outing, a 1-1 draw at home to Southampton.

Two of Bristol's five goals have arrived in their last two outings, their Jamaican number nine, Shania Hayles, scoring Sunderland, and Welsh winner, Ffion Morgan bagging in the draw with the Saints, a game that, prior to which, Bristol shot-stopper, Fran Bentley, who was involved in a joint goalkeeping

session alongside team-mate Liv Clark, and men's stars, Dan Bentley and Stefan Bajic, talked about the goings-on at Ashton Gate.

"We're excited!" explained Fran Bentley, who went near 320 minutes without conceding this season.

"Ashton Gate is a great place to play, we really enjoyed the two games last season with the atmosphere the fans created.

"We want clean sheets just as much as we want goals so to have started with three wins and three clean sheets is pleasing for us as a group. The challenge now is can we push on and keep that going."

The 'keeper session, led by first-team coach, Pat Mountain, was an experience for the women's duo, Bentley adding: "It was great fun! These opportunities are rare for keepers in the women's game, and it was really enjoyable.

"The focus of the session was one-v-one, blocking and spreading your body and that's been an area of my game that I have really wanted to focus on.

"With their experiences and that being such strong part of Dan's (Bentley) game it was so good to get the little bits of insight and information from him when we were going through the session."

The next two sides, Charlton Athletic and Crystal Palace are both on nine points, the former of the two having scored eleven goals in their three wins from four this campaign, the blot on their copybook being the loss in the seven-goal thriller at home to London City at the end of August.

The Addicks' two games in September saw a 3-0 win at home to Birmingham, and a 3-2 success on the road at Sunderland, Ella Rutherford netting in each of the last two, whilst Elisha N'Daw snatched a 93 minute winner in the north-east, heading home a Bethan Roe corner.

That win over Sunderland, it was a game which saw the visitors come from behind, twice, before snatching a late, late win, Rutherford, and Keira Skeels also netting, much to the delight of boss Karen Hills.

Afterwards she said: "Sunderland is always a really tough place to come, and going down 1-0 at half time we knew we had a lot to do, it was always going to be hard to break them down.

"But I thought in the second half we really stepped it up and took the game to them and I thought we deserved it at the bitter end.

"We showed a lot of character today, it was a good performance, we know that we can do better, we are a better footballing side than what we showed, but we spoke in the huddle at the end about the character and belief and those players went on to win that game and they believed, and that is why they won the game."

Meanwhile over at Palace, Elise Hughes bagged the first hat-trick of the new campaign, netting all three on their 3-1 win away to Blackburn Rovers, thus making it three wins from their first four outings.

Her first came inside fifteen minutes when heading home from close range, and the

second, affording a two-goal, interval lead, was a right-foot shot into the top corner; Hughes added a third within ten minutes of the restart with a left-footed shot from six yards out before Blackburn pulled a goal back on the hour.

It's not only Hughes that's been creating headlines at Selhurst Park this past month though, two of the squad, 'keeper Natalia Negri, and midfielder Shauna Guyatt, both being called up for the England U19s squad for October's internationals with Slovenia, Slovakia, and Denmark.

In addition, Palace's Leigh Nicol has received a nomination, shortlisted for a nationwide 'Women of the Future' award; regularly inspiring the next generation, Nicol was awarded the PFA Community Champion award earlier this year, the 27-year-old Scottish midfielder is proud to be nominated.

She said: "I'm really honoured that my name's even been a discussion for such an amazing award. I only ever attached success to football growing up, never [work] off the pitch.

"My proudest achievement in life has only been in recent years, and that's been the amount I've developed and grown as a human being, but that's full credit to my circle, club and colleagues around me."

Three other sides, Sheffield United, London City, and Birmingham City, complete the top six, with seven points apiece, the former of whom, the fourth-place Blades, are the Championship's top scorers early on, with a dozen

goals in their opening four games.

Ten of those twelve have come in their last two games, an 8-0 home thrashing of bottom club Coventry, and a 2-2 draw away to Lewes, Mia Enderby and Maddy Cusack both bagging braces in the former of the games, whilst defender Charlotte Newsham has netted one in each of the games.

The win over Coventry was Sheffield's biggest ever victory in the Championship, and for Newsham, she netted what was her first goal for the Blades, adding her second a week later – a nice vein of form following a three-week hiatus.

Speaking of her goal against Coventry, set up by Bex Rayner, Newsham said: "There's games you can't get forward as much, but in a game like that I want to get forward and help my team with assists and with goals if I can.

"With a player like Bex (Rayner), you know the quality she's going to give and with a ball like that she basically put it on a plate for me."

The draw with Lewes meanwhile, it was made worth the lengthy trip after the Blades came back from a two-goal interval deficit to earn a point, one gladly taken when their next home game in the league doesn't arrive until mid-October – against early leaders, Bristol City.

Elsewhere with the Blades, their Welsh dup of Georgia Walters and Maria Francis-Jones, received international call-ups for Wales' World Cup play-off semi-final qualifier with Bosnia-Herzegovina, the winners of which will face Switzerland for a place at next

summers' World Cup in Australia-New Zealand.

On the other-hand, London City, having been held to a goalless draw away to Lewes, enjoyed a 3-0 home win over Durham following Sarah Ewens deflected opener, Amy Rodgers poking home from a corner for a two-goal, interval lead, and Lucy Fitzgerald squeezing in a shot for the decisive third.

There could well have been more, however, Durham 'keeper, Tatiana Saudners, would be seen to save a spot-kick from Ewens, but it didn't take the gloss off what was an important win for the Lionesses.

Afterwards, Melissa Phillips said that it was a: "Fantastic team performance throughout.

"Really nice to see us find our rhythm in possession which led to a few really good goals.

"The movement of our front line was brilliant. And yet again another resolute performance to keep a clean sheet.

"We have so much strength in the depth of our squad which really shined through today both in the starting line-up and with players impacting the game coming in.

"Today was a feat for us as it's the first time we picked up 3 points against Durham in club history."

Birmingham have conceded one more than Lionesses having scored three and conceded five in their last two outings during September; having lost 3-0 away to Charlton, the Blues followed it up with a 3-2 home win over

Coventry, they being close to letting slip a three-goal lead.

Racing into a two-goal lead, after just twenty minutes, Jade Pennock and Louise Quinn netting, followed by a third, from Ashley Hodson, just before the hour mark, had the hosts pretty much out of sight; the visitors though, shocked, when pulling two back late on, the second coming via an own-goal with the game heading towards what was a good, five minutes plus, stoppage time.

Birmingham though, they held on for a much needed three points, in addition to which, and alongside the afore-mentioned Blades pair, the Blues have seen Charlie Estcourt called up to the Wales squad for their World Cup qualifier, whilst Charlie Murray is called upon for Scotland's WCQ with Austria (they face the Republic of Ireland should they win).

Southampton go into the break in mid-table, on five points, exactly the same number of points off the top as they are from the bottom after they picked up a hard-fought set of points against first Crystal Palace, 2-1 away, and a 1-1 draw at leaders Bristol City.

Against the Palace, the Saints took all three points thanks to a brace from midfielder Lexi Lloyd-Smith, she netting early in each half, her first coming when slamming home first time a cut-back from Beth Lumsden, whilst the second would see her send home a zipping shot into the bottom corner.

Meanwhile, the draw with the leaders, would see the Saints again score early in the second

period, this time earning a point following Ffion Morgan's first half opener; Lumsden, getting on the end of Ella Morris' pinpoint cross to slot home.

Lewes and Durham both have four points and, although the former are yet to win, they're also yet to lose, drawing all four of the matches to date.

Consecutive draws are hampering Lewes' early season progress, that continuing with a goalless draw at home to London City, and a 2-2 draw with visiting Sheffield United, Izzy Dalton and Amber-Keegan Stobbs netting in the latter.

The draw with Sheffield United would see the Rooks show their support for the If U Care Share Foundation, wearing t-shirts in support of world suicide prevention month, and Stobbs, who added a brilliant second for the hosts, dedicated her strike, from distance, to the cause.

Stobbs, who recently, briefly spoke about improving mental health, said after the game: "That goal is for the charity."

"Mental health is my biggest passion and I'll dedicate the rest of my life to working on this.

"So I want to dedicate my goal to the cause, to If U Care Share and to the work I've done to be in the position I am today.

"The team and the club are backing me on this campaign, it's just amazing and I'm really grateful for it.

"I only sent the girls a paragraph of what If U Care Share is all about fairly recently. They were immediately keen to get involved and we wanted to do

it for the postponed Blackburn game.

"The players were asking about it on Sunday, saying 'I love these shirts, can we keep them?'. It's amazing support. They were all talking about it in the changing room and that makes such a difference."

Durham meanwhile, saw a 3-1 win over Blackburn look to have turned early fortunes around, followed it up with a 3-0 defeat away to London City; Saorise Noonan bagged a brace against Rovers, alongside a strike from Susan Robson.

The Northern Ireland international would be seen to power home following a delightful back-heel from Grace Ayre; that win though would be undone the following week however when in London – but the fans continue to flock to home games.

Speaking of fans flocking, Durham have launched a new initiative at their Maiden Castle home when creating a new, 'Little Legs & Family Zone,' somewhere in which the club will also be looking to offer further activities as the season progresses.

The bottom three meanwhile consists of Blackburn Rovers, Sunderland and bottom club, without a point, Coventry United, they having lost four from four, scoring two and conceding fifteen

Blackburn have suffered back-to-back, 3-1 defeats, Saffron Jordan with both the goals there, manager Gemma Donnelly admitting their failings against Palace, was down to their being "too respectful."



James Whitehead/SPP



Stephen Flynn/SPP

Talking after the defeat, Donnelly said: "I thought we were too conservative in the first-half and it allowed them to play quick football around us in threatening areas.

"I'm disappointed with the two goals we conceded, whilst they've been good finishes, they were preventable.

"The second-half we were more aggressive in our press, which rattled them a little bit and I appreciate we went 3-0 down and at it was all to do but it showed the character of the girls that they got a goal back.

"I think we were too respectful in that first-half and the minute we started to put pressure on them and closed them down we looked much better and competed.

"But it's a mountain to climb when you're three nil down, particularly with the timings of their goals.

"At this level you can't afford for those mistakes, and we've got to try and rid of them, or we will just keep conceding."

At Sunderland, they with just the one draw from their opening four matches of the season, that coming in the opening game, with Mel Reay, manager of the Black Cats, saying prior to the defeat against Charlton, is sure their form will come good.

"Overall, we feel it hasn't been for the want of trying, and it has been an admittedly tough set of opening fixtures.

"We were very happy with both the point and the performance in the opening

game at Durham, a game we felt we could have gone on to win.

"We then had a blip against Birmingham City at the Stadium of Light and felt there was a lot we needed to improve upon.

"Last weekend at Bristol City, we played well but came away with a narrow defeat."

A 3-2 defeat against Charlton though leaves them still looking for that first win, although it is a little tight from seventh, downwards.

Sunderland even led twice against their visitors, Emily Scarr opening the scoring midway through the first half, before retaking the lead with twelve minutes remaining, through Emma Kelly, but it wasn't to be, their hearts being broken deep into stoppage time.

As for Coventry, half of the fifteen goals in which they've conceded, eight of them, came during September, when losing 8-0 in Sheffield; they were unlucky in their last outing in the Championship though, falling to a 3-2 loss at Birmingham.

Although they were three-down with a half hour to go, Coventry did pull back to within a goal when first, debutant Mary McAteer slid home a Alanah Mann cross with twenty-two left on the clock, before an own-goal was bundled in in the closing minutes off a Meesha Dudley-Jones low cross.

Coventry even came close to what, at one stage, looked an unlikely point, Fran Orthodoxou seeing her

forty-yard free-kick tipped over; strengthening their ranks, a handful of new signings have joined the club this past month, with two loanees coming in from Spurs, in Eleanor Heeps and Esther Morgan, whilst Ellie Butler has joined from Wolverhampton Wanderers, and McAteer, who scored on the afore-mentioned debut, joined on a dual-signing from Aston Villa.

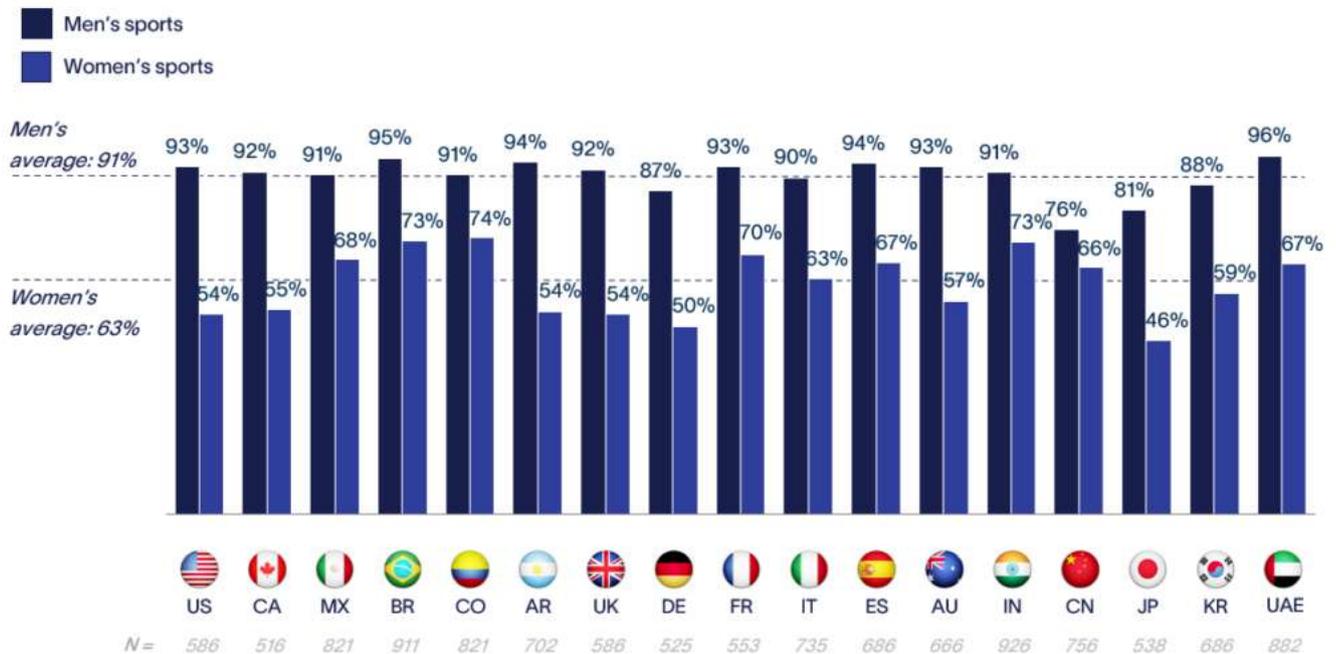
The Group Stage of the Continental Tyres League Cup begins in October, sides from the game's top two divisions split into five groups; concerning the Championship sides then (Northern Section) GROUP A sees Durham and Sheffield United placed with Aston Villa, Everton, and Manchester United, GROUP B has Blackburn and Sunderland with Leicester City and Liverpool, (Southern Section) GROUP C is Birmingham City and Lindon City alongside Brighton & Hove Albion and West Ham United, GROUP D is an all-Championship group with that of Bristol City, Southampton, Crystal Palace, and Lewes, whilst GROUP E sees Coventry United and Southampton take on Reading and Tottenham Hotspur.



Pedro Soares/SPP

Altman Solon survey reveals UK sports fans are watching more sports since the pandemic

Viewership of Men's and Women's Sports
% of monthly sports viewers by country that watch at least monthly



Sports viewing in the UK has spiked since the start of the pandemic in 2020 to today, with women's sports, particularly football, enjoying strong interest, according to a survey of consumers across 17 markets by leading global strategic consultancy Altman Solon.

