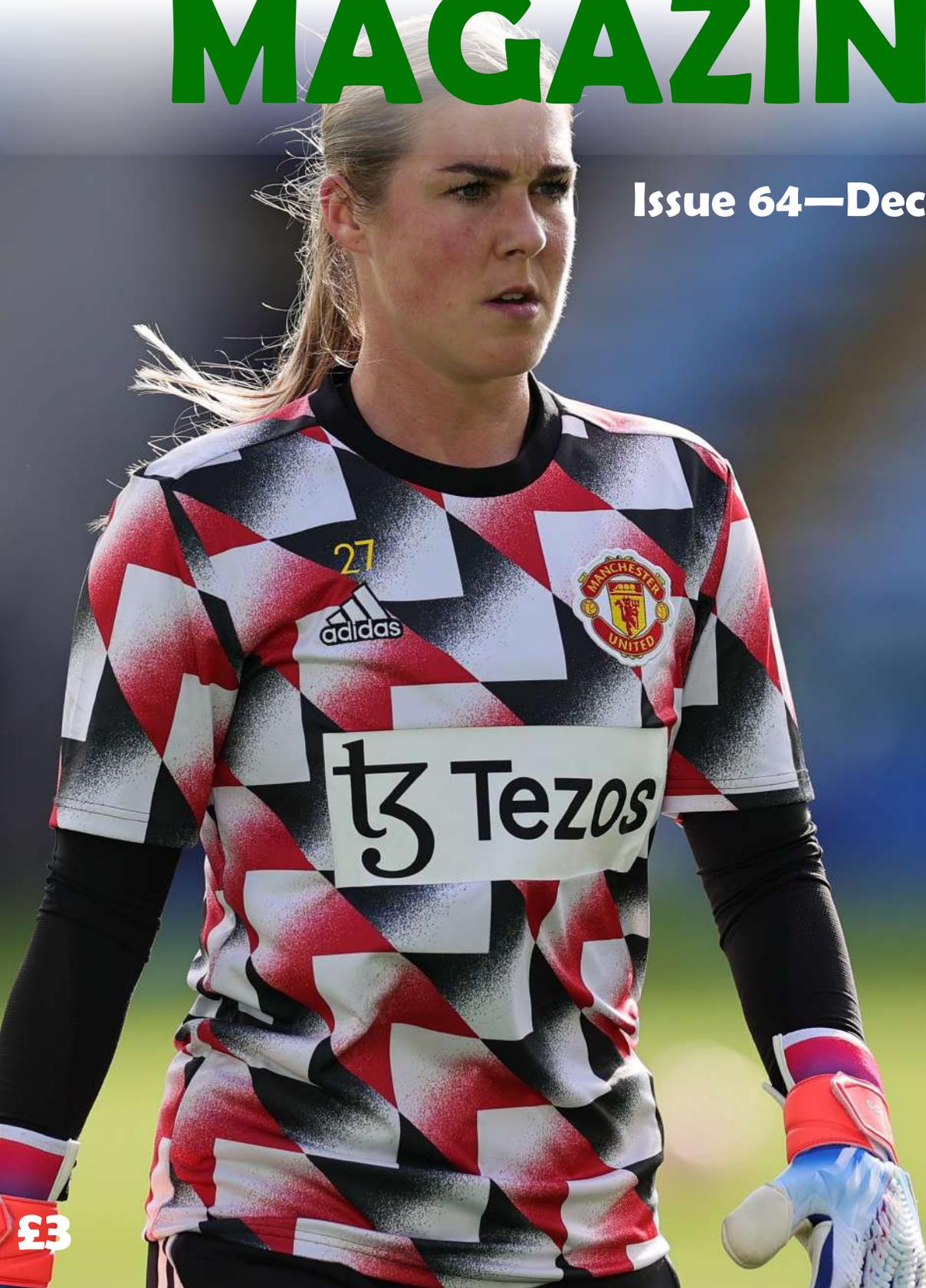


THE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL MAGAZINE

Issue 64—December 2022



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THE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL MAGAZINE



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Welcome

Hello and welcome to Issue 64!

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It's a bit of a different 'Welcome' from me this week.

In this current climate, I know so many people—myself included—are having to cut back on things they love so they can still afford to eat or turn the heating on.

For many luxuries are few and far between at the moment so I wanted to take this time to thank you all from the bottom of my heart for keeping your subscription going.

We love what we do here at TWFM and it means the world to us that you love it too.

During the festive period, check in on your friends and family, make sure you reach out to someone if you are struggling or need to talk.

I hope you have a wonderful festive period, however you celebrate it and see you in 2023.

Enjoy the issue!

Helen Rowe-Willcocks

 **Editor-in-Chief**
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BARCLAYS WOMEN'S SUPER LEAGUE

Spurs stun in eight-goal thriller



Dylan Clinton/SPP

By Abbie Smith

On the 30 October, Tottenham visited Brighton at Broadfield Stadium for a crunch match. Spurs opted for a 4-4-2 formation with attacking duo Drew Spence and Nikola Karczewska leading the line. Star midfielder Ashleigh Neville also started at left wing.

The game was fast paced from the start, with Molly Bartrip scoring after 2 minutes. The defender took a touch before curling the ball into the back of the net with precision, netting from outside the box.

The second came quickly after, with Brighton keeper Megan Walsh making a blunder whilst trying to clear the ball, allowing striker Karczewska to intercept and place the ball into the back of the net.

Neville bagged two goals, one in each half. The first came after teammate Eveliina Summanen won a header, the ball rebounding straight into the feet of Neville, who struck it over the head of Walsh and into the top right corner.

In the second minute of added time, Spence scored her first of the game. Spence ran onto a luxurious backheel from Neville, using her pace to overtake the Brighton defenders and silkily pass the ball into the net.

After half-time, a crucial substitution was made. Karczewska was replaced by striker Jessica Naz. Naz would go on to score two sublime goals in this game, making an instant impact.

Neville's second, a looping header, gave Spurs their 5th of the game. Two minutes later, Spence also got her second. A pass from none other than midfield maestro Neville gave Spence the chance to take a touch, turn into space, and score. 6-0 to Spurs.

Their seventh came from super sub Naz. The Spurs number 7 ran onto the through ball from Cho So-hyun and, noticing Walsh stood off her line, chipped the keeper from just over the halfway line. This emphatic goal showcases the underrated talent that is Naz; the English striker made the finish look easy.

A final link-up between Cho and Naz showcased yet another piece of Tottenham magic. Cho won the ball from Brighton defender Victoria Williams before nudging it onto Naz in the six-yard box, who netted goal number eight.

Spurs dominated the game, having 20 shots compared to Brighton's 14. Brighton had a measly 6 shots on target, with Spurs having 14. Overall, Tottenham had 52% of possession to Brighton's 48% and, despite the slim margin, Tottenham made better use of their chances. From the off, the game felt as if it was Tottenham's for the taking.

Attendance: 2,514.

Broadfield Stadium, Crawley.

Yellow cards: Naz (75')

Goals: Bartrip (2'), Karczewska (19'), Neville (29', 56'), Spence (45+2', 58'), Naz (60', 83').

Man City attacking duo sweep POTM awards



Natalie Mincher/SPP

By Abbie Hannon

In only her second season at Manchester City, Khadija 'Bunny' Shaw is taking the Women's Super League (WSL) by storm. She was announced as October Player of the Month after scoring 5 goals and assisting once in 3 games, becoming the WSL's top scorer.

At the start of the month, City's number 21 scored two to help her team thrash Leicester City 4-0. Her first goal came after Lauren Hemp unlocked the Leicester defence and whipped the ball into the box, allowing Shaw to beautifully head the ball over Leicester keeper Kirstie Levell.

Her second came after City defender Alex Greenwood's penalty was parried away by

Levell, giving Shaw room to make the run into the six-yard box and coolly slot the ball home.

Shaw was nominated for goal of the month for her screamer against Tottenham. She made a perfectly timed run to meet Laura Coombs' through ball.

Shaw took a touch, positioning herself in a pocket of space as three Spurs defenders attempted to close her down. She struck the ball with her laces, sending it into the bottom left corner and giving City a 2-0 lead.

As Shaw stepped into the void left behind after Ellen White's retirement, eyebrows were raised, yet she has silenced her doubters and proved herself worth of the role. Bunny shone

in every game this month, becoming a vital part of Gareth Taylor's side and bringing back hopes of Champions League qualification.

Teammate Lauren Hemp was named PFA Vertu Motors WSL Fans' Player of the Month after her selfless performances throughout October. Hemp returned to the WSL after a successful summer with England in which she was a key part of Sarina Wiegman's well-oiled machine.

Hemp scored 1 goal and made one assist during the Euro 2022 tournament and pulled the strings in midfield, covering an average of 9km per match and a passing accuracy of 71.5% throughout the tournament.

She picked up where she left off, grabbing up a goal contribution in all three of City's October games, most notably scoring and assisting during City's win over Leicester. Her goal against Tottenham was nominated for Goal of the Month and helped City to a 3-0 victory. The silky attacker received the ball outside the box, weaving skilfully between the outstretched legs of the Tottenham defenders before striking it into the right hand corner.

October Goal of the Month

Reading F.C. midfielder Rachel Rowe scored October's WSL Goal of the Month with her long-range strike against Leicester. Rowe stole the ball at the halfway line, twisting between the helpless Leicester defenders before pulling the trigger and scoring from outside the box, making it 2-1 to Reading.

The other nominees were:

- Kenza Dali (Villa vs West Ham)
- Khadija Shaw (Spurs vs City)
- Lauren Hemp (Spurs vs City)
- Frida Maanum (Liverpool vs Arsenal)
- Hayley Ladd (Everton vs United).
- Drew Spence (Brighton vs Spurs)
- Jessica Naz (Brighton vs Spurs)



Natalie Mincher/SPP



Tom Phillips/SPP

Rain stops play in WSL and beyond

Tottenham fell victim to the heavy rain in London on the opening weekend of November, with their home tie against Everton postponed due to a waterlogged pitch.

Championship side Lewes' home tie against Bristol City alongside Crystal Palace's tie with Sheffield United at Hayes Lane also fell victim to the rain, with both games called off shortly before kick-off.

The rearranged fixture dates will be announced in due course.

Manchester United's unbeaten run comes to an end

United dropped points for the first time this season after a comfortable 3-1 win for rivals Chelsea in the tie played at the Leigh Sports Village.

Goals from Sam Kerr, Lauren James and Erin Cuthbert saw The Blues edge past United in the league table.

Bad day for Emma Mukandi as Manchester City beat Reading

Reading captain Emma Mukandi had a string of poor luck when her side fell victim to a 3-0 home defeat to Manchester City.

The left-back scored two own goals with Reading only securing three points in total so far this season.

City climbed into the top four in what is a very tight battle at the top of the table.

Katie McCabe wins Irish Player of the Year award

Arsenal's Katie McCabe has scooped the Football Association of Ireland award for Women's Player of the Year.

The versatile Dubliner captained the Republic of Ireland squad in their first qualification for a major tournament with their place secured at next year's World Cup.

Jill Scott wins I'm a Celebrity

Former Manchester City midfielder Jill Scott has been crowned Queen of the Jungle in ITV's I'm a Celebrity.

The England fan favourite spoke honestly in The Jungle about her youth as a girl playing football in an environment where other parents would torment her.

The other campmates and viewers at home were impressed with her story of growth and resiliency, which allowed her to cultivate such a successful career as a footballer.

England debuts for Maya Le Tissier and Katie Robinson

Manchester United's Maya Le Tissier and Brighton's Katie Robinson were handed their first senior England caps in a 1-1 draw with Norway.

The friendly fixture saw Aston Villa's Rachel Daly net the only goal in front of 3,000 fans at the Spanish Pinatar Arena.

Lotte Wubben-Moy takes a stand against Qatar World Cup

Arsenal defender Lotte Wubben-Moy has spoken of her intention to overlook the World Cup in Qatar due to the host nation's stance on human rights.

The Lionesses will have their own World Cup campaign to look forward to next year in Australia and New Zealand, however, Wubben-Moy has admitted that she will not watch the men's tournament due to the ongoing controversial nature around the event.

Stamford Bridge hosts a sell-out crowd

In a record-breaking year for women's football in England, yet another men's stadium saw tickets sell out for a women's fixture.

The London derby between Chelsea and Spurs, which finished 3-0 to the hosts, claimed 40,000 sales which comes as the stadium lays vacant due to the men's involvement with the World Cup.

Chelsea manager Emma Hayes returned to the touchline after an absence for emergency surgery.

Michelle Agyemang makes her WSL debut for Arsenal

The long-awaited WSL debut for 16-year-old Michelle Agyemang was seen in the Gunners' 4-0 victory over Leicester before the international break.

Agyemang had been a member of the academy since she was six years-old and stepped onto the pitch at the King Power Stadium in the 77th minute for her senior debut.

The hosts Leicester remain bottom of the league with zero points acquired so far this season.

Everton's Toni Duggan takes maternity leave

For the first time in its history, the WSL sees a player take maternity leave in what has been a change in the rules for this season.

Everton forward Toni Duggan, who is four months pregnant, will take time out of football as she prepares for motherhood, with full wages being provided as a result of the updated changes.

Mary Earps makes record appearance

Manchester United's goalkeeper Mary Earps reached her 150th appearance in the WSL in their defeat to Chelsea.

Her run of five consecutive clean sheets came to an end in the fixture, however, she is the first goalkeeper to reach the milestone.

Marc Skinner scoops WSL Manager of the Month

Manchester United' head coach Marc Skinner picked up the Manager of the Month award for October after a successful start to the league campaign from his side.

United had been unbeaten in the league until their recent defeat to Chelsea and boast a strong squad with potential to win the league outright.

The Reds will play at Old Trafford for the first time since last March when they host Aston Villa on Saturday, December 3.

Inequality in Women's Sport & Fitness

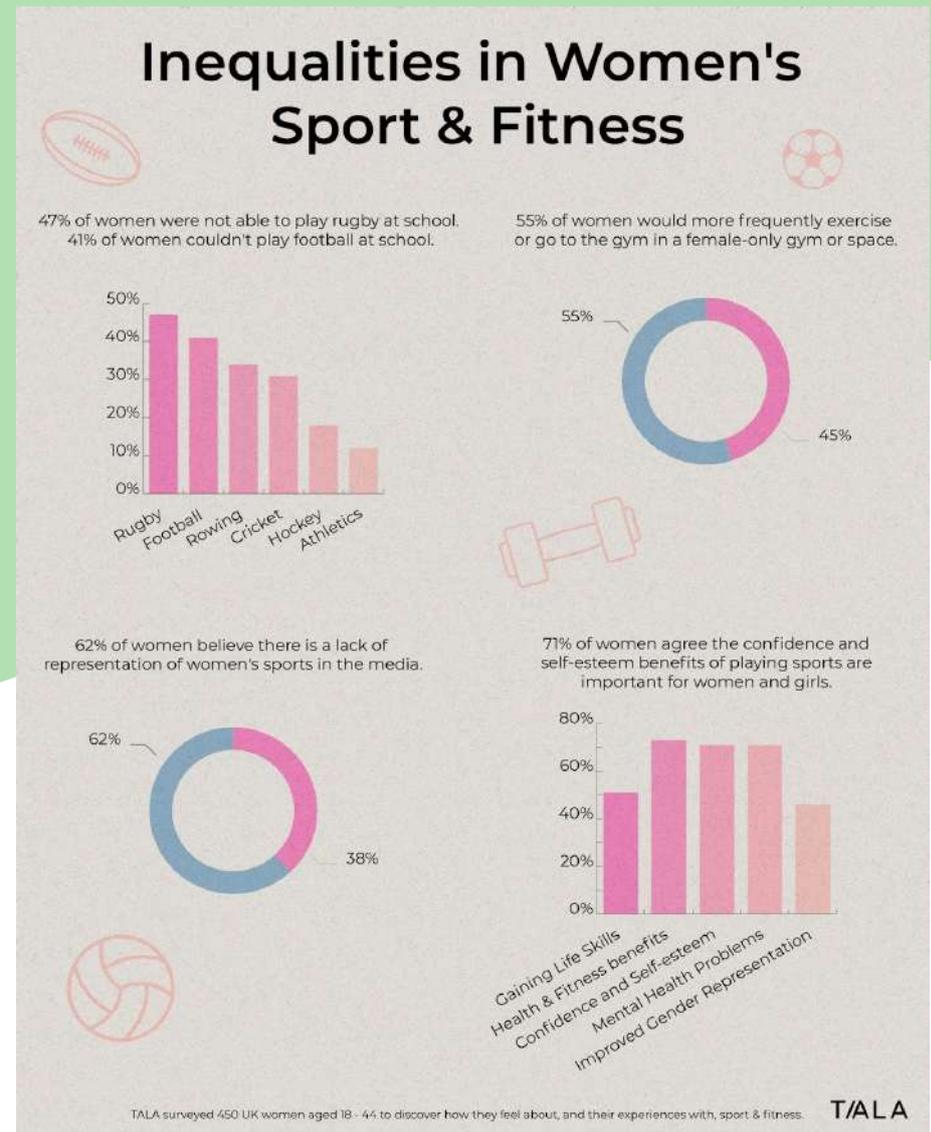
Despite recent successes and breakthroughs, inequality is still rife in the sports and fitness industry. There's still only one football club in the world that pays its male and female players equally (Keep up the good work Lewes FC), and until the Norwegian handball team protested and changed regulations, female players faced fines and bans for wearing anything more modest than a bikini. There are many other ways that the fitness and sports industries play against women – limiting access for many who might otherwise become involved from an early age.