The 2022 Global Sports Survey found that more than half of respondents (57%) are watching more sports now compared to 2020 (43%), with football the most watched sport at 42%, followed by tennis (9%), cricket (8%) and rugby (7%).

However, women's sports have stepped into the spotlight with 54% of monthly sports viewers watching it. Women's football is the most popular sport, and European football bodies continuing to invest heavily in women's leagues have paved the way for a surge in popularity. The growing interest in women's football is also demonstrated by record-breaking fan attendance, including the recent women's Euro final between England and Germany that gathered 87,192 fans at Wembley Stadium.

Other key data points include:

- 57% of UK respondents said they watch sports monthly.
- UK sports fans tend to watch about 3-5

hours of live sports per week.

- 21% of UK respondents would watch live games in virtual reality (VR).
- 30% of UK respondents would watch live games as if inside their favourite stadium or arena in VR.

"This year's Global Sports Survey highlights a growing shift towards positive evolution that is being driven by the success of women's sports, innovations in technology, and changes in fandom," said Ian Lube, Partner at Altman Solon.

"This was a very exciting summer for sports, particularly with the success of the Lionesses in the UEFA Cup. In addition to the historic accomplishments on the pitch, all of England came together behind the Lionesses, packing Wembley and watching the match on TV or livestreams.

"The economic potential of women's sports is reinforced by the survey results, which provide rationale for continued and increased investment and support of women's sports," Lube concluded.

Coventry United make two signings

Coventry United have signed Eleanor Heeps and Esther Morgan on loan for the season from Tottenham Hotspur.

Goalkeeper Heeps joined Tottenham from Liverpool in 2021 and spent the second half of last season on loan at Championship side Blackburn Rovers.

Defender Morgan appeared for Spurs in the WSL during 2020/21 season before joining Leicester City on loan in February 2022.

Smith joins Lewes

Welsh youth international Zoe Smith has joined Lewes.

The midfielder has previously played for Sully FC, Barry Town United and Cardiff City.

Smith said “I knew out of the Championship clubs that Lewes are the most community-orientated.

“It’s great at this club, I really enjoy it here and compared to some friends who I know who have gone to other clubs, there’s not that community aspect.”

Lewes sign Pizzarello

Charlyann Pizzarello has joined Lewes on a free transfer.

Pizzarello has played for CD Guadalajara and Malaga City in Spain, and Lions Gibraltar and Lincoln Red Imps in Gibraltar.

The Gibraltar international said “I’ve always known Lewes has been a community-orientated team with plenty of support, and it was the closeness and togetherness of the team that really attracted me.”

Robins defender recovering

Bristol City have announced that defender Brooke Aspin is recovering from an infection.

The 17-year-old was promoted into The Robins first team squad before the 2021/22 season during which she made 26 appearances in all competitions.

The club have not put any time scale on when Aspin will be well enough to return to action.

ACL injury for Fleming

Charlotte Fleming has sustained an Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) injury that will keep the player out for a significant period of time.

The London City Lionesses midfielder has also suffered a Grade 2 Medial Collateral lesion and meniscus damage.

Fleming sustained the injury late in the Lionesses game against Charlton Athletic at the end of August.

Barker out until 2023

Sheffield United’s captain Sophie Barker is unlikely to play before the end of the year after having surgery on a Lateral Collateral Ligament (LCL) injury.

The midfielder had re-joined The Blades in the summer on loan from Leicester City having previously been at the club between 2018 and 2020.

Estcourt signs for Birmingham

Welsh international midfielder Charlie Estcourt has signed for Birmingham City.

Estcourt has played for Reading, Bristol City, London Bees, Charlton Athletic and Coventry United.

She made 21 appearances for Coventry United in the Championship last season and left during the summer when they reverted back to part-time operations.

Godfrey sustains ACL

Hannah Godfrey has sustained an Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) injury.

The Charlton defender sustained the injury during The Addicks 3-0 win over Birmingham City.

Godfrey had started all three matches for Charlton before picking up the injury but will now spend a lengthy period out as she overcomes the injury.

Lewes add two more

Emily Moore and Jamie Rita have signed for Lewes.

Canadian goalkeeper Moore joins on a free-transfer after being with West Ham for the second half of last season.

Prior to that she had played in Canada. American midfielder Rita has been playing college football in the USA before joining the Championship side.

Sunderland secure McInnes

Libbi McInnes has signed a new one-year deal with Sunderland with the option of a further year.

The 18-year-old midfielder made nice appearances in the Championship last season with four of those from the start. McInnes had come through Sunderland's Regional Talent Centre.

Thomas needs knee surgery

Birmingham City have announced that Martha Thomas has had surgery on a knee injury and will spend a period on the sidelines as she recovers.

The defender joined Birmingham in the summer from Manchester United and had featured in their first two games in the Championship.

Blackburn Rovers re-sign players

Blackburn Rovers have re-signed Chloe Dixon and signed Nicola Worthington.

Attacker Dixon played for Rovers last season making 19 appearances and scored one goal.

She had previously played for Sheffield and Sheffield United at Championship level. Worthington has joined from National League side Burnley.

The midfielder returns to the club where she spent her youth with.

Two more at Coventry

Two more players have joined Coventry United.

Ellie Butler has joined from Wolverhampton Wanderers.

At Wolves she won the National League Northern Premier Division title last season before losing the play-off final to Southampton.

Mary McAteer has joined on dual-registration from Aston Villa.

McAteer has made one appearance for Villa's senior side but was a regular in the WSL Academy League last season.

Charlton Athletic v Birmingham City



Charlton Athletic beat Birmingham City 3-0 at The Valley on Sunday. The goals came from Ella Rutherford, Angela Addison and a Lucy Thomas own goal.

Charlton made two changes from their last match three weeks ago when they lost to London City Lionesses with Elisha N'Dow and Rutherford coming in for Heidi Logan and Mia Ross. Birmingham also made two changes from the side that won their last match against Sunderland with Martha Harris and Tara Bourne dropping out and replacing them were Mollie Green and debutant Charlie Estcourt

Before the match started, there was a minute's silence and the National Anthem was played in tribute to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Birmingham had the first opportunity when Harriet Scott's low shot was saved by Sian Rogers.

Charlton took the lead in the 4th minute when Emma Follis played the ball back to Rutherford who finished first time from the edge of the area into the corner of the net.

Both sides had chances with Follis, Addison, and Melissa Johnson having efforts for Charlton, and Jade Pennock, Jamie Finn, Green, Jade Pennock and Charlie Devlin having opportunities for Birmingham.

There was a long injury delay whilst Charlton's Hannah Godfrey received treatment and was stretchered off. Hopefully Hannah will make a quick and full recovery.

Charlton extended their lead in the 40th minute when Addison scored her first goal for the club

when she finished from close range after a corner had found its way to her.

Both sides had further chances before half time with Pennock and Louise Quinn having efforts for the away side and Rutherford for The Addicks. Charlton went close to scoring a third when Ross, who had come on as a substitute, saw her header hit the crossbar.

Birmingham's Green saw a free kick deflected wide four minutes into the second half.

Charlton made it 3-0 in the 50th minute when Rutherford saw her shot from 25-yards out hit the post and go in off Birmingham's goalkeeper Thomas.

Birmingham were still having chances despite being three goals behind with Devlin and Siobhan Wilson both having efforts off target. At the other end, Johnson saw her shot saved.

In the final 10 minutes, Johnson, Emily Simpkins, Tegan McGowan, Logan and Addison all had chances for the hosts, and Pennock, Quinn and Estcourt all saw efforts blocked for Birmingham.

Charlton Athletic (4-1-4-1)

Rogers, Roe, Godfrey (Ross 36'), N'Dow, O'Rourke, Skeels, Follis (Logan 17'), Rutherford, Simpkins (c) (Ayisi 85'), Addison, Johnson (McGowan 85')

Birmingham City (3-4-1-2)

Thomas, Green (Lawley 74'), Quinn, Scott, Finn, Murray, Estcourt, Wilson (Worsey 90'+4'), Devlin (Cole 74'), Pennock, Smith (Ryan-Doyle 65')

Referee – Aimee Keir

Attendance—446



 **BARCLAYS**
WOMEN'S
CHAMPIONSHIP

	Club	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
1	Bristol City	4	3	1	0	5	1	4	10
2	Charlton	4	3	0	1	11	6	5	9
3	Crystal Palace	4	3	0	1	8	3	5	9
4	Sheffield	4	2	1	1	12	3	9	7
5	London City	4	2	1	1	7	4	3	7
6	Birmingham	4	2	1	1	7	5	2	7
7	Southampton	4	1	2	1	5	6	-1	5
8	Lewes	4	0	4	0	4	4	0	4
9	Durham	4	1	1	2	4	7	-3	4
10	Blackburn	4	1	0	3	3	8	-5	3
11	Sunderland	4	0	1	3	3	9	-6	1
12	Coventry	4	0	0	4	2	15	-13	0

Table correct as of October 3, 2022



THE FA NATIONAL LEAGUE

West Brom to change short colour



By Julian Barker

West Bromwich Albion Women will wear navy shorts with their home kit for the remainder of the current season and beyond.

The decision to don navy rather than white shorts was taken following full consultation with the Albion Women playing squad.

Wearing white clothing while on a period is an issue that has been highlighted by women across all sports, and Albion will ensure this is fully considered when designing all future home kits.

Albion Women captain, Hannah George, said: "It's great that the club are supporting our change to navy shorts.

"Representing the club professionally and looking smart in the kit is really important to us.

"This change will help us to focus on our performance without added concerns or

anxiety."

Head Coach, Jenny Sugarman, added: "It's our job as staff to find every percentage point we can to support our players to perform at their best.

"I'm proud the club have supported the decision to switch to navy shorts for our female players.

"It's another sign of the continued integration of the women's team across the club and recognition of a progressive and inclusive culture."

@SarahStanto wrote on Twitter: "Brilliant from West Brom Simple but very effective gesture for the Women's team!"

@PatrickOKanePR added: "In years gone by, this would have happened without discussion.

"It's great to see women's issues in sport being addressed in the mainstream. Periods are no longer the taboo subject they have been in the past."

Simon Says

This month Simon O'Neill speaks with Kathryn Heath of Southampton Women FC.

How old were you when first interested in football?

I started playing football when I was about 10 but would always watch match of the day with my dad before I started playing.

Did you play football at a young age and if so, what it like? Did any boys or family say you can't play?

There was very few girls teams formed 21 years ago in south wales, we would have to play against boys teams on Sundays which you would have the odd comments of only a bunch of girls we can beat them. My family was always supportive of me and my parents would give up so much time to take me training and to games. I always remember a boy making a comment about you will never score past me, I was about 30 yards out and curled the ball top right corner, soon shut him up!

How far do you think you can go as a football player?

At 31 I've reached as high as I can go.

You currently play both football and futsal for Southampton? How do you combine the two?

It's a busy week! I train futsal Monday and Wednesday and football Tuesday and Thursday with games being Saturday and Sunday. I'm lucky I work shifts so some weeks I can't train certain days so can give my body a break. Some weeks I don't have a game for either futsal or football which helps being able to play both.

When you train is there a difference in the coaching between futsal and football?

Tactically they are very different sports. Futsal is quicker where overloads are important to train. There is a difference but ultimately they both compliment eachother. Futsal has helped me technically improve and look to play quicker whereas football has complimented futsal with attention in games and fitness.

As a player how do you think women's football is seen in general?

A lot has changed since I started playing but I think there is still a way to go to being on level terms with the men's game. But we're getting there and I feel it's in a great place.

Following the success of the England Lionesses, have you seen a big change in the way women's football is viewed?

Massively, the attendance for WSL games has improved and being broadcast on Sky or the BBC which is great to get girls involved with the sport.

The FA Women's National League new season began recently have you seen any upturn in the interest from business in getting involved in providing sponsorships or partnership? - don't really want to answer this one as we are reserves league.

Can you see yourself moving into a coaching role or a behind the scenes role in the future?

I hope so, I've just finished a part time degree with the open university so going to have a break before hopefully doing a masters in sport psychology. There are so many amazing volunteers who help grow the game which hopefully I can help one day be apart of.



League Cup regionalised



This season's League Cup is again being regionalised (north and south) to help reduce travelling involved, but inevitably there were some away teams who had some lengthy trips. Newcastle United were the highest scorers in the determining round, defeating Lincoln City 9-1 at the LNER Stadium, the tie being brought forward to Saturday and played at the men's stadium as part of a double with an Under-18 game because Lincoln did not have a fixture due to international call ups. Both Georgia Gibson and Lauren Robson bagged hat tricks for Newcastle.

Another very noteworthy away win came in an all Northern Premier Division tie at West Bromwich Albion where Paige Cole scored twice in extra time to complete a hat trick and help tier three newcomers Liverpool Feds to a 5-1 victory.

Being drawn at home was far from a guaranteed advantage as away teams prevailed in 21 of the 35 ties completed (Chesham United v Wyomdham Town was postponed). Both Hashtag United and Ipswich Town recorded 7-0 victories in the highest scoring of the southerly ties.

With holders Southampton FC Women now in the Barclays Women's Championship and most of the previous winners also now in the top two tiers, there is likely to be a new name on the trophy next spring. Both last season's Plate finalists, holders Nottingham Forest and runners up AFC Wimbledon, won their ties which means WBA are the only previous Plate winners in this season's Plate.

Butler steps down at Donny Belles

Andy Butler stepping down as manager of Doncaster Rovers Belles highlights the reality of much of women's football and that is that the vast majority is a part time/volunteer basis.

The opportunity for a return to a full time role in the men's game was too good to refuse.

Butler took charge with Belles at their lowest point back in January 2020, the disarray at the club reflected in a 12-0 County Cup defeat to Huddersfield in his first game.

He departed with the club in a much healthier state following a 9-0 away victory over Long Eaton United and looking to improve on last season's runners up position in FAWNL Division One Midlands.

Khan makes debut for Pakistan

Nippy Doncaster Rovers Belles forward Nadia Khan marked her debut for Pakistan with four goals in a 7-0 victory over The Maldives in September. The Pakistan Football Federation has relaxed its qualification criteria to include dual-national or Pakistani origin players based in other countries to be selected through parentage.

Along with fellow South Asian players Kira Rai (Derby County) and Mariam Mahmoud (West Bromwich Albion), Leeds born Khan can become a role model to inspire ethnic girls/women to get involved in football. With several articles on the "whiteness" of the England national team during the Euros, it will be interesting to follow the progress of BAME players.

Play safe weekend to focus attention on importance of safeguarding



English football will unite last weekend [1st/2nd October 2022] to promote Play Safe – a countrywide campaign to focus attention on the vital importance of safeguarding in our national game.

Led by The FA, the Play Safe campaign is endorsed by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children [NSPCC] and will be supported this weekend across every level of English football, including the Premier League, EFL, Barclays Women's Super League and Barclays Women's Championship,

and across the grassroots game.

The focus of this year's Play Safe campaign is on the key role of parents and carers in safeguarding and to raise awareness of the vital role that safeguarding plays in football.

Parents and carers are also being encouraged to take the new and free online safeguarding course specifically developed for them, which can be accessed here.

The FA's Survivor Support and Safeguarding Advisory Group [FASSSAG] has also added its support to the Play

Safe campaign and are encouraging parents and carers to take the new online course, adding:

“We have inputted into the course and helped frame its key messages from our collective experiences.

“It's vitally important to us that every parent and carer understands the role they need to play in football.

“Taking this course can make a real difference – and we are asking every parent and carer to commit to help ensure football is ever-safer.”

The FA's CEO Mark Bullingham, himself a parent and youth football coach, has welcomed the support of the FASSSAG, saying: "The FASSSAG has played an important role in helping us create our new safeguarding strategy and we greatly appreciate their input into the new online course.

"I have taken the new course and encourage all parents and carers across football to take it too.

"Ultimately, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

"We all need to ensure that everyone involved in football – particularly children and young people – has a consistently safe and positive experience of our great game.

"Our Play Safe campaign reminds everyone of that responsibility and keeps safeguarding front of mind, which is exactly where it should be."