To bring this to light, sports and fitness experts at sustainable activewear brand, TALA, have delved into the main challenges facing women today, including lack of access, representation, gender confidence gaps and the lack of media exposure, with expert commentary from key players in the industry.

There are plenty of challenges women face when thinking about starting a sport – from lack of representation to lack of access and reduced confidence.

In fact, 30% of women have experienced a lack of access to sports and fitness resources, including being denied opportunities to participate in sports at an early age. 47% of women surveyed were not able to play rugby, and 41% couldn't play football during their school years.

Vicky Fleetwood, rugby union player and Rugby World Cup winner, says that the main issue she identifies within the



industry is the barriers to entry for new players, which she contributes to a "lack of support and good coaching at grassroots level".

Representation

There is a distinct lack of representation in the sports industry as a whole. Only 4% of all sports coverage is dedicated to women's sports outside the Olympics. This includes only a handful of female presenters. 62% of women surveyed believe there is a lack of representation of women's sports in the media.

Besides the obvious gender gap, the representation of

different bodies is also lacking in most sports. Bodies of larger sizes or more muscle mass tend to be pushed to the sidelines in marketing campaigns, telling young girls that their bodies can't participate.

Grace Beverley, fitness expert and founder of sustainably made activewear brand TALA, comments, "Up until only a couple of years ago, lifting weights was seen as 'manly', and the weights section of the gym felt like an exclusive boys club. Although social media has definitely helped encourage more women to take up space in the gym (as they should!), it can still feel like an

incredibly male-dominated environment, and this needs to change."

Racism is also an issue that Black female athletes face constantly. Just look at how the Tokyo Olympics failed their Black competitors – bans on swim caps designed for Black hair types, athletes banned for having naturally higher levels

life skills such as teamwork, leadership, and confidence through playing and participating in sports.

73% of women believe the health and fitness benefits of participating in sports or using gyms are important, and 71% think the confidence and self-esteem benefits are important for women and girls.

Additionally, seeing better representation, celebration, and success of female athletes in mainstream media can help encourage more confidence. 45% of women believe increased media exposure in sports, and fitness will change misogynistic attitudes, helping to open up the space for more women to participate.



of testosterone, and plenty more besides the treatment of both Black women and men in sports is another barrier that is impacting other BIWOC from entering the industry.

Confidence

The gender confidence gap continually shows that most cis-men are far more comfortable with self-promotion. In contrast, many women struggle with this in various walks of life, but particularly in sports. Girls learn important

So the question is, how can we help women feel more confident to participate in sports? Do we need more female-only workout spaces or potentially more male allies in the gym? According to TALA's survey findings, we need both. 39% of women think positive male allies would make them more likely to participate in sports, with 55% agreeing they would more frequently exercise or go to the gym in a female-only gym or space.

Lack of access

Accessibility is another challenge that many women face – from feeling intimidated by unisex gyms, not being offered certain options during PE lessons, and lack of access to facilities and certain sports can greatly impact women's opportunities and ability to participate in the industry.

47% of women we surveyed were not able to play rugby, and 41% couldn't play football at school during PE

lessons as these two sports are considered “boys” sports. The Women’s Sport Foundation has found that girls have 1.3 million fewer opportunities to play school sports than their male classmates. Lack of physical education in schools and limited opportunities to play sports in both school and university mean girls have to look elsewhere for sports – which may not exist or cost more money, making them even less accessible.

Location is also a significant factor in why girls and women drop out of sports. Being able to travel to another location regularly is not always possible due to extra costs or childcare needs – further indicating that women are disadvantaged when trying to participate in sports.

The solution

So what can be done to help more women feel welcomed into sports?

One solution could be to open more women-only gyms. You need only glance at TikTok to

see the hundreds of first-hand accounts of women’s experiences at the gym to see how they can be treated in shared spaces.

39% of women surveyed believe female-only gyms and sports teams would make them more likely to participate in sports. Opening more women-only spaces may help to improve comfort and confidence within the fitness industry, making it easier for women to participate in sports or exercise of their choice.

Not limiting access to sports at a young age will go a long way to helping improve confidence as well as the number of female athletes we see in championships and competitive levels.

The #LetGirlsPlay campaign wants just that – opening up football as an option for girls’ PE classes in schools.

Better media coverage is also essential. 79% of women believe increased media exposure in sports, and fitness could change misogynistic attitudes. You need only look at

the comparison in viewership of the UEFA Women’s Euro’s final of 365 million viewers versus the expected 5 billion viewers set to tune in to the FIFA World Cup.

These opinions appear to be supported by studies, as research suggests that women’s sports could make up to £1bn if the events are marketed properly. Unfortunately, there will always be offensive comments filtering through, but by giving female sports teams their fair share of exposure, these mindsets can and will change over time.

TALA adds, “Although we understand that as a smaller brand we can only go a slight percentage of the way to addressing this larger-scale issue, at TALA, we believe that creating a strong community for women, by women goes some way to help. Our brand’s social media community is a place where we want women to feel empowered, and we want to be a voice to represent these thousands of women.”



Liam Asman / SPP

Greenwood awarded Freedom of the Borough



Natalie Mincher/SPP

England star Alex Greenwood will become the first ever woman to be awarded the Freedom of Sefton.

The Bootle-born Lioness, who captured the nation's hearts in the summer of 2022 by helping to secure the UEFA Women's Euros Championship, will become the first woman to be given the illustrious Freedom of the Borough civic honour.

Alex will join fellow Bootle footballer Jamie Carragher and famous horse trainer Donald 'Ginger' McCain as the only three individuals on Sefton's Honorary Freedom Scroll, which officially confirms her status as Freewoman of the Borough.

Being bestowed the Freedom of the Borough is the highest honour Sefton Council can give to an individual and is only ever considered in exceptional circumstances.

At a meeting of Full Council on (Thursday, November 17)

councillors voted to award Alex with Freedom status.

It follows Sefton Council conferring Honorary Freedom of the Borough status on Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust, Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust, Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Southport & Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cllr Trish Hardy, Sefton Council's Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing, said: "Alex is a fantastic role model for young people in Sefton and has long been a major influence in the advancement of women and girls' football within our borough.

"Despite still being at the top of her game and competing in the Women's Super League, Alex regularly takes time to motivate and inspire future generations of sporting stars throughout our communities."

Cllr Ian Moncur, Sefton Council's Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing, said: "I want to take this opportunity to urge all our young sporting stars to take a look at Alex's hard work and dedication to getting where she is today as one of the world's best female footballers.

"Her progress is a testament to the excellent school and sports facilities we have within Sefton."

A ceremony to present Alex with her Freedom of the Borough honour is expected to take place in 2023.

The news comes just a month after a huge mural was painted and unveiled in her honour.

Greenwood has always spoke of how proud she is about her home town and how passionately she likes to inspire others from the neighbourhood to go out and achieve their dreams.

United we Stand

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

By Lydia Charles

Hey everyone, welcome back to my column!

It has been a great month for me playing with Preston North End (PNE).

On Sunday, November 27, I got Player of the Match I was so proud of myself and the Sunday before that we tied 1-1 which was better than losing. In the first game of the month, I scored a goal – it was incredible! I couldn't have done it without my fellow teammates. From the corner I headed the ball down to the ground with enough power the goalkeeper could not prevent the ball from going over the line.

I was so happy because this was the first goal I scored for PNE in a match and it proved to be the winning goal. This made me so joyful that when I was substituted, I couldn't help myself but do a little celebration dance, as we were a new team. This was our second win of the season showing that we are continually improving. We were also all very pleased because our new kit has arrived, and it looks outstanding.

The first weekend in December was incredible because not only did I get to play on Sunday, but also because on Saturday we went to watch Manchester United women at Old Trafford! As I was there, I met Grace (for my second time) from the company Miss Kick she was so nice and we played a bit of football and I got some free merchandise (headband and a flag)!



This was an important match as it was only our second time there, and because it shows that

women's football is getting more popular by the minute. We were against Aston Villa in the Women's Super League match. I couldn't but happier with the result, we won 5-0!

The goals were all outstanding; the first goal was scored in the 13th minute by Katie Zelem (captain), the second was by Leah Galton in the 28th minute assisted by Ella Toone, the third was by Alessia Russo in the 51st minute assisted by Toone.

The fourth goal was scored by Ona Battle in the 76th minute assisted by Martha Thomas, and finally the fifth goal was scored by Rachel Williams in the third minute of injury time assisted by Battle.

The player of the match went to Toone which was very well deserved as two assists are great and throughout the game she played amazingly. Still, it must have been a tough decision for Marc Skinner as everyone played absolutely superb.

I am really looking forward to the Manchester Derby. I will be watching Manchester United Vs Manchester City at the Eithad Stadium. It is going to be an interesting game, but I predict United will do well either way, tie, win or lose (hopefully not lose though). I assume that some of the people who scored in the last game will probably score again but you never

know there probably will be someone else to score too. Mary Earps again did some fantastic saves, Millie Turner did some brilliant passes from defence, Nikita Parris kept the tempo and kept her shape, Hayley Ladd did some excellent play including passes, skills, tackles and so on, Maya La Tissier did some excellent skills on the ball, obviously the goal scores and assisters did fantastic.

Hannah Blundell did some astonishing dribbles and skills, Vilde Boe Risa did some more astonishing tackles and skills and finally Lucia Garcia again some beautiful ball control. What a game it was!

I do feel sorry for the players that didn't play as it was at Old Trafford but hopefully, they were still happy with the result and play. The only card out of the whole game went to an Aston Villa player, Patten.

Marc Skinner was really supportive of the girls and so were all the fans around me. And of course, I myself super proud of the girls. Marc is a amazing manager and I hope that he carries on the positivity he has.

All I can say now is well done girls and come on United!



Making positive changes to ring in the New Year



Red Star Education are experts in delivering impartial financial education and wellbeing workshops and courses. We have been working with elite sporting academies since 2014, working in partnership with the Premier League, League Football Education and, more recently, Loughborough College, which supports the education delivery for the Women's Super League. With over 20 years experience as financial planners, our courses are relevant and useful for everyone but include specific details helpful for aspiring professional athletes.

Giving that we are coming up to the start of a new year, many of us might be considering making some positive changes to our lives. One way in which you can do this is by changing the way you view and treat your money. Are you using your money in a way that is meaningful for you?

By setting ourselves financial goals and creating a budget to meet these goals, we can give our money a purpose. These financial goals vary in size; for example, you might want to buy a new pair of trainers or save enough money for a house deposit. These things cost money, so it's helpful for you to think in detail about how you are going to achieve these goals!

We have recently established Red Star Education's Online Academy as an additional learning resource for our students. Our 'Financial Goal Setting' mini-course is available online for free:

All Courses - Red Star Financial Education (thinkific.com)

This walks you through how to set and achieve your financial goals, by following the 'SMART Goalsetting' system. SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely. By making sure your goals fit this criteria, you can create a set deadline for your goals and work out how much money you will need to save every week or month in order to meet them. We speak more in depth about this on the 'Financial Goal Setting' video.

You can then factor the cost of this saving into your budget, to ensure that it is achievable and manageable for you to save at this level whilst also paying for your day-to-day expenses. We have a free budget calculator tool on our website to help you work this out:

<https://www.redstareducation.co.uk/blog/budget-planner/>

It's important to remember that your financial goals are not fixed in stone.

You might change your financial goals as your life changes, and that's okay! The purpose of setting these goals and working towards them is to help you achieve the things you want in your life.

Setting these goals can make it much easier for you to follow a budget plan as it is clear what the pay-off will be for you in the long-run.



 **BARCLAYS**
WOMEN'S
SUPER LEAGUE

	Club	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
1	Chelsea	10	9	0	1	31	8	23	27
2	Arsenal	9	8	0	1	25	5	20	24
3	Manchester United	9	7	1	1	24	6	18	22
4	Manchester City	9	6	1	2	21	10	11	19
5	West Ham	10	5	0	5	15	18	-3	15
6	Aston Villa	9	4	0	5	13	19	-6	12
7	Tottenham	8	3	0	5	11	14	-3	9
8	Everton	8	3	0	5	7	10	-3	9
9	Liverpool	9	2	2	5	11	16	-5	8
10	Reading	10	2	1	7	12	23	-11	7
11	Brighton &	8	2	1	5	11	29	-18	7
12	Leicester City	9	0	0	9	2	25	-23	0

Table correct as of December 12, 2022



BARCLAYS CHAMPIONSHIP

Barclays Women's Championship sees records broken



The tightly contested Barclays Women's Championship saw both the individual and combined record attendances for the league broken last weekend in what is shaping up to be one of the best seasons ever for the competition.

With no top flight men's football taking place during the FIFA World Cup in Qatar, fans have flocked to fixtures across the Barclays Women's Championship, with a number of clubs holding their matches in their men's stadium.

Sheffield United, who hosted new league leaders London City Lionesses at Bramall Lane, smashed the previous Barclays Women's Championship attendance record, with an attendance of 11,137 – almost doubling that of the impressive number set by Bristol City last season (5,752).

With matches held at Blackburn's Ewood Park,

Bristol City's Ashton Gate, and a club record attendance for Crystal Palace at Selhurst Park of 1,969, the total attendance across the Barclays Women's Championship was 17,500 – a record weekend for the competition.

Kelly Simmons, The FA's Director for the Women's Professional Game, said: "I'm really encouraged to see the records broken in the Barclays Women's Championship, and congratulations to Sheffield United on breaking the individual attendance record for the league.

"It's such an exciting and tightly contested league, and there is so much quality on show within the division.

"The Barclays Women's Championship continues to go from strength to strength and I am really pleased that we are seeing such healthy attendances, that are considerably up on last season."

Charlton impressive in London derby



By Paul Donegan

Charlton Athletic won 2-1 in this south London derby against Crystal Palace at Selhurst Park. Emily Simpkins gave Charlton the lead from the penalty spot in the 17th minute, and Melissa Johnson doubled their lead just before half time. Floss Gibbons got a goal back for Palace during the second half with a brilliant free kick. There was a record attendance for a Palace home match with 1,969 fans there to watch.

In the opening ten minutes, Simpkins put a low shot wide for Charlton whilst Crystal Palace saw a scramble in the penalty box cleared then a low cross claimed by Sian Rogers. In the 11th minute, Rogers got to Paige Bailey-Gayle's

through ball first to stop another attack from the home side.

The Palace fans behind the goal were singing and creating a good atmosphere with their flags hung up along the back of the stand.

Charlton were awarded a penalty when Johnson was brought down by Fran Kitching in the area after being played through. Simpkins scored from the spot to give the Addicks the lead in the 17th minute.

There were a couple of stoppages for injuries that broke play up during the first half. The next chance didn't come until two minutes before half time when Palace saw a Molly

Sharpe effort from a corner blocked.

Charlton made it 2-0 in the 45th minute. They broke forward and Angela Addison played a great through ball to Johnson who took a couple of touches and finished low into the net.

Tegan McGowan almost extended Charlton's lead further in the fifth minute of first half stoppage time when she turned in box then sent a shot against the crossbar.

The away side had the first second half chance when Ella Rutherford's dipping shot from 25 yards went just over in 51st minute.

Palace appealed loudly for a penalty in the 59th minute after Elise Hughes and

Elisha N'Dow clashed in the area but the referee and assistant decided not to give a spot kick.

Shauna Guyatt was brought down just outside the area three minutes later and Palace were given a free kick in a dangerous position. Gibbons stepped up to take the kick and scored superbly from around 20 yards to get the Eagles back into the match.

The home side then had a few chances in quick succession with Bailey-Gayle sending in a cross that no one could get onto, then seconds later Hughes saw her effort deflected wide. From the corner, Anna Filbey's effort went into the Rogers hands.