Michelle North, Service Head of the NSPCC's Child Protection in Sport Unit [CPSU], said: "Children and young people have a right to enjoy all sports including football with the confidence they will be safe.

"Everyone involved in sport has a role to play in preventing abuse, and so we're pleased

"The FA is putting a spotlight on safeguarding in football through the Play

Safe weekend, which runs ahead of our own Keeping Your Child Safe in Sport Week 3-9 October.

"We know from our experience that parents and carers can play a crucial role – and we'd encourage anyone whose children play football to check out The FA's new free online course.

"If anyone who has concerns about the safety of a child, they can call the NSPCC FA-designated helpline on 0808 800 5000."

To help all parts of football support Play Safe, various digital and print resources are being distributed as well as links to two short films, one featuring the views of FASSSAG members.

The FA's Head of Safeguarding Sue Ravenlaw added: "Play Safe demonstrates that across the game we are all united and committed to keep children and young people safe in football.

"As adults, it's essential we all work together – including with parents and carers – to create positive football settings where children thrive and feel confident to speak up if they are not feeling ok.

"Backing the Play Safe campaign gives clubs and leagues a specific moment early in the season to talk with parents, carers, players, coaches, managers, first aiders and spectators to

reinforce their safeguarding practices and expectations of everyone involved.

"Behind everything is one core message: whatever your role in football – whether an active participant or an administrator – safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

"Play Safe naturally aligns with and shows our support for the NSPCC's Keeping Your Child Safe in Sport Week campaign."



Natalie Mincher/SPP

National League: How is it going so far?



By Julian Barker

With most clubs having played five league games, just under a quarter of their 22 scheduled fixtures, how are things shaping up?

Northern Premier Division

Wolverhampton Wanderers have made a strong start as they bid to finish champions again (and this time win the decider against the Southern champions to reach tier two).

Main rivals for the title are Burnley and Nottingham Forest.

At the opposite end of the table, promoted Boldmere St Michaels (four games)

and Loughborough United (five games) had yet to register a single point and are five (realistically six because of goal difference) points adrift of safety.

Southern Premier Division

Watford are strongly placed in their bid for an instant return to tier two with two other former second tier outfits, London Bees and Oxford United, also in the running in a top four completed by Portsmouth.

Just two points separate the bottom five teams.

Division One Midlands

Newcomers Stourbridge top the table, having reeled off four successive wins following defeat on their tier four debut.

Just three points separate the top six.

Northampton Town, the other newcomer, have gained just a single point from their first five games, but are only two points adrift of safety.

Second bottom Long Eaton United, who finished fourth last term, have already suffered two 9-0 defeats.

Division One North

Barnsley have put last season's battle to avoid relegation firmly behind

them to top the table, three points ahead of Newcastle United who are a point clear of the next three teams.

At the other end of the table, newcomers Merseyrail, having lost their first four games, broke their duck with a draw after trailing and having a player sent off at home to previously 100% Barnsley and are just one win away from safety.

Division One South East

Hashtag United and Norwich City, both on 13 points from five games, are separated by goal difference, while London Seaward are just three points behind.

Hounslow, yet to complete a league game, have Wymondham Town (no points out of 12) below them with Actonians on a single point.

Division One South West

Cardiff City and Selsey have maximum points from three games and are a point behind and with two games in hand on the top pair of AFC Bournemouth and Exeter City.

Both Larkhall Athletic and AFC St Austell are without a point from five games.

Maidenhead United, having played just once, are also point-less.

Keynsham Town, with some heavy defeats in their four games to date will be looking anxiously over their shoulders.

Brighouse launch GoFundMe page

Having the backing of a men's professional club is becoming ever more important in the current climate.

Brighouse Town have launched a gofundme campaign to assist with their travel costs with every donation of £5 or more going into a prize draw to win FIFA World Cup hamper (worth over £300) kindly donated by Curt Cochrane.

While Brighouse are not unfavourably located (their maximum return journey is approx 250 miles), spare a thought for AFC St Austell whose nearest away game is Exeter City (150 mile round trip) with the visit to Selsey involving an additional 300 miles travel.

Plymouth are in a similar boat to their Cornish neighbours. Plymouth's shortest trip is 170 miles return to Bridgwater and that pales compared to the additional 500 miles

required for their round trip to Ipswich Town.

Noakes leaves Boldmere St. Michaels

Boldmere St. Michaels announced that it was a "bittersweet day" after the historic 2-0 victory against Loughborough Lightning.

In a statement, the club said: "The club can confirm that we have reluctantly accepted Simon Noakes' resignation.

"Simon joined last August and delivered on his promise of getting us into Tier 3 while also winning Manager of the Year.

"Simon leaves us in our highest ever league position, with a talented squad who have learned and improved with every game.

"The club would like to thank him for all his hard work, on and off the pitch and we wish him every success in the future.

"Physio Alex Petinatos also leaves the club after four seasons and we thank him for his valuable contribution and wish him the best.

"Both roles will be advertised shortly."



FANWNL

2022/23 Tables

Northern Premier Division

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Burnley	6	5	1	0	7	16
2 Wolverhampton Wanderers	6	4	1	1	14	13
3 Huddersfield Town	6	3	2	1	5	11
4 Stoke City	6	3	1	2	-1	10
5 Nottingham Forest	4	3	0	1	8	9
6 West Bromwich Albion	6	2	2	2	-4	8
7 Derby County	5	2	1	2	7	7
8 Brighouse Town	6	1	3	2	0	6
9 AFC Fylde	6	1	3	2	-2	6
10 Liverpool Feds	6	1	2	3	-3	5
11 Boldmere St. Michaels	5	1	0	4	-11	3
12 Loughborough Lightning	6	0	0	6	-20	0

Southern Premier Division

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Oxford United	6	4	2	0	12	14
2 Portsmouth	6	4	1	1	12	13
3 Watford	5	3	1	1	7	10
4 London Bees	6	3	1	2	-2	10
5 Ipswich Town	5	3	0	2	1	9
6 Cheltenham Town	6	3	0	3	-7	9
7 Milton Keynes Dons	5	2	1	2	2	7
8 Plymouth Argyle	6	2	0	4	-5	6
9 Bridgwater United	6	1	2	3	-2	5
10 Gillingham	4	1	1	2	-1	4
11 Billericay Town	6	1	1	4	-7	4
12 Crawley Wasps	5	0	2	3	-10	2

Tables correct as of October 3, 2022



TheFA Women's
National League

FANWNL

2022/23 Tables

Division One North

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Barnsley	6	4	1	1	8	13
2 Newcastle United	6	4	1	1	6	13
3 Leeds United	6	4	0	2	4	12
4 Durham Cestria	6	3	2	1	8	11
5 York City	6	3	1	2	4	10
6 Norton & Stockton Ancients	6	2	3	1	2	9
7 Middlesborough	6	3	0	3	-2	9
8 Hull City	6	2	1	3	-1	7
9 Stockport County	6	2	1	3	-4	7
10 Chorley	6	1	2	3	-6	5
11 Bradford City	6	1	0	5	-7	3
12 Merseyrail	6	0	2	4	-12	2

Division One Midlands

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Stourbridge	6	5	0	1	17	15
2 Solihull Moors	6	4	1	1	13	13
3 Leafield Athletic	6	3	2	1	6	11
4 Peterborough United	6	3	1	2	4	10
5 Sporting Khalsa	6	3	1	1	3	10
6 Doncaster Rovers Belles	6	3	0	2	6	9
7 Sheffield	6	3	0	3	0	9
8 Leek Town	6	2	2	2	-1	8
9 Northampton Town	6	1	1	4	0	4
10 Lincoln City	6	1	1	4	-7	4
11 Wem Town	6	1	1	4	-9	4
12 Long Eaton United	6	1	0	5	-32	3

Tables correct as of October 3, 2022



TheFA Women's
National League

FANWNL

2022/23 Tables

Division One South East

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Hashtag United	6	5	1	0	21	16
2 Norwich City	6	5	1	0	20	16
3 London Seaward	6	4	1	1	3	13
4 Cambridge United	6	2	2	2	1	8
5 AFC Wimbledon	4	2	1	1	4	7
6 Queens Park Rangers	6	1	2	3	-4	5
7 Actonians	5	1	1	3	-2	4
8 Ashford Town	4	1	1	2	-4	4
9 Chesham United	3	1	0	2	-4	3
10 Cambridge City	5	1	0	4	-6	3
11 Hounslow	1	0	0	1	-7	0
12 Wyomondham Town	4	0	0	4	-22	0

Division One South West

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Cardiff City	5	5	0	0	31	15
2 Exeter City	6	4	1	1	9	13
3 Selsey	4	4	0	0	12	12
4 AFC Bournemouth	6	3	1	2	12	10
5 Portishead	6	3	0	3	-3	9
6 Moneyfields	4	2	2	0	6	8
7 Southampton Women	4	2	0	2	0	6
8 Swindon Town	3	2	0	1	0	6
9 Keynsham Town	6	2	0	4	-19	6
10 Maidenhead United	2	0	0	2	-9	0
11 Larkhill Athletic	6	0	0	6	-13	0
12 AFC St Austell	6	0	0	6	-26	0

Tables correct as of October 3, 2022



TheFA Women's
National League



GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL

Lionesses inspire young footballers as Premier League commits £5.25m to increase girls' participation and pathways



Lionesses record goal-scorer Ellen White, the spearhead of the side that won the UEFA Women's EURO 2022, and former England defender Anita Asante, who won 71 caps during a 14-year international career have met with young footballers at Brentford FC's Gunnersbury Park Sports Hub.

The site is one of 70 FA Girls' Emerging Talent Centres, supported by the Premier League, with the aim of increasing accessibility to the player pathway for thousands of girls.

Funding of £5.25 million from the Premier League across the next three years will see the number of female players aged 8-16 engaged in FA programmes across the country more than double from 1,722 to over 4,200 by the end of the 2023/24 season.

With more centres around the country every girl will be close to a centre and will be able to continue participating at their grassroots club, enabling them to play with their friends whilst also benefitting from this experience.

This is part of the Premier League's £21m investment in women's and girl's football over three years. Within this is £10.5m for the grassroots game and £3m for a new strategy for the FA Women's National League.

The Premier League Trophy and Women's EURO Trophy came together for the first time to mark the partnership and a tournament featuring twelve Under 11s girls teams from the Premier League Primary Stars programme was run by Brentford FC on the day. [22 September 2022]



The Lioness legends took part in a Q&A with the participants, sharing their advice on working hard to become the best version of yourself and emphasising the focus on enjoying playing football at an early age.

Recently retired Lioness hero Ellen White said: “We really hope the legacy of us winning the Euros is to empower people to live out their dreams and to want to play football and be active.

“Seeing the amount of girls playing and the smiles on their faces is just incredible.

“The investment from the Premier League is significant and an amazing opportunity which provides access for more young girls to play, hopefully it means the women’s game will continue to grow and grow.

“This is all about the next generation of girls being given the accessibility and opportunity to play football in safe and fun environments”.

The first 60 licenses for Emerging Talent Centres, which will be operated for at least 30 weeks per season, have now been confirmed and the venues can be found on the FA website here.

Licences were allocated on a regional basis with a mix of professional

football clubs, club foundations and County FAs selected to deliver coaching programmes at the Centres to develop the talents of young players.

Kay Cossington, the FA’s Head of Women’s Technical added: “The women’s game has so much potential for growth and working with the Premier League and their experience of developing talent and delivering community programmes is hugely exciting.”

“Seeing the two trophies together actually gave me spine tingles because this is such a powerful partnership and supports our endeavour to offer football to every young girl in every community.

“Through the FA Emerging Talent Centres, we will engage 2,500 more girls in the next three years.”

Funding for the Emerging Talent Centres is on top of investment in the Premier League Primary Stars programme which sees the League fund 105 professional football clubs across the pyramid to deliver free school sports sessions to 5–11-year-olds.

Nick Perchard, Head of Communities, Premier League said “The Premier League and our clubs are committed to developing football for everyone and it is important that opportunities for girls will increase, so we are delighted to support the FA’s Emerging Talent Centres.

“These ETCs across the nation will increase opportunities for talented girls regardless of their background and gives more girls than ever the chance to take their first steps on the pathway towards playing professional football and following in the footsteps of the inspirational Lionesses.”



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UEFA
WOMEN'S
EURO
ENGLAND 2022

Audrey Cooper: 'It's time for opportunities to exist'



As the women's game continues to grow and thrive, the FA Education is determined to provide a platform for aspiring women's coaches to be able to build.

Whether a mum who is running a team for her daughter, or a young girl with the dream of being the next Sarina Weigman, the FA Education platform is providing learning modules and courses to help women get the best out of their coaching journey.

Helen Rowe-Willcocks sat down with Audrey Cooper, Head of Women's Coach Development to find out more about what the FA Education hopes to achieve.

Can you tell our readers a little bit about yourself?

I have been with the Football Association for the last five and a half years. I am come from two different backgrounds – I worked in business for over 20 years whilst being an athlete and coach and then I moved into a

full-time position in coaching and coach development. I previously worked at VolleyballEngland as the England coach (I am a former beach volleyball athlete) and then I moved to UK Sport. My last 10 years have been in coach development.

Do you think there are differences in coaching women versus men?

Yes I do. In football the pitches are the same size, the goals are the same size, and the game is essentially the same but how do you get the best out of a woman is different from how you would get the best out of a man or a boy.

Some of the research we did at the start of 2019 started to unpick that so we could evidence what girls really value in terms of getting the best out of them. Boys will battle to bond, they like being in a competitive situation, girls in general will want to bond first and then go

into battle together. The approach as a coach has to be different. The game is the game but if you think about it through social ends, the physicality, it's all different. Our bodies are different, we are built differently. There is a whole different way of understanding that and then you go and look into the technical side of what girls can and cannot do whether that is built on their physical ability, their height, their size but the game is the same.

The tactical side is more similar but you will make it work best getting to know the girls or women and when you get it to work it is phenomenal as Sarina Weigman demonstrated this summer. She got the best out of them by valuing them as people not just as footballers.

At lot has been mentioned recently during not just the European Championships but also the Commonwealth Games about women's cycles and how that affects performance in sport, is a

lot more research being done around periods and how that can be brought into coaching?

It is, yes. It wasn't until really recently that people were willing to talk about it. I think there were some people in UK Sport who did some initial research and then more recently there has been more research within football clubs that have gone into a different level of researching and understanding it so there is that side but then it's a case of how do you apply it and how does that affect coaching on a daily basis.

What does it mean to players in how they are feeling psychologically not just physically and also things like their energy levels. There is still a lot to learn about it and we are in the middle of developing a module about how do you develop a female. We have done some work with colleagues around the menstrual cycle and how to get the best out of females.

It is part of nature. We want to role it out across the game to coaches from grassroots coaches to talent pathway coaches to senior game coaches. We have never had anything like that before so it's a really good example of how it differs with men and women's football. We want to bring out the best in the coaches and they can bring out the best in the players.

Even if you don't know a lot about the women's game, most people now know Emma Hayes. She is – like many mums out there – working etc but she has remained amendment that she sees going into the men's lower leagues as a step down for her. Do you see women coaches going into the men's game?

Wouldn't it be great if they did but we also want as many of the amazing women that are involved in the game, coaching in women's football. That's why we want to develop them. There shouldn't be any reason why women couldn't be coaching across the male game. We still reference people like Hannah Dingley and Forest Green – she is still one of the exceptions. There really is no reason why there shouldn't be more women coaching across the men's game.

In the same vein, they need to understand how to get the best out of boys and men like they do out of girls and women so as long as you have that, you can work across both. For some people it is a preference – they find their style is more suited to one or the other. I absolutely hope that we do start to see more women coaches everywhere.

Do you think coaching styles differ between women and men coaches?

For those that have had the experience, you start to see the little nuances and differences. If you can recognise that you can start to be effective across either of the genders. I still coach – I coach a men's team and I coach a women's team. They often train in the same hall at the same time and I often go from one session to the next and I do adjust how I am going to work with them subtly. You have to recognise how to get the best out of that person in front of you. If you don't recognise that, you will fall short and you will not get the best out of the individual.

A lot of coaches who go into the grassroots girls and women's sides go into it because their daughter or someone they know wants to play and there isn't a team, or their aren't enough volunteers, do you think

with the FA Education modules, there are steps for people who start their to make their way up the pyramid?

100%. People never think they could be a football coach but then realise they have the skills to work with young children or young adults. They are transferable. Some will only want to work in that space and will come to our FA Education modules to get the best out of themselves at that level but some will aspire to move up in the pathway. Maybe they dream of being a WSL academy coach because they are great with teenagers and they want to be the best they can be.

It wasn't a long time ago that there was not these opportunities to coach in these spaces and there certainly wasn't these opportunities to have a job or a career in these areas. It's only now that there are roles emerging and females are going into coaching thinking they could have a job or a career and that has been evident with our pathway. You can go in as a volunteer coach, a part-time coach or you can go in and you can build to be a profession. Wherever you want to sit on that pathway, there is an opportunity for you to coach.

We definitely need to fill the pipeline so that sitting just below the professional game is a plethora of female coaches and exceptional role models for them to look up to. There were not many women in these roles five years ago – Emma Hayes and Hope Powell were the most recognisable but now look how many there are.

To find out more about coaching courses and Playmakers, go to:
<https://thebootroom.thefa.com/>

Xero to become the official partner of the England and grassroots football



The Football Association and Xero, the global small business platform, have announced two commercial partnerships to champion women in football, highlighting the importance of financial viability in creating further opportunities on and off the pitch.

Xero will become the official partner of both the England Women's senior team and England Football. Both partnerships go beyond brand placement, as Xero will work with the FA's Grassroots Team, County Football Associations and the FA Club Consultants to provide access to a comprehensive range of educational resources for clubs' financial management.

Xero will also provide a platform for grassroots clubs to find and connect with local accountants and bookkeepers.

The partnership has been designed to ensure support

for girls and women at both the grassroots and elite, with both organisations championing the importance of both levels and recognising one cannot thrive without the other.

Xero has also partnered with Lewes FC in East Sussex to help the pioneering club on its mission to drive greater equality in the women's game.

John Coldicutt, marketing director for Xero, UK & EMEA, said: "We take great pride in partnering with the England senior women's team.

"The future is bright for the women's game but the financial viability of clubs at every level is vital to getting more women into football.

"The success of the women's game at any level begins with local clubs and their communities. These clubs are not only small businesses in themselves, but are powered by them too.

"We hope that we can reduce that financial management burden and help them focus on what really matters – getting more women and girls on the pitch."

Baroness Sue Campbell, the FA's director of women's football, said: "Grassroots clubs are the heartbeat of their communities and it's important we promote them as a source of joy, camaraderie, education and health.

"After a difficult few years the financial administration support that Xero can provide will help clubs attract and retain more people to play football.



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JANUARY 2023

THE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL
MAGAZINE

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FEBRUARY 2023

THE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL
MAGAZINE

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CUP COMPETITIONS

The 2022/23 Vitality FA Cup: Q1 & Q2

By Paul Donegan

First Round Qualifying

The first round qualifying took place on the 18th September, delayed a week as a mark of respect after the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

The highest scorers were Helston Athletic who won 16-2 over Crediton United. Sedgley & Gornal (14-0) and Pen Mills (10-0) also scored double figures in their victories.

12 ties were decided on penalties with Sir Tom Finney, Workington Reds, Mossley, Allextion & New Parks, Droitwich Spa, Headstone Manor, Hackney, Steyning Town, Bishops Cleeve, Weston Super Mare, Pucklechurch Sports and Frampton Rangers winning the shoot-outs.

Amongst those to be making their first appearance in the FA Cup and also claiming their first win were City of Stoke who won 1-0 away to Kingfisher. Headstone Manor also won their first ever FA cup match.

The winning clubs received £1,800 in prize money whilst the losers got £450.

Sunday, September 4

AFC Portchester 3 v 0 QK Southampton

Sunday, September 11

Pilkington 1-1 **Sir Tom Finney** (STF won on pens)

Penrith 6-0 Cramlington United

Boro Rangers 2-4 **Cramlington Town**

Guisborough Town 1-5 **West Allotment**

Cullercoats 0-8 **Birtley Town**

Chester le Street United 0-1 **Thornaby**

Boldeon 1-3 **Hartlepool Pools Youth**

Workington Reds 1-1 Washington (Reds win pens)

Darlington 6-1 Ripon City

Hartlepool United 0-3 **CLS Amazons**

Stanwix 2-4 **Gateshead Leam Rangers**

Gateshead Rutherford
3-0 Gateshead

Altofts 6-0 Sheffield United Community Foundation

Morley Town 7-0 Beverley Town (2pm)

Harworth Colliery 0-7 **York Railway Institute**

St Joesph's Rockware of Worksop 2-7 **Farsley Celtic Juniors**

Market Rasen Town WO Ruston Sports (Home win walkover)

Thackley WO **Grimsby Town** (Away win walkover)

Poppleton 1-4 **Pocklington Town**

Grimsby Borough 1-3 **Brighouse Sports**

Sheffield Wednesday 3-2 **Cleethorpes Town**

Preston North End 3-0 Atherton LR

Macclesfield Town 0-5

Warrington Wolves
Foundation

Bury Foundation 2-3 **Marine**

Penwortham Town 3-5 **Altrincham**

West Kirby WO **Bolton Wanderers** (Away win walkover)

Bury AFC 7-0 BRNESC

Hindley Jnrs 1-1 **Mossley** (Mossley win pens)

Macclesfield WO **Wythenshawe** Ams (subject to appeal)

Clitheroe Wolves 1-0 Nantwich Town

Willaston WO Burnley Belvedere (Home win WO)

Dunton & Broughton United 0-5 **Skegness Town**

Yaxley Phoenix 2-4 **Leicester City**

Allextion & New Parks 3-3 Long Buckby (Allextion win pens)

Bugbrooke St Michaels 3 -2 Rugby Borough	Southend United Community Sports Club 0-1	Shanklin 1-3 AFC Stoneham
Stamford 1-6 Asfordby	Hertford Town	Rushmoor
Kingfisher 0-1 City of Stoke	Frontiers 1-0 AFC Dunstable	Community WO New Milton Town (Home win walkover)
Bromsgrove Sporting 0-1 Coventry City	Sevenoaks Town 0-6 Barking	Gloucester City 2-2 Bishops Cleeve (BC win pens)
Coventry Sphinx 4-3 Walsall Wood	Maidstone United 1-5 Herne Bay	Pen Mills 10-0 Longwell Green
AFC Telford United 6-0 Wyrley	Comets 3-4 Islington Borough	Frome Town 2-2 Weston Super Mare (WSM win pens)
Droitwich Spa 0-0 Tamworth (DS won pens)	Regents Park Rangers 3-3 Hackney (Hackney won pens)	St Vallier 1-1 Pucklechurch Sports (PS win pens)
Norton Canes 0-14 Sedgley & Gornal	Hastings United WO Margate (Home win walkover)	Frampton Rangers 2-2 Oldland Abbotonians (FR win pens)
Westfields 0-7 Bewdley Town	Welling United 6-0 Glebe	Bideford 3-6 Activate
Leamington Lions 3-1 Doveridge	Buckingham United 1-6 Sport London e Benfica	Marine Academy Plymouth 6-1 Teignmouth
Newcastle Town 2-0 Port Vale	Mortimer 1-8 Watford Ladies Development	Helston Athletic 16-2 Crediton United
Brantham Athletic WO Mulbarton Wanderers (Away win wo)	Milton United 8-0 Slough Town	Sticker 9-0 Budleigh Salterton
Haverhill Rovers 3-4 Stanway Rovers	Abbey Rangers 2-2 Steyning Town (ST won on pens)	Brentford 5-4 Woodley United
East Bergholt United 0-1 Brett Vale	Richmond Park 8-0 Reigate	Dorking Wanderers 5-1 Richmond & Kew
Hitchin Belles 2-1 Bedmond	Guildford City 0-8 Leatherhead	Mancunian Unity 8-0 Athletico Middleton
Biggleswade United 1-1 Headstone Manor (HM win pens)	Montpelier Villa 2-0 Burgess Hill Town	

Second Round Qualifying

The second round qualifying took place on Sunday 2nd October. The winning clubs received £3,000 from the prize money pot whilst those who lost got £750. Here are the results.

Wythenshawe Amateurs 1-5 FC United of Manchester	(D won pens)	Birtley Town 0-2 Consett
Darlington 2-2 Blyth Town	West Allotment 0-7 South Shields	Gateshead Rutherford 2-0 Carlisle United

Wallsend 2-0 Bishop Auckland	United	Asfordby 13-0 Kirby Muxloe
Sunderland West End 2-4 Penrith	Accrington Stanley 3-0 Mossley	Mansfield Town 8-1 Bugbrooke St Michaels
Gateshead Leam Rangers 1-5 Redcar Town	Northwich Vixens 2-2 Darwen (Darwen won pens)	Newcastle Town 5-0 Droitwich Spa
CLS Amazons 5-0 Cramlington Town	Willaston 1-21 Curzon Ashton	Leamington Lions 0-1 Sutton Coldfield Town
Ponteland United 3-0 Workington Reds	Warrington Wolves Foundation 2-2	Burton Albion 6-0 Bewd- ley Town
Chester-Le-Street Town 9-0 Hartlepool Pools Youth	Altrincham (WWF won pens)	Worcester City 8-1 City of Stoke
Thornaby 1-9 Alnwick Town	Bolton Wanderers 4-1 Sir Tom Finney	Kidderminster Harriers 2-3 Coventry Sphinx
Brighouse Sports 2-0 Harrogate Town	Tranmere Rovers 6-1 Mancunian Unity	Crusaders 0-4 Shifnal Town
York Railway Institute 1-2 Oughtibridge War Memorial	Blackburn Community 3-1 Chester	Lye Town WO Bedworth United (Home win walkover)
Farsley Celtic Juniors 7-0 Bradford Park Avenue	Fleetwood Town Wrens 12-1 Clitheroe Wolves	Shrewsbury Town 8-1 Coventry City
Retford 0-4 Dronfield Town	Cheadle Town Stingers 4-1 Blackpool	Sedgley & Gornal United 4-2 Hereford Pegasus
Ossett United 4-1 Millmoor Juniors	Salford City Lionesses 2-3 Crewe Alexandra	Knowle 3-2 Coundon Court
Rotherham United 0-2 Altofts	FC St Helens 0-6 Preston North End	Lichfield City 5-1 AFC Telford United
HBW United 0-7 Wakefield	Sherwood 1-0 Rugby Town	Stanway Rovers 1-5 Mulbarton Wanderers
Sheffield Wednesday 0-6 Morley Town	Thrapston Town 2-5 Arnold Eagles	Fakenham Town 3-2 Beccles Town
Chesterfield 10-0 Pocklington Town	Lincoln United 4-3 Anstey Nomads	Lawford 1-4 Wroxham
Hull United 7-0 Grimsby Town	Desborough 0-5 Kettering Town	Bungay Town 0-10 AFC Sudbury
Market Easen Town WO Farsley Celtic (Home win walkover)	Notts County 1-1 Basford United (BU won pens)	Sprowston 2-2 Brett Vale (Sprowston won pens)
Ashton Town Lionesses 1-5 Mossley Hill	Skegness Town 5-0 Coal- ville Town Ravenettes	Histon 1-6 Needham Market
West Didsbury & Chorlton 15-0 Sandbach	Nottingham Trent University 4-0 Allextion & New Parks	St Ives Town 4-1 Newmar- ket Town
	Leicester City 8-0 Borrowash Victoria	Thetford Town 1 v 4 King's Lynn Town

Chelmsford City 2-2 Harpenden Town (HT win pens)	Caversham United 1-3 Eversley & California	Bristol & West 0-13 Bristol Rovers
Hitchin Town WO Hitchin Belles (Away win walkover)	Tilehurst Panthers 1-2 Long Crendon	Penn Mill 1-5 Pucklechurch Sports
Cheshunt 5-0 Bedford	Wycombe Wanderers 3-2 Sport London e Benfica	SGS Olveston United 2-4 Stockwood Wanderers
Wootton Blue Cross 3-5 Colney Heath	Abingdon United 5-0 Brentford	Forest Green Rovers 8-0 Weston Super Mare
Headstone Manor 8-0 Frontiers	Watford Ladies Development 0-1 Penn & Tylers Green	FC Chippenham WO Downend Flyers (Away win walkover)
Wodson Park 0-7 Luton Town	Milton United 1-3 Ascot United	Helston Athletic 0-1 Marine Academy Plymouth
Royston Town 9-1 Hertford Town	Richmond Park 2-0 Steyning Town	Feniton 1-9 Torquay United
Harlow Town WO Garston (Home win walkover)	Woking 6-0 Seaford Town	Bradninch 0-14 Bishops Lydeard
Bromley 0-9 Millwall Lionesses	AFC Acorns 1-0 Saltdean United	Sticker 2-1 Ilminster Town
Islington Borough 0-4 Dartford	Leatherhead 0-6 Woking	Bodmin 2-5 Saltash United
Hackney 3-0 Bexhill United	AFC Portchester 2-3 Badshot Lea	Seaton 1-5 Liskeard Athletic
Sittingbourne 1-3 Clapton Community	Widbrook Town 2-7 Poole Town	Marine 3-4 Bury AFC
Enfield Town WO Edgware & Kingsbury (Home win walkover)	Sherborne Town 1-1 Winchester City Flyers (WCF won pens)	Walsall 0-4 Solihull Sporting
Tunbridge Wells Foresters 1-7 Dulwich Hamlet	AFC Stoneham 3-2 Rushmoor Community	Activate 1-3 Barnstaple Town
Cray Valley PM 2-6 Herne Bay	Shaftesbury 1-3 Warminster Town	Redditch United 0-4 Redditch Borough
Ashford United 15-0 Borough Green	Fleet Town 0-4 Weymouth	Bowers & Pitsea 3-2 Stevenage
Aylesford 3-1 Welling United	Pagham 0-12 Bournemouth Sports	Ebbsfleet United 4-3 Barking
Hastings United 2-1 Haringey Borough	Middlezoy Rovers 0-6 Royal Wootton Bassett Town	Newhaven 0-5 Fulham
Abingdon Town 3-3 Oxford City (Abingdon Town won pens)	AEK Boco 3-0 Bishops Cleeve	United Services Portsmouth 0-2 Eastleigh In The Community
	Tuffley Rovers 0-2 Paulton Rovers	Ashmount Leigh 0-3 Sutton United

Third Round Qualifying

The third round qualifying matches are due to take place on Sunday 23rd October. The 48 sides in the FA Women's National League Division Ones enter at this stage.

Could this be the best Champions League yet?



By Rosie Hall

Even before the Lionesses achieved their historic Euros victory, the Guardian called this a “breakthrough year” for the women’s game. More tickets have been sold than ever before, record-breaking fees have been paid for players, and TV companies are making the game more accessible than it’s ever been.

All of this points to a huge season for the game. One that has every opportunity to take it to the next level again.

Off of the back of a fantastic summer for women’s football, alongside high profile players moving around to some of the most acclaimed European teams - could this be the biggest year yet for the Women’s Champions League?

Let’s take a look.

A record breaking season

Last year was a Champions League competition that looked a little different. The first to feature a 16-team group stage. The first with a major marketing and TV deal through DAZN. And one that shattered attendance records in Barcelona.

It was a game that captivated fans of women’s football all over the world. A significant moment that will go down in the history of the sport. It not only represented a turning point, but also shut down the internet trolls who love to ask “who cares about women’s football?”