At the other end, Johnson had a shot saved then caught by Kitching in the 73rd minute, then Rutherford sent a shot wide three minutes later.

Bailey-Gayle put in another dangerous cross for Palace in the 80th minute but it was easily caught by Rogers.

Charlton had a couple of chances in the 83rd minute as they looked to wrap the game up. Emma Follis' low cross was cleared behind by Annabel Johnson before it could reach its target. Then there were a couple of blocks from the corner by the home side before Simpkins low driven shot was saved by post.

Palace came agonisingly close to equalising in the

87th minute when Hughes put an effort inches wide of the post from Annabel Blanchard's low cross. The home side had the final chance of the game in the 90th minute when Filbey's shot from 30 yards flew not far wide.

Line ups

Crystal Palace (4-3-3)

Kitching, Reilly, Johnson (c), Fibley, Gibbons, Olding (Guyatt 46'), Haines (Arthur 79'), Barton (Doran 90'+2), Bailey-Gayle, Sharpe (Hughes 46'), Sibley (Blanchard 79')

Unused substitutes

Waldie, Negri, Noble

Goals – Gibbons 64'

Charlton (4-1-4-1)

Athletic

Rogers, Roe, N'Dow, Skeels, Henson, Ross, McGowan (Follis 57'), Simpkins (c), Rutherford, Addison (Bruton 74'), Johnson

Unused substitutes

Gray, Newborough, Ayisi, Logan, Bashford, O'Rourke, Bell

Goals – Simpkins (pen) 17', Johnson 45'

Bookings – N'Dow 40', Roe 57', Henson 62'

Referee – Melissa Burgin

Attendance – 1,969



All change at the Championship top



James Whitehead/SPP

By Peter Mann

Heading into the festive season, the Barclays Women's Championship steps aside for December as the Continental League Cup takes centre-stage, in fact that was how November finished, with just one other cup match featuring a Championship outfit, taking place.

That was in mid-November, when fourth place Southampton won 2-1 away to Ebbsfleet United in the Vitality Women's FA Cup First Round, before crashing out in the next, in early December, losing 3-0 to London Bees.

November would also see Bristol lose for the first time this season, London City

take over top spot, and Coventry continue their winless streak; there was also a notable, managerial departure as Neil Redfearn departed third bottom, Sheffield United.

Southampton's Katie Wilkinson (home to Coventry), and Durham's Rio Hardy (away to Coventry), on 2 and 20 November respectively, both bagged hat-tricks, as did London City's Shanade Hopcroft (home to Birmingham, 2 November), with Hardy's a somewhat quick-fire one, in six, first half minutes, Coventry's misfortune continuing into December when they conceded five to Sunderland, Emily Scarr with a four-goal

salvo which in itself contained a first half hat-trick.

London City Lionesses (21 pts)

The Lionesses moved to six wins and three draws as the Championship moves towards the halfway stage, and they moved top of the table, by a point, over previous leaders, Bristol City.

November began with a 3-2 win over Birmingham City, Shanade Hopcroft with the hosts three goals whilst Louise Quinn pulled two back, too little too late; later in the month there was a 2-0 win away to Sheffield United, goals from Amy Mae Rodgers and Atlanta Primus, early in the first and late in

the second, earning the points there.

And, with Bristol losing, at home to Birmingham, the Lionesses moved top of the pile ahead of their 2-1, Conti Cup loss, at home to Brighton & Hove Albion, December kicking off with them drawing 1-1 at home to Southampton, Sarah Ewens netting late in the second before they gave away a penalty to allow the hosts to nick a point at the death.

The increasing success of the Lionesses would see manager, Melissa Phillips, take home the November Manager of the Month award, which she said on receiving it: "I'm incredibly fortunate to lead a group of staff and players who have such strong character and drive.

"We are a focused group throughout the club right now and this recognition is a testament to the hard work that goes in daily from everyone. All the credit goes to the team and staff."

Bristol City (20 pts)

Leaders for much of the first half of the season, Bristol dropped points in mid-November when crashing to a first defeat of the campaign, going down 1-0 at home to Birmingham. It cost them top spot although they do have a game in hand, and are only a point behind the Lionesses.

They proceeded to lose for a second time, in the space of week, when on Conti Cup

duty, Abi Harrison with the Robins' goal when losing 2-1 to Championship title rivals, Charlton Athletic, whilst December, that kicked off better for lowly Durham than it did Bristol, the north-east side battling to a 1-1 draw, in a game which the visitors saw as a pivotal one, Shania Hayles having opened the scoring for the visitors.

The Robins boss said afterwards: "I'm quite pleased to be coming away with a point....

"Durham are a tough team to play against. They're experienced and well organised which showed during the game.

"We weren't stepping onto the loose balls as well as they were which meant that the 'luck' seemed to be falling their way and we didn't wake up to that until the end of the game."

Charlton Athletic (19 pts)

The Addicks are third in the table from a month which saw them pick up three consecutive 2-1 wins, two in the league, and one in the Conti Cup; consistency at its best.

An Emily Simpkins penalty and a goal from Melissa Johnson saw Charlton start November with a 2-1 win in Durha, all three goals coming in the first half with Beth Hepple having equalised from the spot; a few weeks later, and a local affair with Crystal Palace, it

would be the same one-two netting, again in the first period.

The game with Palace proved costly for the Addicks however, they losing forward Tegan McGowan for a lengthy period, the 18-year-old having suffered an anterior cruciate ligament rupture and now awaits surgery.

Consistency, and a pattern growing there although, in third, 2-1 win, in the Conti Cup, at home to Bristol, Kiera Skeels with a brace having netted once in each half for the Championship high-fliers; kicking-off December, Lauren Bruton netted the only goal of the game as the Addicks picked up another three points, in a 1-0 win at home to Sheffield United.

Those victories see the Addicks cruising in third place, and just two points behind the leaders, London City, and level with fourth place Southampton.

Southampton (19 pts)

The Saints, they began November with a 3-0 win at home to Coventry, Katie Wilkinson's first half hat-trick, the goals coming in the 1st, 38th, and 42 minutes, earned them a 3-0 win at home to Coventry United, she also scoring in the 1-1 draw away to Blackburn later in the month, before finishing up with a 3-0 reverse at home to Reading, in the Conti Cup.

Their last goal ahead of the festivities, would see Paige Peake with a last minute penalty, against Blackburn, her first competitive goal for the club, thus earning a point and dent London City's progression at the top.

Birmingham City (16 pts)

The Blues currently find themselves three points off the fourth place Saints, having lost the same, three times, as Charlton in third, but have played a game less than those above them.

Perhaps disappointed to lose by the odd-goal-in-five when away to leaders, London City, Louise Quinn with that brace, netting one in each half, they edged to victory later in the month, winning 1-0 at Bristol, which saw change at the top, Jade Pennock with the only goal seven minutes into the second period.

A 2-0 defeat to West Ham United in the Conti Cup was followed up with the opening December match, a 2-0 win when at Blackburn, Siobhan Wilson netting in first half stoppage time, Louise Quinn with the second, early into the second period.

Following the win over Blackburn, goal-scorer Wilson said: "It is always frustrating when you have a lot of the ball, and you play against a team in a low block.

"It is very hard to try and break the lines, so it is

something we are working on.

"It is about having the patience and control to that because there will be a time when you can break the line.

"I think we did show that most of the time today, there were some parts where we could have controlled it better but that is still a working progress."

Crystal Palace (15 pts)

Mid-table Eagles find themselves just six points off top spot, with five wins and four losses, and a game in hand themselves on their capital rivals, they only taking to the field, eventually, on 20 November, when they lost to another rival, Charlton Athletic, their first game in November, home to Sheffield United, postponed.

They then proceeded to crash to a 4-1 defeat to mid-table rivals, Lewes, in the Conti Cup, before beating the same side, 1-0, in the league, as December kicked off – that in itself brings that age old question of what does one prefer, cup progression, or three points in the bag.

The narrow, home loss to Charlton, that was in front of a Palace home record crowd of 1,969 spectators.

Lewes (13 pts)

Sussex-based Lewes, a couple of points off Palace and sitting nicely in seventh place had a similar scenario to their London rivals.

Their game at home to now-former leaders, Bristol, postponed at the start of the month, before Ellie Hack's goal, seven minutes from time, gave them the points away to Sunderland; the Conti Cup meanwhile, that saw them ease to a 4-1 win away to Palace as Emma Thompson bagged a first half double.