While the Spanish side gave all 91,600 in attendance something to scream about as they stormed through to into the final, they were eventually

beaten by Lyon. A team who, by lifting the trophy, also broke another record; claiming the title for the eighth time.

Looking back on how far we’ve come

It’s safe to say that the competition has come a very long way since its inception as the “UEFA Women’s Cup” back in 2001/02. With 33 teams battling it out for the trophy, Frankfurt went onto win the first competition with a 2-0 triumph over Umeå. Just over 12,000 spectators were in attendance.

By 2004/05, the competition had grown. An extra 10 clubs had joined since the first, and 43 were now competing for glory. It wasn’t until 2006/07 however, that a non-Swedish or German side were able to

triumph. After dominating the first 5 competitions, both nations lost out to their claim on the trophy with English side Arsenal claiming the top prize.

There were just 3,400 people in attendance to see the Gunners win the tournament that year; something which feels almost unthinkable now given the rise of the game since.

The competition continued to go from strength to strength; with support in the stands growing and more women's teams from across Europe competing year-on-year.

It was the 2017/18 final which solidified Lyon's place as the ones to beat, as the French team made it 3 competition wins in a row. Breaking a record in doing so.

And while the pandemic may have placed things on hold momentarily - the competition has bounced straight back. With incredible games, plenty of goals and even bigger

crowds.

You can't deny the competition has been crucial in helping the game grow. This season will see yet more investment and media interest.

Steffi Jones, who scored the first ever goal in the competition said to UEFA: "The only thing you feel is pride and happiness for the teams. And I want to see even more of that. We've really had to work hard to get here, and it's a pleasure to see what we've accomplished. I'm happy that the teams can play in such a setting. I get goosebumps and just really want to see more of that!"

Is there still room for more growth?

With all of this growth and momentum building, it might be hard to see how it can keep going. Everything has a ceiling that can't be broken, doesn't it?

The popularity of the women's

game - along with its commercial success - is very much on an upwards trajectory. It's undeniable.

In fact, a recent report from UEFA estimated that by 2023, women's football could be worth half a BILLION pounds per year. It's facts like this which prove one thing: women playing football isn't going anywhere.

"Women's football is on an incredibly exciting trajectory," Nadine Kessler, UEFA's Chief of Women's Football recently said. "With growth being seen across nearly every metric and across all of our stakeholders across Europe."

Major investment, exciting fixtures, and Barcelona no doubt eager to break their own attendance record, surely means we are in for a massive competition this season.

If this summer has proved anything - it's that there truly is no limit to where this amazing sport can go.

Group stage draw in full

Group A: Chelsea, PSG, Real Madrid, Vllaznia

Group B: Wolfsburg, Slavia Prague, St Polten, Roma

Group C: Lyon, Arsenal, Juventus, Zurich

Group D: Barcelona, Bayern Munich, Rosengard, Benfica

The group stage games will be played between 19 October and 22 December.

This season's final will take place at PSV Stadion in Eindhoven, Netherlands, on either 3 or 4 June 2023.

Uefa confirms no concussion substitutions after Mead confusion

Uefa says concussion substitutes are not allowed in the women's Champions League after confusion following a head injury to Arsenal's Beth Mead in their game against Ajax.

Mead was forced off after a clash of heads with Ajax defender Lisa Doorn.

Arsenal boss Jonas Eidevall said he was told he could make a concussion substitution before being informed that it would not be allowed.

Uefa rules for the competition state teams can make a

maximum of five substitutions within three stoppages - and there are no concussion substitutions.

There are currently no Uefa competitions, including the men's and Women's Champions League, taking part in the ongoing trial of concussion substitutions by the International Football Association Board (Ifab).

The Premier League and the Women's Super League are participating in the Ifab trial which allows two permanent substitutions to be made in the

event of head injuries, even if all replacements have already been used.

England international Mead was taken off immediately after the collision as a precaution for concussion and Eidevall said post-match that he was preparing Lina Hurtig as a replacement before his side were forced to finish the game with 10 players in stoppage time.

"Don't worry Mead's all OK!" Arsenal tweeted on Thursday. "Thanks for your concern and love, Gooners."



Liam Asman/SPP

Chaos at Ajax

Arsenal's win over Ajax in the Women's Champions League was overshadowed by controversy.

The Gunners' boss described it as he had "never experienced anything like" it before.

The goalposts had to be

adjusted before kick-off as it became apparent they were 10cm smaller than required.

"It's been a very weird experience being here," said Eidevall.

"Playing against a big club like Ajax where we had to measure

the goals before the start of the game... I have never experienced anything like it to be honest.

"It's very weird but we can only control the things we can control."

Shocks as the Conti Cup comes back



James Whitehead/SPP

The Continental Tyres Cup is back and already there have been some shock results in the first round of the group stages.

Group Stage: Matchday 1 of 5

Group A

Aston Villa 1-1 Manchester United
(Villa win on pens)

Aston Villa have secured their first victory of the tournament after a dramatic penalty shootout with Manchester United.

Seven penalties were saved during the shootout.

Villa goalkeeper Anna Leat was the hero, keeping out the efforts of Hayley Ladd, Ella Toone, Hannah Blundell and Ona Batlle before Maz Pacheco slotted home the

winner at the Bescot Stadium.

The sides could not be separated over 90 minutes, with Nikita Parris's first goal since joining United in the summer cancelled out by Rachel Daly, who has now found the net four times in three games this season. A 1-1 draw meant both sides collected a point apiece in this Group A fixture, but there was an additional bonus point on offer for the shootout winners.

Durham 3-3 Sheffield United
(Durham win on pens)

A thrilling game saw Durham take home the extra point after a 5-3 win on penalties.

Durham were the side to settle quick and went ahead early on before doubling their lead on 20 minutes.

The second half produced some great entertainment from both teams from the very first whistle.

In the penalty shootout, Durham netted all five of their spot kicks to claim the bonus point. McAloon saved Sheffield United defender Charlotte Newsham's penalty, the only kick to be missed in the entire shootout.

Group B

Sunderland 0-1 Liverpool

Liverpool picked up the points on the road against Championship side Sunderland.

The only goal of the game came from a superb freekick by Megan Campbell in the first half.

Sunderland had a number of chances including from Jess

Brown but ultimately could not find the back of the net.

Blackburn Rovers 0-3 Leicester City

Rovers suffered a 3-0 defeat at home in their opening game to BWSL side Leicester.

A first-half strike from Mackenzie Smith gave the visitors the lead at the break and goals Connie Scofield and Aileen Whelan in the second-half rounded off the victory for the Foxes.

Group C

London City Lionesses 2-2 West Ham (West Ham win on pens)

West Ham picked up two points after a thrilling penalty shootout which saw a total of 26 penalties taken.

The Hammers were two goals behind in the game after London City scored in the first half through Lois Heuchan, and in the second from Sarah Ewens.

Viviane Asseyi scored her first goal in Claret & Blue, which seemed to reinvigorate her side – and Dagny Brynjarsdottir would head home an equaliser moments before the final whistle sounded.

In a quite incredible shootout, it would be Brynjarsdottir that would score the Hammers final penalty, with Lilly Agg blazing her follow-up over the bar.

Birmingham City 3-2 Brighton & Hove Albion

Barclays Championship side Birmingham City caused upset over Barclays Women's Super League side Brighton to take three points in their opening match.

The side lost all of their group stage games last season and showed they were not about to have the same happen again.

Libby Smith opened the scoring for the home side before Jade Pennock doubled the advantage eight minutes after half-time. Lee Geum-min pulled one back on the hour but Lucy Quinn was quick to restore the two-goal cushion and Danielle Carter's 89th-minute penalty was too little, too late.

Group D

Lewes 2-0 Charlton

The Addicks fall to defeat in their opening game as Charlton scored a goal in each half.

Three minutes before the interval Lewes took the lead, goalkeeper Poppy Soper who made her Charlton debut got down to her right and produced an impressive first save, but the ball rebounded out to Paula Howells.

In stoppage time The Rooks doubled their lead after the corner ball was headed in by Ellie Hack.

Bristol City 4-0 Crystal Palace

Bristol City hit four past Palace at the Robins High Performance Centre.

Abi Harrison made no mistake just 10 minutes in to open the scoring as she was put through on goal and the hosts doubled their lead through Ffion Morgan's close range effort.

After the break, Mustaki added a third and with only minutes to go substitute Emily Syme scored a spectacular goal to seal an impressive victory.

Group E

Reading 1-2 Tottenham

Despite a late comeback from Natasha Dowie, Tottenham held on to take home all three points.

Goals from Ashleigh Neville and Nikola Karczewska pulled off the away win as Reading's problems continue.

Coventry United 2-1 Southampton

Two quick-fire goals in the second half proved too much for Southampton.

Dominating possession in the first half, Saints were unable to make their chances count, with the home side only notching two shots on target in the opening 45.

However, despite their lack of real opportunity, Coventry United hit a slow-starting Saints side in the second half, with Meesha Dudley-Jones and Ebony Wiseman scoring in the 50th and 55th minute.



HOME NATIONS

England Seal Their World Cup Spot



Daniela Pochelli/SPP

By Frankie Scott

It was never in doubt, was it?

To fail to qualify for Australia next year, we would have had to have a disastrous final two games of the qualification fixtures.

As it was, the Lionesses booked their spot on the plane without so much as a hiccup.

England's penultimate game was against Austria, with whom the squad had beaten by a single goal in the opening game of the Euros. This time, England went one better by winning 2-0. The opening goal was a fantastic volley from Alessia Russo in the 7th minute, followed by another by Nikita Parris in the 69th minute as she put the ball to the left of the keeper.

With qualification ensured, England finished their qualification fixtures against Luxemburg with ten goals. Not only did England reach double figures – but we also finished the qualification games without conceding a single goal.

The goals in this game were scored by Georgia Stanway, Alessia Russo, Rachel Daly, Beth Mead, Beth England, Nikita Parris, Ella Toone, and Lauren Hemp. We also saw a debut for Lauren James, who looks like a fantastic prospect.

Preparation for the World Cup next summer starts now, and what better way to begin than a mouth-watering tie against USA at Wembley on 7th October, followed by a match against Czech Republic on 11th October.

We are one of the favourites, and the road to the finals starts now.

Remaining England games of 2022

England vs United States
Friday, October 7
Wembley, 8pm

England vs Czech Republic
Tuesday, October 11
AMEX Stadium, 8pm

England vs Japan
Friday, November 11
Pinatar Arena Football Centre, Spain, TBC

England vs Norway
Tuesday, November 15
Pinatar Arena Football Centre, Spain, TBC

Lionesses Sell Out Wembley



Daniela Pochelli/SPP

By Clare McEwen

Within 24 hours all 65,000 general release tickets had been sold for an England international at Wembley. Not for a final, not for a major championship, but for a friendly.

What team generates those kinds of sales? Yep, the new European Champions.

It would be wrong to give them sole credit though. Their opponents, the USA, are undoubtedly a big draw. Who wouldn't want to watch the European Champions face the World Champions?

It isn't just about the number of tickets sold and the timeframe, though. People spent hours in an online queue for tickets to a game that may not have gone ahead. We (I was in that virtual queue until 11.10pm) were prepared to wait and invest in the possibility of a game of football.

The fixture depended on England successfully qualifying for the 2023 World Cup beforehand. Probably a safe bet given their form, but the Lionesses still needed to finish the job. In the end, it was never in doubt!

It's safe to say there's an appetite for women's football in England. But is this a surge in demand or more about opportunity?

In 2014, a friendly fixture against Germany, saw the Lionesses play in front of a 45,619 Wembley crowd. A friendly against the same opponents in November 2019, brought in 77,768 fans.

October 2021 saw the Lionesses finally get their chance to contest a competitive match at Wembley. The World Cup qualifier against Northern Ireland drew a comparatively small crowd of 23,225. Why the difference?

I suspect there was less promotion for the game; people just didn't know about it. Unless you're signed up for England team emails, fixtures can pass you by. Even a year ago there wasn't the awareness about

the women's game that there is post-Euros; people didn't know to look for fixtures.

Whatever the reason, it certainly wasn't a lack of appetite, as the Euros would demonstrate. The competition in general attracted a record number of spectators across all games, with the final seeing an 87,192 Wembley crowd. And then there's TV viewing figures: 17.4 million people in the UK watched on BBC One with 5.9 million via the BBC Sport website or iPlayer.

In the context of the past decade, 65,000 tickets sold for England vs USA at Wembley looks like sustained interest in the game, rather than a new surge. What's different this time is that the tickets sold out so quickly. Not only is there a demand for women's football, but now fear of missing out (FOMO) too - nobody wants to miss the next piece of history.

These sales are about awareness and opportunity. People are looking out for games; and having them in big, accessible stadiums makes it easier for people to attend. Other contributing factors are family friendly atmospheres, more affordable ticket prices and the chance to see an England side who are champions of Europe.

Personally, I was hoping to see an Alessia Russo hat trick but she has now pulled out due to injury.

Goalkeepers: Mary Earps, Sandy MacIver, Ellie Roebuck

Defenders: Millie Bright, Lucy Bronze, Jess Carter, Rachel Daly, Alex Greenwood, Esme Morgan, Lucy Parker, Demi Stokes, Leah Williamson

Midfielders: Fran Kirby, Jessica Park, Georgia Stanway, Ella Toone, Keira Walsh, Katie Zelem

Forwards: Lauren Hemp, Lauren James, Chloe Kelly, Beth Mead, Alessia Russo, Ebony Salmon

Lotte Wubben-Moy and Nikita Parris have been added to the England women's senior squad following injuries to Leah Williamson and Lucy Parker.

Jill Scott and Ellen White - Take a Bow



Claire Jeffrey / SPP

By Clare McEwen

Last month saw two of England's golden girls retire from the game. Jill Scott and Ellen White picked the perfect endings to their era-defining international careers, finishing as European Champions.

Scott will be missed for her box-to-box dynamism, backroom banter, and her constant presence on the team sheet over the past 15 years. White, the Lionesses all time lead goal scorer, has been a fixture in the frontline for a decade; firing in goals from everywhere and wheeling away with her trademark glasses celebration.

It's impossible to do these Lioness legends justice within one article, but here are some of the highlights of their stellar careers in an England shirt.

Jill Scott - Heart of a Lioness

Given the amount of grass Scott has covered over her career, it may not come as a surprise that she was an excellent long-distance runner as a youngster. But her first love was football.

Scott was 18 when she was given her first taste of pulling on the

England shirt. She didn't move through the usual youth ranks, but instead was spotted by the under-19s coach - Mo Marley. Scott is quick to give Marley credit for giving her that chance and sparking her career as a Lioness.

And Scott only needed that one chance. She quickly progressed to becoming captain of the under -19s side.

In May 2006, she was called up to the senior squad, and in August, still only 19, she won her first senior cap; coming on for Kelly Smith in the 82nd minute against The Netherlands. To demonstrate how even the greats must start somewhere, Scott came on with moulds on her boots rather than the studs that coach, Hope Powell, had requested. Fortunately, she managed to stay on her feet and it didn't stop her England career before it got started!

In 2007, Scott made her World Cup debut against Japan, coming on as a substitute. She impressed Powell enough to start the remaining games of the campaign and went on to score her first goal in a major tournament in the Lionesses'

resounding 6-1 win against Argentina.

Scott was always a big game player. Not only rallying the team and endlessly running, she had a knack for scoring goals when the Lionesses needed them most. In the 2009 Euros semi-final against The Netherlands, Scott scored one of the most important goals of her career - a winner in extra time that would see the Lionesses reach their first major final and ultimately gain a runner's up medal.

Her next major goal was an equaliser in the 2011 World Cup; England were behind to New Zealand but went on to win following Scott's strike. She swiftly followed this with the opening goal against France in the semi-final - although they went on to lose that one on penalties.

In 2012, Scott got to play at the Olympics as part of Team GB. True to her big game status, she scored against Cameroon to help the team reach the quarter finals.

In 2015, she played her part in helping the Lionesses win a Bronze medal at the World Cup

when they beat Germany in the third-fourth place play-off. This was a massive achievement for the squad since Germany were already a footballing superpower. It was Scott's third World Cup tournament, and soon after, in October, she'd reach the magic figure of 100 caps.

Scott scored another important goal during the qualification stages for the 2017 Euros, scoring another late equaliser, this time against Belgium. The goal made sure they continued their remarkable 15-year unbeaten run in qualifying competitions!

Scott made more history during the 2019 World Cup when she became the first England player (man or woman) to reach 18 World Cup caps. She went on to extend her record to 21 during the tournament and scored the opening goal of a 3-0 win against Norway in the quarter final.

In February 2021, she became one of only two England players to reach 150 caps when she captained the side against Northern Ireland (Fara Williams is the other). Later that year, she became a two times Olympian by competing for Team GB in the delayed 2020 Tokyo games.

I think it's safe to say that 2022 became the highlight of her long and illustrious international career. As the engine of the midfield for four European Championship and four World Cup campaigns, it was fitting that she was right there, in amongst it, when Chloe Kelly scored that winning goal.

Over her 16 years as a Lioness, Scott reached 161 caps, scored 27 goals, played in 10 major international tournaments (eight for England, two for Team GB), and is the only England player to have played in two European Championship finals.

She has more World Cup caps than any other England player, has a World Cup bronze medal, a European Championship silver medal, and now, ends her career with the gold medal around her neck.

And she ran about a zillion miles!

Jill Scott, thank you!

Ellen White - Back of the Net

White had a more traditional start to her Lionesses career, moving through the junior ranks before her senior call-up.

Her senior debut came in March 2010 in a World Cup qualifier against Austria. Coming on in the 62nd minute, 20-year-old White scored the third goal in a 3-0 win. Not a poke in the net, though, rather a supremely confident chip from a ridiculous angle - White had set out her Lionesses stall.

That chip opened the floodgates to what would become a record-breaking 52 international goals. White was a clinical finisher, but it was her positional intelligence that set her apart from others - it was no accident that she was always in the right place at the right time; she understood the game.

Clearly, it would be impossible to document all of White's goals here, so here are some highlights.

At the World Cup in 2011, her first major tournament, she scored a magnificent lob against Japan. It was the opening goal of a 2-0 win that would see England into the quarter finals.

Despite suffering major injuries throughout her career, White was often instrumental in helping England qualify for major competitions. For example, shortly after recovering from an ACL injury, she scored three goals to help England get to the 2015 World Cup finals.

White's perfect positioning and striker's instinct led to some big moments. In the 2017 invitational SheBelieves Cup, the Lionesses stunned World Champions USA when White scored an 89th minute winner - cleaning up Lucy Bronze's strike off the crossbar. In their 6-0 win over Scotland during the group stages of the 2017 Euros, a thunderbolt from Jill Scott rattled off the crossbar. No prizes for guessing who was quickest to react!

Again, making her presence felt at the 2018 SheBelieves Cup, she scored two against Germany, finished as joint top scorer in the competition, and helped the Lionesses secure second spot. She netted again in the 2019 version, this time helping England win the tournament.

But, it was the 2019 France World Cup where White secured her Lionesses' legend status. She scored six goals throughout the



tournament, narrowly missing out on the Golden Boot: scoring the same number of goals as Megan Rapinoe and Alex Morgan but missing out due to fewer assists.

White's stream of goals in the World Cup helped raise the profile of the women's game in England. In November 2019, the Lionesses played at Wembley in front of nearly 78,000 spectators. The atmosphere inside the stadium was electric and emotional. It felt like an important moment for women's football, and although England lost 2-1 to Germany, White was the Lionesses' goal scorer.

As part of Team GB at the Tokyo Olympics, White was again in supreme scoring form - three goals in the group stages would help the team qualify at the top of their group. Disappointingly, they lost 4-3 to Australia in a thrilling quarter final; White's hat-trick wasn't quite enough.

In 2021, White reached the milestone of 100 senior caps. She marked the occasion with the only goal in a 1-0 win against Austria; helping England on their way to qualification for the 2023 World Cup. In her 101st appearance, a qualifier against Latvia, she would break Kelly Smith's record of 46 England goals with a hat-trick.

But 2022 would be the crowning glory of a glittering international career for White. Including her two goals against Norway at the Euros, she finished as all-time top scorer for the Lionesses.

Over her 12 years as a senior Lioness, White reached 113 caps, scored 52 goals, and played in eight major tournaments (three Euros, three World Cups and two Olympics).

She has a World Cup bronze medal, a European Championship silver medal, and now, of course, she is a Champion of Europe.

Not bad for someone who, at the age of nine, was banned from the league for being a girl.

Ellen White, thank you!



Scotland squad named for first World Cup play-off hurdle

2023 FIFA Women's World Cup play-offs

Scotland v Austria
Thursday, 6 October
Hampden Park, Glasgow

Scotland or Austria v Republic of Ireland
Tuesday, 11 October
Hampden Park, Glasgow

Pedro Martinez Losa has named his Scotland squad for the 2023 Fifa Women's World Cup play-offs.

Scotland go head to head with Austria at Hampden Park on Thursday, 6 October - with the winner going on to face the Republic of Ireland.

There's a welcome return for fit-again Christy Grimshaw and Kirsty Hanson in a 25-strong group.

Scotland squad: Eartha Cumings (Liverpool), Jenna Fife (Rangers), Lee Gibson (Glasgow City), Emma Mukandi (Reading), Jen Beattie (Arsenal), Jenna Clark (Glasgow City), Kelly Clark (Celtic), Nicola Docherty (Rangers), Rachel Corsie (Aston Villa), Sophie Howard (Leicester City), Caroline Weir (Real Madrid), Chloe Arthur (Crystal Palace), Christie Murray (Birmingham City), Christy Grimshaw (AC Milan), Claire Emslie (Angel City FC), Erin Cuthbert (Chelsea), Lucy Graham (Everton), Rachel McLauchlan (Rangers), Sam Kerr (Rangers), Abi Harrison (Bristol City), Fiona Brown (Rosengard), Kirsty Hanson (Aston Villa (on loan from Manchester Utd)), Lana Clelland (Sassuolo), Lisa Evans (West Ham), Martha Thomas (Manchester Utd)

Shirley Martin appointed Head of Girls' and Women's Football

The Scottish FA has announced the appointment of Shirley Martin as Head of Girls' and Women's Football.

Shirley will lead on developing the grassroots game in this country and look to implement some of the strategic aims from Accelerate Our Game – launched in July 2021 to drive up standards across women's football in Scotland over an initial five-year period.

She follows in the footsteps of Fiona McIntyre, who has been confirmed as Managing Director of the Scottish Women's Premier League (SWPL).

As we kick off Scottish Women and Girls In Sport Week 2022, the Scottish FA's Chief Football Officer, Andy Gould, was in no doubt that Shirley – who takes up her role from Fiona McIntyre on 16, October - was the stand-out candidate.

He said: "We are delighted to be able to appoint Shirley in her new role and she is ideally suited to it.

"She has years of experience – not only professionally but also as a dedicated volunteer – across the game at various levels. She's done just about every role from administering to coaching and that breadth of experience will be a real asset.

Shirley said: "It's a really exciting time for women's football in Scotland and I am delighted to take on this new role to build on the excellent groundwork done by Fiona and others within the game here.

"Being able to focus on the grassroots side of the game means we can reach those who love to play the game, at all levels, and those who haven't discovered it yet, through excellent programmes like UEFA Disney Playmakers.

"We have some outstanding success stories and role models to inspire a new generation. We are here to help and harness the power of football."

Scottish Women's Premier League signs historic deal

Sky Sports will broadcast more Scottish Professional Football League (SPFL) matches than ever before and for the first time, the Scottish Women's Premier League.

From the 2024/25 season, a new four-year extension to the current deal will mean up to 60 cinch Premiership matches per season will be shown exclusively live until the 2029 campaign, with scope to increase this over the term of the deal.

For the first time, Sky Sports will show live Scottish Women's Premier League (SWPL) action from this season and become the title sponsor of the SWPL League Cup for the next seven campaigns.

A minimum of five SWPL or League Cup matches will be broadcast exclusively live every season

from 2022/23, with the option of an additional five possible.

SWPL managing director Fiona McIntyre said: "This is a historic moment for the SWPL and an enormous step forward for the women's game in Scotland.

"This deal brings significant financial investment to the new leagues and enhances the visibility of the SWPL at this crucial time for the game.

"Our clubs have invested considerable resources and we can now see the rewards of that work, with increasing commercial interest. This deal will allow clubs to invest further and will put the SWPL on the map as one of the most progressive women's leagues in the world."

SWPL Cup continues

Holders Celtic and local rivals Glasgow City and Rangers were among the sides to reach the SWPL Cup quarter-finals.

Celtic defeated hosts Partick Thistle 2-0, City beat visitors Aberdeen 5-0 and Kirsty Howat scored a hat-trick as Rangers won 5-0 at Queen's Park.

Crystal Thomas scored the first three goals of Hibs' 8-0 win at Hamilton.

Kilmarnock beat Gartcairn, Glasgow Women overcame Stirling University, Motherwell knocked out Dundee United and Spartans beat Hearts on penalties.

Glasgow City 5-0 Aberdeen
Hamilton Accies 0-8 Hibernian
Hearts 1-1 Spartans (Spa win on pens)
Kilmarnock 2-0 Gartcairn
Motherwell 2-1 Dundee United
Partick Thistle 0-2 Celtic
Queen's Park 0-5 Rangers
Stirling Uni 1-2 Glasgow Women

Prades joins Glasgow City

Glasgow City have signed Spanish midfielder Beatriz Prades Insa from Villarreal.

The 22-year-old formerly played for Levante and helped Villarreal to 12th in the Spanish top flight last season.

Prades is eligible to face Aberdeen in the SWPL Cup on Sunday.

"I'm so glad for the opportunity to play at this club," Prades said.

"I'm excited to be part of Glasgow City and I get to gain this new experience in my football career."

City coach Eileen Gleeson added: "Bea brings a wealth of experience having played in one of the top leagues in Europe.

"I'm looking forward to working with her and have no doubt she will be a great addition to the team."

Wales announce squad for Women's World Cup play-off

Cymru v Bosnia & Herzegovina

Thursday, October 6
Cardiff City Stadium, 19:15

Gemma Grainger has chosen her 26-player squad for her side's key FIFA Women's World Cup Qualification Play-Off fixtures in October.

A win for Cymru would see them advance to the Second Round where they will take on Switzerland at Stadion Letzigrund, Zurich on October 11 (KO 19:00).

Grainger has an almost full-strength squad available, with the only omission being Natasha Harding who is unavailable due to personal reasons.

More than 9,000 tickets have been sold for the match against Bosnia & Herzegovina, with the team hoping to see another record-breaking crowd for the third time in this campaign.

Cymru: Laura O'Sullivan (Cardiff City Ladies), Olivia Clark (Bristol City), Safia Middleton-Patel (Manchester United), Rhiannon Roberts (Liverpool), Josie Green (Leicester City), Hayley Ladd (Manchester United), Gemma Evans (Reading), Rachel Rowe (Reading), Lily Woodham (Reading), Sophie Ingle (Chelsea), Anna Filbey (Crystal Palace), Angharad James (Tottenham Hotspur), Georgia Walters (Sheffield United), Charlie Estcourt (Birmingham City), Jess Fishlock (OL Reign), Carrie Jones (Leicester City - on loan from Manchester United), Ffion Morgan (Bristol City), Megan Wynne (Southampton), Elise Hughes (Crystal Palace), Kayleigh Green (Brighton & Hove Albion), Helen Ward (Watford), Ceri Holland (Liverpool), Maria Francis-Jones (Sheffield United - on loan from Manchester City), Chloe Williams (Blackburn Rovers - on loan from Manchester United), Morgan Rogers (Watford), Chloe Bull (Bristol City).

Action from the start

We had action from the 1st minute to the 90th in today's Genero Adran Premier games and 17 goals from 15 different scorers!

There's no change at the top of the table, with Cardiff City the only team maintaining their 100% record. Phoebe Poole picked up where she left off last week to open the scoring (19'), with Zoe Atkins doubling their lead (39') and a stunner in the second half from Danielle Broadhurst (73') completed a clinical victory against Barry Town United at Jenner Park.

Cardiff Met travelled to Aberystwyth, aiming to keep hold of second place. Emily Allen was on the scoresheet for the first time this season, the scoring in the 20th minute, before setting one up for Shannon Evans (42') and captain Steph Tuner added a third at the end of the half. Allen got her second on the final whistle to see the Archers win 4-0 and take the three points.

Swansea matched Met's scoreline to stay a step behind, with just one goal continuing to separate the two sides in the table. Pontypridd Town were the visitors at Llandarcy, falling to goals from Jess Williams (20'), Katy Hosford 8 minutes later and Monet Legall put away a third in the 33rd minute.

Ellie Lake, who provided assists for the opening two goals, turned scorer early in the second half (56') to make it 4-0 and wrap up the three points for the home side.

With Barry, Aberystwyth and Pontypridd failing to pick up points, 4th spot was in sight for TNS and they grabbed it with both hands. In a first visit to Abergavenny, the visitors were awarded a penalty in the 17th minute dispatched by Beth Lewis. Isobel Redding (25') and Danielle Staley (41') added two more for yet another 3-0 half time scoreline. Abergavenny pulled one back through Ellis Lunn (51'), with a dramatic end to the game with both TNS' Caitlin Chapman (90') and a second for Lunn (90+7') to see the game finish 4-2 to TNS.

Next up is Round 1 of the FAW Women's Cup (fixtures below), so the league will be back on 16th October.

Genero Adran Premier Results
Abergavenny 2-4 The New Saints
Aberystwyth Town 0-4 Cardiff Met
Barry Town United 0-3 Cardiff City
Swansea City 4-0 Pontypridd United

An open letter from Sophie Ingle to schools across Wales



Last month, the Cymru Women's National Team made history by securing our first ever play off spot to a major tournament, and we are one step closer to qualifying for the FIFA Women's World Cup which is being hosted in Australia and New Zealand in July 2023. Our final group match against Slovenia this month was in front of a record crowd of 12,741, more than double our previous attendance record.

At the start of this World Cup campaign, we came together as a squad and defined our higher purpose which would drive us to the next level. Our purpose is: To play for change, to play to inspire, For US, For THEM, For HER. We stand on the shoulders of trailblazers who paved the way for us to have this opportunity to compete on the international stage in front of thousands of people in the stands and many more watching on TV at home. During a historic moment for women's football in Wales, we want to play our part in ensuring we are visible to young girls and boys and that we

create meaningful change in our society and create a sport where girls feel they truly belong.

On Thursday the 6th October (19:15 KO), we face Bosnia Herzegovina at the Cardiff City Stadium, for our next challenge. To ensure our matches are accessible to all, children's tickets are only £2 as part of the group booking offer (available [here](#) in PDF or DOC format). We would love to see your school involved as part of the Red Wall, which play a huge part in our success. Following the match, the squad of 23 players will give our match shirts to 23 schools who come and support us, to hang them in their school corridors as a daily reminder to girls and boys that football is a sport for all, and hopefully inspire the stars of the future.

Tisdale's Tidbits

By Zoë Tisdale

Is now the time to move the Women's Premiership season in Northern Ireland in line with the men's and their European counterparts?

Women's football in Northern Ireland is played from April to October as opposed to the men's season which runs from September to June, but is this disadvantaging the development, form, and match fitness of their players when it comes to international duty?

Kenny Shiels, the Women's Northern Ireland manager, has spoken previously about how his players that play for NI and, also, domestically in NI, are out of season in comparison with their European opponents. I am sure even the NI players would rather be facing their opponents when they have played the majority of their season, and when their match fitness is at peak level, than when they are not involved with club football and struggling for match fitness. Shiels was disappointed with the lack of friendlies that his team had before the Euros kicked off, would this have been such an issue if the players were well into their season?