Prior to the win over Sunderland, Lewes manager, Scott Booth, said: "We're constantly working on getting more goals, we know where we need to improve but any away trip in the Championship is going to be difficult.

"I think our start to the season has been really good though to be honest. We've had a lot of work to do, but it doesn't feel like we're far in.

"But we kind of are in a way, now that we're approaching Christmas. I feel like we've covered a lot of ground, players have been given a lot of information, the players have bonded incredibly well and they've formed into a really strong team that's highly competitive."

The goals continued to flow in the opening forty-five in London, an own-goal, and one from Emily Kraft, had them four goals to the good at the break, Palace not registering, through Molly Mae Sharpe, until the closing minutes.

Palace though gained instant revenge when defeating Lewes, in Sussex, by the one

goal at the start of December, the Rooks having hosted 'An Evening with Tony Russell & Scott Booth' at their Dripping Pan home, on 8 December.

Blackburn Rovers (12 pts)

Mid-table Rovers lead the relegation-threatened sides having picked up a dozen points from their eleven outings thus far, winning three and drawing three in the process.

A point behind Lewes, and one ahead of Durham, Rovers claimed a lone-goal success at the start of the month, courtesy of Ellie Leek seven minutes from time, at home to lowly Sunderland, before picking up a hard-earned point against visitors Southampton thanks to Saffron Jordan's goal, five minutes from time.

The Conti Cup would see the Championship side fall to a narrow, 1-0 defeat on Merseyside, when visiting Liverpool, before they feel to their fourth defeat of the season, at the start of December, losing 2-0 at home to Birmingham.

Durham (11 pts)

One of two, north-east sides in the Championship, both of which are languishing in the bottom four heading to the half-way point of the season, Durham have enjoyed a few highlights this campaign, in league and campaign.



Currently holding a five-point advantage on third bottom Sheffield United, and eleven better off than Coventry at the foot of the table, Durham narrowly lost their November opener at home to Charlton, then hit hosts Coventry for five, lost agonisingly to Aston Villa, 1-0, in the Conti Cup, before picking up a battling point with high-fliers Bristol.

Against the Championship's basement club, Durham easing to a 5-1 win as Jess Clarke and Saorise Noonan had the visitors two goals to the good inside twenty minutes, before Rio Hardy took over, emphatically, with a six-minute hat-trick, in the closing stages of the opening forty-five.

In their first game of December, Durham battled to a 1-1 draw at home to Bristol City, Hardy's goal just after the half hour mark, cancelling out Shania Hayles' opener ten minutes earlier.

Two of Durham's star players have also been away on international duty during November, Noonan with the Republic of Ireland, at a warm weather camp in Marbella, and Sarah Robson with Northern Ireland, as she notched the only goal in a famous win over visiting Italy.

Sheffield United (7 pts)

The Blades, having seen November's opener away to Palace, postponed, also didn't play until later in the month, losing first, 2-0 at home to leaders London City, lost 3-0 in the Conti Cup against visitors Everton, before narrowly losing 1-0 away to Charlton at the start of December.

Having picked up just two wins and a draw thus far, and with Neil Redfearn having stepped aside as manager, the Blades are joint-second bottom with Sunderland on seven points, having played a game less than their relegation rivals.

Redfearn, who spent over two years with the Blades, said in a club statement that: "I would like to thank everyone connected with Sheffield United for their support during my time as manager of the women's team.

"I am proud of the players and staff, who have performed exceptionally well in an increasingly full-time league with a win percentage of 44% across all competitions, and I wish them all the very best in their future careers.

"It has been a real pleasure to witness and support the development of everyone we have worked with over the past couple of years and I

am proud of those who continue to make progress as players and as individuals.

"I would like to thank Carl Shieber (Head of Football Administration) and Zoe Johnson (Head of Women's Football) for their continued support of the team, as well as the fans who have bought into what we have been aiming to achieve.

"Whilst I have really enjoyed managing Sheffield United, I feel it is the right time to step aside.

"I hope the club continues to challenge the best teams in the league and I look forward to seeing their progress in the coming seasons."

Sunderland (7 pts)

The Black Cats have only just picked up their second, league win of the season, following narrow defeats away to Blackburn, and home to Lewes, 1-0 in each, during November, whilst also falling to a 3-0 defeat away to Manchester City in the Conti Cup.

December though, it would begin with a little festive promise, with a goal-blitz of their own away to the divisions' cannon-fodder of Coventry City, and a four-goal salvo to boot.

Emily Scarr bagged herself four goals, including a first

half treble, sticking the fourth in with nineteen minutes remaining, whilst Jessica Brown added the fifth shortly after the restart, the Black Cats purring to a 5-0 victory.

Black Cats boss, Melanie Reay, urging the importance of victory ahead of the Coventry game when saying: “It’s an important game.

“It’s another opportunity to get some points on the board.

“It would be a good opportunity to go into the second half of the season following a successful game,” and that they did.

Coventry United (0 pts)

Bottom club Coventry, they’ve not really moved since the opening weeks, have now lost ten straight and have a goal-difference of -32 (scored five, conceded thirty-seven) following the thumping off Sunderland (Scarr with four).

That loss, at the start of December, was added to throughout November by a 3-0 loss at Southampton (hat-trick from Wilkinson), a 5-1 defeat at home to Durham (Hardy hat-trick), and a 5-1 lost to Tottenham Hotspur in the Conti Cup, Francesca Orthodoxou with a rare, chink of light, in the Coventry darkness.

The draw for the third round of the Vitality Women’s FA Cup, sees the following ties concerning Championship clubs – Coventry United vs. Stockport County; Peterborough United vs. Durham; Birmingham City vs. Huddersfield Town; Blackburn Rovers vs. Sunderland; Sheffield United vs. Nottingham Forest; Bristol City vs. Southampton; Crystal Palace vs. Watford/Crawley Wasps; Lewes vs. London Bees; London City Lionesses vs. Portsmouth; Charlton Athletic vs. MK Dons



Spacey-Cale awarded boss

Southampton's Marieanne Spacey-Cale has been awarded the Women's Championship Manager of the Month for October 2022.

Southampton won all their league matches throughout the month 1-0 with victories over Birmingham City, Sheffield United and Sunderland.

Spacey-Cale said "It's always a proud honour to win any award, especially in this division, but this is more than just an individual award – we've got such a fantastic squad of staff who work endlessly all week to get us in the best position possible heading into each matchday".

City latest to change shorts

Bristol City have announced that they will wear red shorts with their home kit for the remainder of the 2022/23 season.

Bristol City said on their website that wearing white clothing while on a period can be a concern for all athletes and the change had been made with a view to maximising performance by aiding focus and reducing anxiety on matchday.

Gray joins Charlton

Goalkeeper Jessica Gray has joined Charlton Athletic for the remainder of the 2022/23 season.

Gray joins from FA Women's National League Southern Premier Division side Billericay Town.

Gray said "I am really delighted, it is a great club! I have come in and the girls have all been really nice to me, there is a great atmosphere. I am a keen shot-stopper, I like to play out from the back, being vocal and being involved in the back four as well."

She made her debut for the club at the end of November in the Conti Cup match against Bristol City.

Rendell wins Player of the Month

Kayla Rendell has won the Women's Championship Player of the Month award for October 2022.

The Southampton goalkeeper kept three clean sheets for the Saints throughout the month.

On Twitter, Rendell said "delighted to have won this!

"Wouldn't be possible without the teammates and staff that surround me everyday."

Graham makes first team debut

Sheffield United youngster Molly Graham has stepped up to the first team after impressing in the club's academy and development sides. The 19-year-old centre back has been with the club since she was 11 and has regularly trained with the first team throughout this season. Graham becomes the tenth teenager in the first team squad to come from the club's Regional Talent Centre.

Records broken

A new Women's Championship attendance record of 11,137 was set when Sheffield United hosted London City Lionesses at Bramall Lane on Sunday 20th November.

Crystal Palace had a record home attendance of 1,969 on the same day. That weekend's games also saw a new cumulative attendance record set for the league of 17,500.

Redfearn leaves Sheffield United

Neil Redfearn has resigned as manager of Sheffield United. Redfearn had been in charge of the Blades for just over two years.

His final match in charge was against London City Lionesses on 20th November. Head of women's football at the club, Zoe Johnson, and technical director, Luke Turner, have taken temporary charge of the side.