As the NI Women's premiership moves to full time status next year, surely, we need to be asking this very question. Many would argue that we do not have the facilities to run both seasons here simultaneously. There would undoubtedly be a huge demand on pitches and training facilities, but there is an overlap when the men's season starts before the women finish and pitch access does not seem to be a major issue. There is, of course, the issue of spectators, would less people come to watch the women if there was a men's game on at the same time? Again, fixtures could be organised, so they don't clash, especially with more and more games being played on Sunday, surely there are plenty of options.

In England the Women's Super League is played simultaneously with the men's premiership to great affect and the crowd numbers are forever increasing. We can all see how further developed the women's game and national team are in England, so surely this is a model that we now need to be implementing if we are to compete with the best teams at international level.

I am sure there will be discussions within our governing bodies, the IFA, NIFL and the NWFA on

this subject in the months ahead as the NI footballers finally become full time professionals in 2023, another aspect of the women's game in NI that is long overdue!

Why has it taken so long for our women footballers to be given the recognition which they so richly deserve and earn a living from the game, just like their male counterparts?

It seems here in NI that we are always playing catch up, let's not keep making the same mistakes repeatedly for the sake of the development in our women's game. Yes, there is no doubt that a shortage of money and funding has contributed to the lack of progress in many of these areas, it is the same old problem that has plagued the men's game for all these years, how do you compete with clubs generating millions of pounds and playing in front of 50,000 plus spectators, week in week out.

Quite simply, you can't, so it is therefore vital that you get your development strategies right. The move to full time professional status in the women's game is a great first step, the next one must surely be to align our season to all the other leagues across Europe in order to achieve parity and equal developmental opportunities.

Together with a long-term funding strategy, there is no reason why the game of football cannot be accessible to a greater number of girls, with

genuine career opportunities, and our leagues becoming increasingly competitive, allowing players to reach the standards necessary to play for teams throughout Europe, and ultimately raising the profile of the national team on the international stage.

So, let's make a start, let's look with some seriousness at running our season over the same time period as other women's leagues in Europe, let's provide equal developmental opportunities for all our players, let's not handcuff the development of our national team, and let's change the landscape of women's football in Northern Ireland for the better.

Cliftonville expelled from Women's Irish Cup

Cliftonville have been expelled from the Women's Irish Cup after fielding two illegible players in their 7-1 quarter-final win over Linfield.

The Irish FA ruled that goalkeeper Nicole Adams and midfielder Hannah Doherty were not registered before the competition's July 31 deadline.

Linfield have been awarded the tie although the Women's Premiership leaders can appeal against the verdict.

Glentoran, Sion Swifts and Crusaders are already in the semi-finals.

After Linfield launched a protest saying that the two players had been ineligible for the quarter-final, Cliftonville made a protest of their

own, which stated that the Blues had used too many substitutes in the game.

It further found that both clubs had breached the competition's substitutes regulations which permits teams to nominate a maximum of five substitutes, from which only three substitutions can be made.

Linfield were found to have nominated six substitutes and used three, with the Reds having nominated seven and again using three.

The committee fined both clubs £25 for the breaches of the substitutes regulations.

McConville leaves Derry

Derry have announced they have parted ways with manager Ryan McConville.

The club released a statement on their social media channels to announce the decision.

In a statement, Derry wrote: "Derry Football Club can confirm the departure of Women's First Team Manager Ryan McConville from the club.

"Results have not met the Club's expectations. Without any clear path to sustained improvement, the newly updated DCFCW Committee, after lengthy consideration, decided a change was needed to take the club in a new direction.

"We would like to take the opportunity to thank Ryan and his staff for their work over the past five months.

"We wish Ryan the very best of luck for the future."

Many fans seemed surprised by the decision and found the statement "sad".

Davey Hone wrote: "Sad to see to be honest, but as coach can't be blaming the coach all the time to, players could be a fault also here but that's how the game goes. Best luck Ryan where ever you may go lad."

Shauna Fullerton added: "I find this statement sound sad."

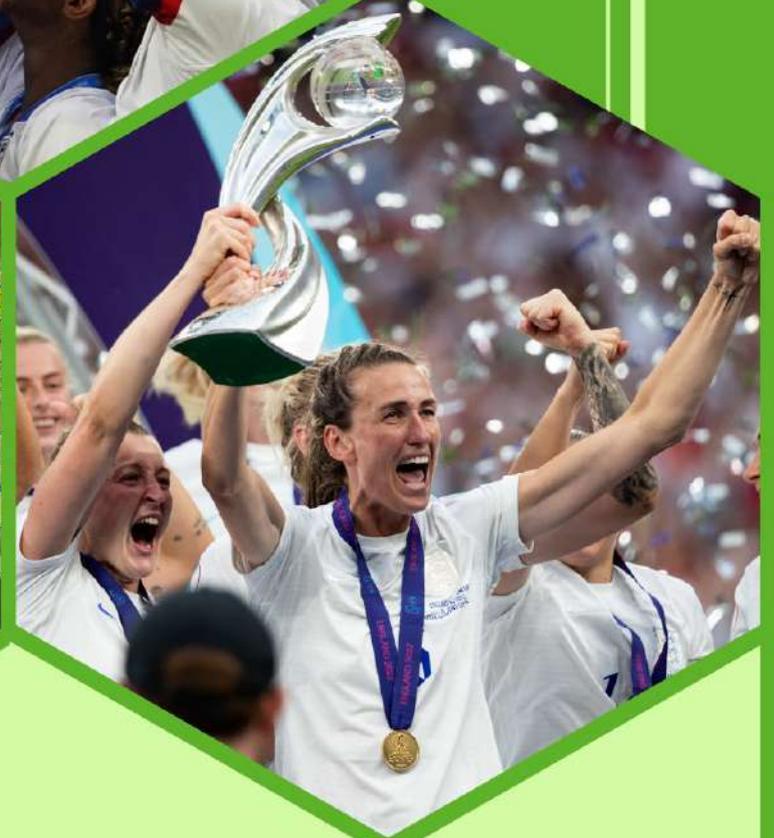
And David O'Donnell wrote: "No messing. Can't be happy with what they've seen to date. Invested a lot of money in new signings recently."

Just four days later it was announced that club volunteers Mark Terry and Caoimhe McLaughlin had made the decision to leave the club after seven years.

Mark Terry said "I've taken the very hard decision to step away from all things Derry City FC. A decision that was very hard to make but after a fantastic 6 years it is time for a break and to see the club move in a new direction."

Caoimhe McLaughlin said "Like Mark it's been a tough decision, one that I've thought about for some time now. I started out at the Club at the age of 13 back in 2002 when the women's squad was first established, then taking on the role as Club Secretary 6 years ago.

"I've been there for all of the ups and downs, league wins and cup wins. And I will always treasure being part of the fantastic squad who took Derry City FC into the N. Ireland Premiership for the very first time."



INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENTS

U17 Women's World Cup:

All you need to know

Hosts: India (1st time)

Dates: October 11th – October 30th

Teams: 16 (from 6 Confederations)

Venues: 3 (in 3 host cities)

India is getting ready to host the FIFA Under-17 Women's World Cup from October 11.

Spain, who are current holders, join 15 other teams who will battle it out to lift the trophy as India host their first ever women's international tournament.

Hosts India join Morocco and Tanzania as debutants in the seventh edition of the tournament.

Last time out

The previous U17 Women's World Cup was four years ago when Uruguay hosted it with the 2020 tournament cancelled due to Covid-19.

Spain were the tournament winners after a tight affair with Mexico in the final at Estadio Charrua.

Two first half goals from Claudia Pina put the Spaniards ahead but just three minutes later the Mexicans found a goal back from Denise Castro, it proved to just be a consolation goal as Spain held on to become world champions.

Pina's brace from the final tallied her tournament goals to 7 and it nearly earned her a Golden Shoe but just beaten by Ghana's Mukarama Abdulai who edged the Spaniard because of having more assists.

However, Pina won the Golden Ball award, which labelled her as the best player of the tournament. The now 21-year-old is still the top goal scorer for Spain's Women's U17 history with 35 goals.

Spain goalkeeper Catalina Coll won Golden Glove for the highest amount of clean sheets in the competition.

Group Stages

Just like any World Cup, all 16 teams will be put into groups of four with the top two teams of each group advancing to the quarter-finals.

The group stage games take place between October 11 and October 18.

Group A: India, United States, Morocco and Brazil.

Group B: Germany, Nigeria, Chile and New Zealand.

Group C: Spain, Colombia, Mexico and China.

Group D: Japan, Tanzania, Canada and France.

Knockout Stages

Quarter-finals: October 21 – October 22

Semi-Finals: October 26

Third Place Match: October 30

Final: October 30

Which venues will be hosting matches at the U17 World Cup?

There will only be three stadiums across India which will host the matches and they do prove to be quite a distance between at least a couple of the stadiums.

Navi Mumbai and Margao are the closest cities to each other while Bhubaneswar is over 1,700km from Navi Mumbai. Margao is around the same distance as well as Navi Mumbai is from Bhubaneswar.

The final will take place at the DY Patil Stadium. The venue has a capacity of 55,000 spectators and is also known as the home of IPL cricket team, Mumbai Indians.

Will there be VAR?

It was revealed on Asiana Times that this year's tournament will have VAR available for all 32 matches, which was exactly the same rules at the U20 Women's World Cup in August.

It will be the first time the technology has been used in the history of the U17 Women's World Cup, FIFA also announced this back on September 27th – just two weeks before the opening game takes place.

Kari Seitz, the Head of FIFA Women Referring, stated that the tournament will give them importance and insights into the qualities of the match officials who are assigned for the job. They also said that they are very happy that the VAR technology will be used first time in the FIFA U-17 World Cup.

Stars of the U17 Women's World Cup

By Jamie Davies

The Women's Football Magazine takes a trip down memory lane looking back at players and moments of the history of the FIFA Under-17 Women's World Cup.

It all began in 2008 as it took place in New Zealand as North Korea took home the world crown after a dramatic extra time winner over the United States.

World Cups like the Under-17 format are also a great opportunity for young players to make themselves known to the footballing world. Yes, they are playing as a team but it is a chance not to be missed to try to impress potential employers after the tournament is done and dusted.

Let's take a look back at some of the best players to have played this tournament...

The Mewis Sisters



14 years ago, the Mewis sisters of Samantha Mewis and Kristie Mewis represented USA at the 2008 edition of the tournament.

Samantha is the younger of the two and was only 16 when playing at the tournament while Kristie was 17 years old at the time.

Both of them were playing in America when not playing for

their country as their club was Scorpions SC.

In USA's opening game of the World Cup they took on Japan in Hamilton. This was a Japanese side that featured Arsenal's Mana Iwabuchi as she scored the equalizer to Victoria DiMartino's 3rd minute goal. Kristie put the Americans ahead for the first time and only time in the match just six minutes into the 2nd half but it all ended in defeat as goals from Natsumi Kameoka and Kei Yoshioka gave Japan a 3-2 win. Sam only came on with 4 minutes left on the clock.

In the following game against Paraguay, Kristie was given the captain's armband as she started the match while her sister again began the game from the bench. The US showed a bit more of a fighting spirit in their second match by scoring three past the South Americans to get their first win of the campaign, it ended 3-1 to USA.

The final group game of Group C was a nervy one for the Mewis sisters as they knew a win would secure a place in the knockouts. DiMartino scored yet again at the World Cup to put America in pole position but suddenly 15 minutes later their opponents France found an equalizer from Lea Rubio.

It finished 1-1 at the final whistle, it proved to be just enough for America to get through to the last eight as they achieved 2nd in Group C – five points behind Japan.

Both sisters would start in the quarter-finals against South Korea as Kristie scored USA's second goal of the game while Courtney Verloo and DiMartino (again!) also added to the scoreboard to win the tie 4-2.

Come the semi-finals and the Mewis sisters were one win away from that one shot at glory. Trying to stop them from getting there was the mighty Germans. A young Alexandra Popp would make it a bad start for the US by opening the scoring after just six minutes but come the 2nd half, America fought back thanks to goals from DiMartino and Verloo to grant them a ticket to the U17 World Cup final. The Mewis sisters were heading to a World Cup final.

North Korea would be their opponents but in a way the team from Asia caused shocks all over Auckland when Jang Hyon Sun scored the winning goal at extra time to sink the Americans.

North Korea were world champions as the Mewis sisters had to accept the runners-up medal. But I'm sure they went onto bigger things after that tournament!

Alexia Putellas



The year is 2010 and Trinidad & Tobago would host the 2nd ever U17 Women's World Cup

two years after North Korea won the first one.

It was a World Cup where we first saw Alexia Putellas in a Spain shirt at just the age of 16 while being a player for Spanish side, Espanyol.

The start to the 2010 campaign couldn't have been any better for the current FIFA Ballon d'Or winner who scored in a 4-1 win against Japan. Putellas scored the 2nd goal for Spain just 28 minutes into the game. It would prove to be the only goal she would score at that World Cup.

For the rest of the group stages, Spain would win all three matches as the following two games after Japan would be victories against New Zealand (3-1) and Venezuela (2-1).

Putellas would start against Brazil in the quarter-finals after resting in the last group match. It was the Spanish that advanced to the semi-finals with goals coming from Raquel Pinel and Nagore Calderon.

The semi-final stages had arrived and it would sadly be the end of the World Cup road for Putellas and her nation as South Korea reached the final with first half goals from Yeou Min-Ji and Joo Soo-Jin would secure the win.

Putellas didn't go home just yet as they didn't leave empty handed as Spain beat North Korea in the 3rd Place Playoff. 1-0 it ended with Pinel scoring her 3rd goal of the tournament.

It seems to be a going theme of a future star not being able to win this tournament but again Putellas hasn't done too badly 12 years on.

Jordyn Huitema



A more recent star that was first seen at the U17 Women's World Cup over six years ago. This is when the tournament took centre stage in Jordan for the 2016 World Cup.

Huitema was only 15 years old during the competition and was the second youngest player in the 21 player squad. Her and the entire squad was coached by Beverly Priestmann, someone who would go on to succeed as the manager of the women's first team for the Maple Leafs in 2020 shortly before winning Olympic gold at the Tokyo Olympics. An achievement that Huitema herself would experience alongside Priestmann.

Going back to 2016, Canada were drawn in Group B with Germany, Venezuela and Cameroon. It only took three minutes into the campaign against Cameroon for Huitema to score her first U17 World Cup goal, it was a dream start for the Canadian. Cameroon did however turn the score line around as Djoubi and Dabda made it 2-1 going into half time. But a goal from the penalty spot by Stratigakis on the 78th minute then inspired Taylor to score the winning goal seven minutes from time.

Their 2nd game would involve Germany but it was a good result getting a draw against a mighty nation in the sport. Their final group game would prove to be their final game of the campaign as Venezuela kept a clean sheet while Deyna

Castellanos and Yerliane Moreno scored the goals. Priestmann's team finished 3rd while Germany won the group and Venezuela took the final spot to qualify for the knockout stages.

It may not have been the best experiences for Huitema but now the 21 year old is playing in the States for one of the biggest clubs in women's football of OL Reign after a three-year spell with Paris Saint Germain.

A lot more to come from the striker we are sure of.

Honorable Mentions

Below are some other famous faces who once played at the U17 Women's World Cup...

Alexandra Popp (Germany)

Finished 3rd place at the 2008 U17 Women's World Cup and scored two goals at the tournament.

Mana Iwabuchi (Japan)

The 2011 Women's World Cup winner scored two goals at the 2008 U17 Women's World Cup, Japan reached the quarter-finals.

Pernille Harder (Denmark)

Reached the knockout stages at the 2008 edition but got beaten 4-0 by eventual winners North Korea in the quarter-finals.

Jessie Fleming (Canada)

Captained Canada at the 2014 U17 Women's World Cup at the age of 16. They reached the last eight but only to be beaten by Venezuela. Fleming did get a goal in their opening game.



AROUND THE WORLD

NWSL to have new champion



By Peter Mann

Later this month, the National Women's Soccer League sees its top six sides from the regular season, contest the play-offs, and an opportunity to challenge for the NWSL Championship presently held by the 2021 victors, Washington Spirit.

They've not qualified this time around, finishing second bottom instead, the top six being that of NWSL Shield winners, OL Reign, runners-up Portland Thorns, along with San Diego Wave, Houston Dash, Kansas City Current, and Chicago Red Stars.

Even the Challenge Cup winners, North Carolina Courage, they defeated the Spirit in the Sahlen's Stadium back in May, missed out, after what was the tightest of tight finales to a regular season; it was that tight that, going into the final round of games, it was still six from eight sides were up for qualification, North Carolina, and Angel City, being the two that missed out.

OL Reign would take the championship, at the death, after they won 3-0 at home to Orlando Pride, and Portland Thorns were held in a six-goal thriller away to bottom club, NY/NJ Gotham; it was to be the Reign's fourth straight win, and

stretched their unbeaten run to nine (in all competitions), seven in the league.

For the Portland Thorns, they'll be ruing dropped points heading into the play-offs when, although unbeaten in their last five outings, two have been draws, they also had a 3-3 draw at home to North Carolina back in early August, and a 2-2 draw with the Reign, in early July. They can take some solace however in being the league's top scorers during the regular season however, bagging some 49 goals in their 22 matches (the Reign were fifth best with 32).

Neither of those however, possessed the NWSL top scorer, she is the San Diego Wave striker (qualified in third place), Alexandra Morgan, former co-captain and current striker of the USWNT.

A much-travelled Californian, Alex has played in both France (Olympique Lyonnais Feminin) and England (Tottenham Hotspur), as well as some nine clubs now, during an illustrious career dating back to 2008; Alex has also won five honours at club level along with numerous honours with the United States, including that of Olympic Gold in 2012, and the Women's World Cup in 2015 and 2019.

The top two clubs do possess the 'Best Goalkeeper' though, in Phallon Tullis-Joyce (Reign) and Bella Bixby (Thorns), with nine clean sheets apiece; the former of the two 'keepers, born in New York, began her pro career in France, with Reims, before joining OL Reign in April 2021 (she's majored in Marine Biology and a certified scientific diver), whilst the latter, from Milwaukie, Oregon, although having had a brief spell in Germany with Eintracht Frankfurt Frauen, has spent her career with the Thorns winning numerous trophies including the 2021 International Champions Cup.

Speaking of Tullis-Joyce, and that more than interesting choice of major, she recently told Jayda Evans of The Seattle Times that: "Any chance I get, I'm pretty much out in the water.

"I just found one of my favourite marine animals in the Puget Sound, the Pacific Spiny Lump sucker.

"I'm super stoked. They're adorable."

Digressing, so back to the NWSL, and the final match-day, one which changed a little, and decided a lot, heading towards the late October play-offs, with the Reign taking top spot

for the Thorns.

Houston claimed a 2-1 win away to Washington, the deciding score being an own-goal just before the hour mark, whilst in the late kick-off, goals from Mallory Pugh, deep in first half stoppage time, and Japanese striker, Yuki Nagasato, sent the

Red Stars through; in the other two games, San Diego were held to a goalless draw with visiting North Carolina Courage, and Racing Louisville beat Kansas City 1-0, thanks to Jessica McDonald at the death.

As for the play-offs themselves, on 16 and 17 October, it'll be

Houston Dash vs. Kansas City Current (16) and San Diego Wave vs. Chicago Red Stars, with the semi-finals a week later, Portland Thorns playing on 23/10, and OL Reign the following day, 24.10, ahead of the final itself, at the end of the month, in Washington.

The Yates Report Findings

An investigation commissioned by the US Soccer Federation and conducted by former US deputy attorney general Sally Yates was released on Monday.

It includes revelations that have been sending shockwaves throughout women's soccer and are raising tough questions around player safety.

The report's findings focus heavily on three coaches in the National Women's Soccer League who have been accused of serious sexual misconduct and abuse: former Racing Louisville coach Christy Holly, former Portland Thorns coach Paul Riley and former Chicago Red Stars coach Rory Dames.

It sheds new light on the alleged misconduct by these three coaches, as well as the repeated failures by team owners, U.S. Soccer officials and others to heed warnings and complaints from players about them.

Whilst we are not going to go into detail here in the magazine—some of the findings are tough to read and we want readers to have a choice as to how much they want to know, we are going to give a brief overview of the findings.

Why was the investigation commissioned?

The investigation came after The Athletic reported that Riley had been fired by Portland Thorns in 2015 for misconduct—something which was kept hidden and meant he was

allowed to be re-employed by another NWSL team.

Two former Thorns players interviewed on the record recalled that Riley verbally abused and disparaged them, sent them lewd photos, gave them alcohol and sexually harassed them.

Did everyone cooperate?

The report says that some teams and individuals did not fully cooperate—despite statements claiming otherwise.

Racing Louisville "refused to produce documents concerning Christy Holly and would not permit witnesses (even former employees) to answer relevant questions regarding Holly's tenure, citing non-disclosure and non-disparagement agreements it signed with Holly.

The Portland Thorns "interfered with our access to relevant witnesses and raised specious legal arguments in an attempt to impede our use of relevant documents," the report says.

What does the report say about Holly and why he was fired?

Although much of the allegations against Riley and Dames became public last year through investigative journalism, the manner of Holly's exit from Racing Louisville is detailed for the first time in the Yates report.

Holly had previously coached for Sky Blue FC (now known as

NJ/NY Gotham FC) and players complained that Holly was "paranoid, ultra-aggressive, short-tempered, nasty, mean, patronizing, humiliating," -- they also alleged he had a romantic relationship with a player, the Yates report says.

Why did Riley keep coaching in the NWSL after Shim filed her complaint?

Although the Thorns conducted an investigation into Riley in 2015, the Yates report says it "did not address the most serious of Shim's allegations."

The Thorns' report of the club's investigation did not include the terms "sexual" or "harassment" anywhere, despite Shim providing records of repeated harassment by Riley.

Why was Dames allowed to keep coaching the Red Stars after Press reported him?

Although Press filed a complaint about Dames in 2018, he was allowed to coach in the NWSL until last year as the Washington Post prepared to publish its report about allegations the club previously failed to address.

What next?

It's important to remember that it's not the end—the league itself is conducting a joint investigation with the NWSL Players Association which has already resulted in two coaches being suspended this season.

Records broken in Germany



“YOU made this evening unique. YOU made history in German’s football today.”

As attendance records, across the globe, continue to be broken throughout the women’s game, be they in the Americas, South America, Europe, that quote, from German side, Eintracht Frankfurt Frauen, came on the back of their opening day, goalless draw, with FC Bayern Munchen Frauen, in the Frauen-Bundesliga.

Goalless draws don’t usually generate as much publicity, it’s a fact, however, this one has done, more for off-field, than on when, at the Deutsche Bank Park, or Waldstadion (English Forest Stadium), on 16 September 2022, the opening game of the new, German, women’s league season, did just that, break records.

On the field of play, it could very easily have been about one of England’s European Championship-winning side, Georgia Stanway, who was making her league debut for the visiting Munich side.

Stanway in-fact was to create an early flashpoint in the season opener, causing jeers around the Waldstadion when a crunching tackle, which would also see her nearly take out one of her new team-mates, and receive a yellow card for her endeavours, come as early as the seventh minute.

In the immediacy prior to kick-off, supporters were engulfed in torrential rainfall; by the time kick-off was reached, the Waldstadion was fast becoming a sun-kissed

temple for said, record crowd, to worship their footballing heroes.

It had been several years in fact, eight, and some small change, since the Frauen-Bundesliga’s last attendance record was set, that was back in June 2014, when coincidentally, Frankfurt Frauen, travelled to VfL Wolfsburg, in a championship decider.

That was the final game of the 2013-14 season, a winner-takes-all clash, with Wolfsburg going on to add the Frauen-Bundesliga to the Champions League title won the month before.

Back then, against Frankfurt in 2014, Wolfsburg would edge the decider, 2-1, with goals coming from Verena Faisst (16 mins), and a certain, German national team legend (in the making as she was then), Alexandra Popp (89), it was that tight a game; Frankfurt’s goal would arrive via Kozue Ando (82 mins), she being a former, Japanese star.

Ando, a resident in Germany either side of spells at the Urawa Reds in her native Japan, actually lifted the Women’s World Cup back in 2011, and in Germany – she would appear for Duisburg (2010-12), Frankfurt (2013-15) and Essen (2015-17).

Fast-forward to the present day and some 23,200 spectators took to the Waldstadion for the season opener, and, in turn, breaking the previous record of 12,464, by more than 11,000.

There may not be Asian stars in the current Frankfurt squad,

but there are numerous other nationalities (Munich has one Asian) – at Frankfurt there are four Austrians, one Polish, one Swiss, one Slovenian, and a Brazilian; Munich meanwhile, there’s three Icelandic, one French, one Croatian, one Serbian, one Austrian, one Norwegian, one Swede, one English, one Brazilian, and one Japanese.

After history was made, Frankfurt’s defensive midfielder, Sara Doorsoun, who has been in the game for more than fifteen years, and has been capped more than forty times by Germany, said: “What the fans did was outstanding for women’s football in Germany. If you let us do the stage, do advertising and the people around us work to get something like this off the ground, something like this is often possible.

Meanwhile, Frankfurt CEO, Axel Hellmann, added: “Women’s football deserves this attention we had a great game. The enthusiasm in the region shows that the attendance record for the women’s soccer Bundesliga fell in Frankfurt. You can already see how many families and young people have found their way to the Deutsche Bank Park today.

Since the goalless, season opener, and history being made, Munich and Frankfurt occupy top four placements, alongside Wolfsburg (yearly leaders) and Bayer Leverkusen, the two history-makers, they’ve won one, drawn one of their opening two games.

Home Nations players around the world

By Jamie Davies

We are now just a few weeks into the new football league season in and around Europe including the Women's Super League, Frauen Bundesliga, Liga F and more.

Last month's magazine we looked at how some of our home nation players were getting along overseas.

It can be difficult to follow some of our homegrown players abroad due to lack of coverage on our TV sets but not to worry, The Women's Football Magazine has got you covered as we update you in what our favourite players have been up to while representing their foreign clubs.

Keira Walsh (England) – FC Barcelona

At the beginning of September after many paper talks after the Women's Euros, Keira Walsh had agreed to join FC Barcelona from Manchester City. It is believed the fee Barcelona paid for Walsh was around £400,000 which is a world record fee in women's football.

Walsh was one of the stars in midfield of the

Women's Euros by being part of the Lionesses squad that won their first ever major trophy.

The contract to join the Spanish giants is a term of three years.

The 25-year-old would join fellow lioness and ex-Manchester City teammate Lucy Bronze who joined the Spanish club earlier on in the summer.

Barcelona have only played a couple of games since Walsh's arrival but it is so far so good in the league for the 2021 Women's Champions League winners as they have played two and won two.

Walsh made her debut on September 17th at home to Granadilla Tenerife and won the game 2-0 with goals coming from Geyse and Caroline Graham Hansen.

The English midfielder did not start however in the away trip to Villarreal, Barca were able to win without her influence as she spent the entire 90 minutes on the bench.

It's early days but will be interesting to see how Walsh and her new club do

in the European Cup when the group stages lift off.

Georgia Stanway (England) – Bayern Munich

Georgia Stanway is now well into her spell at Bayern Munich since we last checked in on her. The England player joined the German club earlier this summer from Man City.

September started out with an emphatic 0-7 win at Ingolstadt, Stanway was not one of the goal scorers but she did start the game. All seven goals were from seven different goal scorers of Lea Schuller, Linda Dallmann, Saki Kumagai, Lina Magull, Carolin Simon, Giulia Gwinn and Klara Buhl.

Bayern have only played two games in the Frauen Bundesliga so far this season and it started off with a goalless draw at Eintracht Frankfurt. They were hungry for goals in the following league match when hosting Werder Bremen by beating them 3-0. Stanway played all 90 minutes of that game picking up a second yellow in a row in the league.

There was also success in the Women's Champions League qualifying as they

overcome Real Sociedad over two legs. The aggregate ended on 4-1 to Bayern.

No goals or assists yet for Stanway at her new club but let's hope to see that in October.

Jess Fishlock (Wales) – OL Reign

It's coming to the business end for Jess Fishlock and her team OL Reign over in the United States. As we write this, OL Reign have one game remaining in the regular season as they host Orlando Pride on the first weekend of October.

OL Reign can still win the NWSL Shield by finishing top of the league, they are just one point off the top by being behind Portland Thorns.

Playoffs are secured regardless of their result against Orlando Pride but it all depends on where they finish in the table.

Finishing second place will get them to the playoff semi-finals but finishing 3rd or 4th will only get them to the first round of the playoffs. So a lot at stake for Fishlock and her team in the final league match.

Caroline Weir (Scotland) – Real Madrid

When we last checked up on Caroline Weir, she

ended her old club's Champions League by scoring the winning goal against Man City.

She has as of this week also ended Rosenborg's run by scoring in both legs of the Champions League qualifier.

Weir got a brace in the away leg before scoring another in the reverse tie earlier this week to put the game to bed at 5-1 on aggregate.

Real Madrid have only played one game in Liga F so far and that was at home to Valencia. They were victorious in that one by winning the game 2-0 with goals coming from Teresa Abelleira and Nahikari Garcia.

Madrid are currently 6th in the table after one game and one win.

Rebecca Holloway (Northern Ireland) – Racing Louisville

We mentioned Fishlock being in a title/playoff battle in the final round of the NWSL but for Rebecca Holloway it is a quieter end to the season.

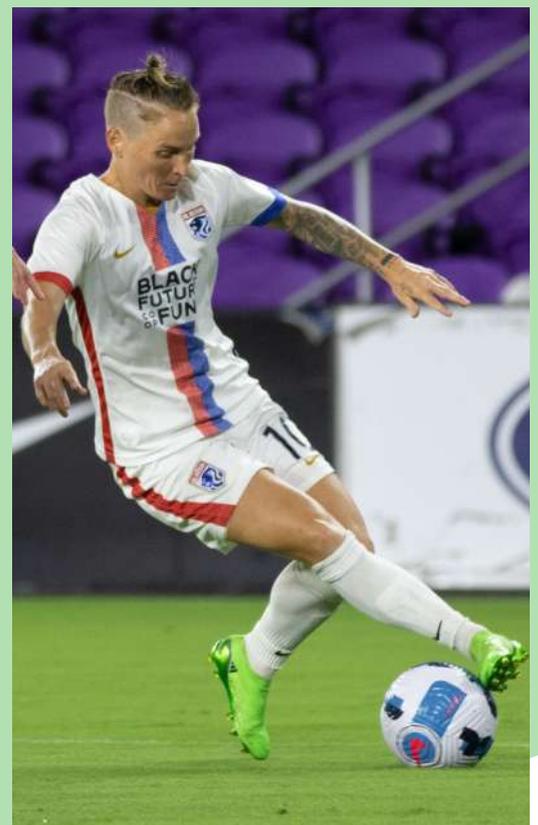
Racing Louisville wrap up their season this weekend with a home tie against Kansas City. It won't be an easy encounter as Kansas will be determined to win in hope that they at least pip OL Reign to 2nd place, they can also win the

league if they beat Louisville and both OL Reign and Portland Thorns do not win their final game. A big ask but still possible for a glorified end.

Louisville are currently 10th in the league and are too far behind to grab a playoff spot as they are currently 11 points away from the final spot to qualify.

They also do not have any threat to finish rock bottom of the league as Gotham FC are eight points behind them. The highest they can finish is 9th by being just two points behind Orlando Pride.

So a bit of an uneventful finish to the season for Fishlock but we are sure she will want to end it with a bang!



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