Goal of the month winner announced

Birmingham City's Lucy Quinn stunning strike against Sheffield United has won the vote for the Women's Championship October Goal of the Month.

Mullen suffers ACL

Sunderland's Faye Mullen has undergone surgery on her Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) injury.

The defender sustained the injury in the Conti Cup match against Liverpool at the start of October. Mullen will spend the rest of the 2022/23 season in rehabilitation. We wish Faye a full and speedy recovery.

McGowan out due to ACL injury

It has been confirmed by Charlton Athletic that Tegan McGowan sustained an Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) injury during their match against Crystal Palace on the 20th November. The 18-year-old will undergo surgery soon and then complete her rehabilitation with the club. We wish Tegan a quick recovery.



Periods and pregnancy still taboo



Sport and exercise experts from Staffordshire University are calling for better education around periods and pregnancy in women's football.

New research carried out at women's football clubs across six European countries shows that education around the menstrual cycle, hormonal contraception and pregnancy is severely lacking.

The study, led by academics from Staffordshire University, involved more than 1,100 players, coaches and managers from grassroots to elite level clubs in Bulgaria, England, Finland, France, Poland and Spain.

Dr Jacky Forsyth, Associate Professor of Exercise Physiology, explained: "The topic of ovarian hormones and their effects on training and performance, in addition to pregnancy and postpartum, seems to have received scant consideration.

"In sport, these topics also come with varying degrees of stigma and silence, as well as being a barrier to gender equality.

"Despite some good practices in individual clubs across different countries, there was limited knowledge and understanding of how training, performance and health are affected. Knowledge was generally left up to the individual without support from governing bodies or coach education providers."

69% of all participants said that educational provision on menstrual cycle was 'not at all' provided at their clubs and while some clubs tracked players' menstrual cycle this was varied and inconsistent.

Approaching coaches about menstrual cycle was identified as difficult for some players with one barrier being that 'the female game is still predominantly coached by males' and that 'males won't understand'. Because of this, some players supported each other, keeping it 'between us girls' rather than approaching their coaches.

Similarly, 77% of respondents reported no educational provision on hormonal contraception and 64% reported no educational provision on pregnancy. Furthermore, only 5% knew of club policies on pregnancy, maternity leave, motherhood and caring responsibilities/childcare.

Co-author Dr Alex Blackett said: "These findings shine a light on the fact that football training and education is still geared towards the men's games. The development of women's football seems to be surface level at the moment and underneath it all there's still a lot more that needs to be done."

The team at Staffordshire University will now work directly with football clubs in the UK to put some of their findings into practice and E-WinS project partners are producing toolkits which will be freely available online.

In 2022, Chelsea F.C. Women became the first football club in the world to tailor training to players' menstrual cycles and the England women's manager Sarina Wiegman introduced menstrual tracking apps ahead of the team's victory at the 2022 European Women's Football Championship.

More recently, a number of teams announced a switch to coloured shorts with their home kit because of player concerns about wearing white during their periods.

Dr Forsyth added: "Something as simple as tracking players' menstrual cycles can make a huge difference. For instance, performance may be optimised at certain phases of the menstrual cycle and training could be adapted in order to avoid injury and muscle soreness.

"Coaches should be knowledgeable about issues that are specific to women and my hope is this will be incorporated into the FA's coaching awards because it is clearly needed."

Menstrual cycle, hormonal contraception and pregnancy in women's football: perceptions of players, coaches and managers is published in the Sport in Society journal.



 **BARCLAYS**
WOMEN'S
CHAMPIONSHIP

	Club	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
1	London City Lionesses	10	6	3	1	20	7	13	21
2	Bristol City	9	6	2	1	14	4	10	20
3	Charlton	10	6	1	3	19	14	5	19
4	Southampton	10	5	4	1	13	8	5	19
5	Birmingham City	9	5	1	3	14	10	4	16
6	Crystal Palace	9	5	0	4	11	10	1	15
7	Lewes	9	3	4	2	9	8	1	13
8	Blackburn Rovers	10	3	3	4	10	15	-5	12
9	Durham	9	3	2	4	13	13	0	11
10	Sheffield United	9	2	1	6	14	12	2	7
11	Sunderland	10	2	1	7	10	14	-4	7
12	Coventry United	10	0	0	10	5	37	-32	0

Table correct as of December 12, 2022



THE FA NATIONAL LEAGUE

Draws made for National League Cup and Plate



Sports Press Photo

The quarter-final draws for the 2022-23 FA Women's National League Cup and Plate competitions have been made.

Last season's National League Cup winners Southampton are not in contention to retain their crown after getting promoted.

They beat Huddersfield Town 3-0 in the final last May.

Huddersfield, runners-up, remain in contention once again after beating Middlesbrough 6-1.

FAWNL Cup Q-Fs

Burnley v Nottingham Forest

Wolverhampton Wanderers v Huddersfield Town

Plymouth Argyle or Cardiff City v Portsmouth or Oxford United

Watford or Hashtag United v MK Dons

Nottingham Forest beat AFC Wimbledon 2-1 in last season's National League Plate final.

Forest remain in the Cup quarter-finals so will not be able to retain their title.

FAWNL Plate Q-Fs

Hull City v Stourbridge

AFC Fylde v Leeds United

Crawley Wasps or Ashford Town v Cheltenham Town

Swindon Town or Southampton Women or Hounslow v Billericay Town or Queens Park Rangers

Ties to be played on 22 January 2023.

TWFM partners with Her Game Too



By Helen Summers

We are delighted to announce that we have partnered with Her Game Too.

We are looking forward to working together in our bid to create a space for everyone at football games.

After the announcement was made, we sat down with one of the original founders Eve Ralph to chat about the amazing work they do.

Please could you give us a bit of background about yourself and your role within Her Game Too.

I am co-founder of Her

Game Too. It is voluntary and I do it alongside my full-time role at Leicester City.

My specific role is that I work on Partnerships. We try and grow the partnerships to see what more can be done whether it's with a club or an organisation. We are always looking for new ideas as to where Her Game Too can go.

As co-founder, what made you start Her Game Too?

The initial idea was pitched to me by another member of the team. She received a lot of abuse on Twitter during a

particular incident in lockdown. She locked her account, blocked her socials and after a few months, she sat and wondered why she put up with it.

She reached out to 11 females with an idea to raise awareness about abuse which she, and others, had received. She wanted to do a campaign video.

We all thought it would be great to raise awareness, people will see but once we released it, the amount of support we received was amazing. It has grown from that to the campaign you see today.

When the video came out, did you receive mostly positive?

Absolutely. Personally, I had no idea how it was going to go down. We released it on a game day. I was heading to Wembley for the first time in over a year to watch football. My phone did not stop—it was amazing.

My first thoughts were that people were mocking it but the response was incredible. The amount of people who got in touch was phenomenal. We never thought it would reach as many people as it did.

There was a small fraction of the comments which were negative. We had people mocking it, people saying ‘Get over it’ and a number of negative comments but the positive outweighed the negative.

There are definitely people who didn’t think that it was an important topic but came to realise it was with the response we got from clubs, individuals and others who had similar stories.

Moving past the video, you are working with over 60 clubs now. What do you do when you start working with a club?

The main thing for us it to make sure that we have a reporting system in place. A lot of clubs do, but then when we delve into it deeper, we see that they are not promoted well and people do not know that there is a

system available to be able to report.

Another one is that it is important that clubs know that sexism is abuse and that it should be reported and treated seriously.

A lot of the time they have listed racism and homophobia but there is no mention about sexism. We wanted to get sexist put under that umbrella as well.

We get all this branded with our logo so that people know that we are working together with a club and associated with the reporting system.

We also have designated Her Game Too fixtures so a lot of the time the players will warm up in the t-shirts, we will promote female fans and staff whether that be on the pitch or in the programme, we have female mascots and we try and get as many females involved with those days as we can.

We also have a Her Game Too ambassador at each club. They work as a liaison between Her Game Too and the club. If anyone shares any reports we have that person who can directly take it to the club and action it.

We also want to highlight the positives. It’s important to have that person on the ground, that goes to games, who is able to see what is going on at their club on a regular basis.

Can any club get involved, no matter what level?

Absolutely any club. We have professional, women’s teams, men’s teams and grassroots partnerships.

The grassroots partnerships are a little different as they don’t have the same budget but it’s still the same underlying values.

If there is a club reading this who wants to get involved, what do they do?

They could drop us an email from the website. Let us know they would like to be involved—it is really easy to get sorted.

We are delighted with the partnership, but what are you hoping the partnership with TWFM is going to bring?

We want to make sure that we are helping keep up the momentum from the Euros. Women’s football has skyrocketed in the summer and we would love that to keep going.

We can link up to promote the game and we think that it can only be positive.

If you are interested in finding out more about Her Game Too:

[Www.hergametoo.com](http://www.hergametoo.com)

For information about joining with Her Game TOO email,

info@hergametoo.com

Simon Says

As someone who has recently taken to supporting a development side in the women's game, I thought this month I would look at the growth in the women's game and in particular the development team which many clubs are creating.

The creation of development teams is in my view one not just of necessity but essential if we are to see the growth in the women's game that we, as fans and supporters of the women's game desire.

In my local area the Birmingham County FA Women's League has seen a growing trend in established clubs from higher up in the women's game creating development sides to run alongside their established first-team or reserve teams. In the Birmingham County FA we see teams such as Redditch United have a team in the Premier Division of the BCWL.

Redditch like other clubs has seen all team's men and women integrated and playing at the main stadium. This can only be beneficial for all in the game showing that all clubs under a team banner will play in the colours and stadia. Other clubs associated with men's clubs who run women's sides are Sutton Coldfield Town, Coventry City, Coundon Court, Coventry Sphinx, Long Itchington, and Walsall Ladies. These clubs have been successful because Birmingham County FA have been pushing hard for women's game and it is paying dividends. Previously there might have been a disconnect between a club's first team and development but that is no longer the case.

Players who begin playing football for the first time and who have ambitions can now see a way to progress into the first team if they have the talent and desire to do so.

For many teams having a development side is an important link with the community and

can be a way of introducing players to competitive football at a level that is easier than trying to break into a first team, or reserve team if you are a newcomer or young player to the game.

The coaching in development football is tailored to the newcomer more so than regular coaching in the first team setting and this does allow the players to develop in an environment that is not pressured, and players are not made to feel unskilled if they make some mistakes. The development setting is one that allows a player to grow in confidence with support of team mates and coaching staff.

Development teams have also been brought into being at university level football with some university teams who run development sides entering them into the lower reaches of the BUCS football system. Other universities who have only recently set up development teams play in friendly development leagues with the idea of bringing them into the established universities BUCS leagues once the players have gained sufficient experience.

If you wish to know more about a development team near you, contact your local County FA.

Simon

Cook named FAWNL Manager of the Month

Forest Women head coach Andy Cook has been named the FA Women's National League Manager of the Month for November.

The Reds sit second in the National League North table, three points behind leaders Wolves having played a game less.

Speaking to the official website, Cook said: "I'm delighted to receive the award, it's been a real team effort and it's great to see the hard work rewarded," said Cook.

"We're going well in the league, as well as in the League Cup and FA Cup but it's important we take each game as it comes and continue to improve week on week.

"I couldn't ask for any more from the players and staff since the start of the season and that's testament to the people we have here at the club.

"A lot of hard work goes in to preparing the players each week and we're beginning to see that pay off for us now, but we're hungry for more and want to keep progressing forward."

Collins joins Liverpool Feds

Liverpool Feds have announced a new signing at the club.

Leah Collins has joins the WNL North side from Mersey LFC and will be sponsored by the Scizor Sisters Unisex Hair Studio.

West Brom announce two new signings

West Bromwich Albion have announced two new signings in Maria Timms and Lizzie Bennett-Steele.

Timms, a 19-year-old defender, has been on trial with the Baggies and joins on a dual registration from Birmingham City.

She will continue to play games with Blues' WSL Academy and train with the first team.

Head Coach Jenny Sugarman told the official website: "We're delighted to have Maria join us for the rest of this season.

"We've been really impressed by what we have seen from her over the past few weeks in training and we feel she will be a great addition to our squad.

"For Maria, this is a great opportunity to gain some minutes in senior football while continuing her development with us and Birmingham City."

Bennett-Steele joins the club as a forward and immediately was part of the squad who travelled to Lichfield for their FA Cup.

The 25-year-old has previously played at Wolves, Stoke City, Boldmere St. Michaels and Coventry United.

Walker announced as Ipswich Town Head of Goalkeeping

Ipswich Town have announced that Paul Walker has been made the new Head of Goalkeeping.

The 30-year-old joins the Tractor Girls from Stowmarket Town after one year with the fellow Suffolk side.

In addition to his new role with the Tractor Girls, Paul will also work with the Club's academy boys age groups.

Ipswich Town launch official supporters club

Ipswich Town women have announced a new dedicated official supporter's club.

ITFC Women Official Supporters Club (ITFC WOSC) has been formed with the core aim of promoting the Tractor Girls and representing the interests of ITFC Women supporters - young and old. The ITFC WOSC has been established to mirror the same arrangements and purpose as the ITFC Official Supporters Club for the men's team.

Working with the club, a group of fans has recently formed a committee to oversee the functions and activities of the ITFC WOSC.

King becomes Pompey first team coach

Portsmouth Women have appointed Dan King as first team coach at the club.

Jay Sadler's new member of the backroom staff as experience at Crawley Wasps and has achieved his Uefa B Licence.

Speaking to the official website, King said: "I'm delighted to be part of the Pompey Women set up. Having come up against the team last year and seeing how they like to play, the passion they have for the game, but also the passion the fans have for the club in general, is amazing."

Stourbridge impressing

After losing 2-0 at Sheffield on their FAWNL debut, Stourbridge then reeled off eight successive wins to put themselves nine points clear at the top of the Division One Midlands table for what is the most impressive introduction since the re-structuring of the League to embrace the former Combination Leagues.

That run included a 10-1 home win over Long Eaton United whose goal by Ella Brennan was the first by a visiting player in over a year. In a re-arranged game against Sheffield, the visitors went ahead, Stourbridge levelled, but then an injury to Zoe Clarke who landed on her head caused the game to be abandoned.

Fortunately the ambulance arrived within half an hour and Clarke's injury was not as bad as first feared. Footballing injuries are not always so quickly attended to and there was a reported wait of several hours for an ambulance to arrive earlier this season.

Newcastle impress at St. James Park

Newcastle have been making the most of the Premier League absence and have been playing their games at St James Park.

Their second-round FA Cup game against Barnsley saw the Lady Magpies win 2-1 in front of a record-breaking crowd.

Newcastle part-owner Amanda Staveley was in attendance to show her support for the women's team, who narrowly missed out on promotion despite losing just two games in the season.

28,565 fans were present at St James Park—an FA Cup record crowd outside of the final.

Back in May, Newcastle also played at St. James Park against Alnwick where 22,134 were present—so that record was also smashed.

FANWNL

2022/23 Tables

Northern Premier Division

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Wolverhampton Wanderers	10	8	1	1	21	25
2 Nottingham Forest	9	7	1	1	20	22
3 Burnley	10	6	4	0	14	22
4 Huddersfield Town	9	5	2	2	6	17
5 Derby County	10	4	2	4	6	14
6 Stoke City	10	4	1	5	-7	13
7 Liverpool Feds	10	3	3	4	-7	12
8 AFC Fylde	10	2	2	3	-3	11
9 Boldmere St. Michaels	10	3	3	6	-9	10
10 West Bromwich Albion	10	2	2	5	-9	9
11 Brighouse Town	11	1	1	5	-5	8
12 Loughborough Lightning	11	0	0	9	-27	2

Southern Premier Division

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Oxford United	10	7	3	0	16	24
2 Watford	9	6	1	2	18	19
3 Portsmouth	10	6	1	3	13	19
4 Ipswich Town	8	5	1	2	10	16
5 Billericay Town	10	5	1	4	0	16
6 Cheltenham Town	8	4	1	3	-6	13
7 Bridgwater United	10	3	3	4	0	12
8 Gillingham	10	3	2	5	-4	11
9 Milton Keynes Dons	8	3	1	4	-1	10
10 London Bees	9	3	1	5	-9	10
11 Plymouth Argyle	10	2	0	8	-16	6
12 Crawley Wasps	10	0	3	7	-21	3

Tables correct as of December 12, 2022



TheFA Women's
National League

FANWNL

2022/23 Tables

Division One North

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Durham Cestria	9	6	2	1	11	20
2 Barnsley	9	6	1	2	11	19
3 Newcastle United	9	6	1	2	7	19
4 Middlesbrough	11	6	0	5	-2	18
5 Leeds United	9	5	1	3	8	16
6 Stockport County	10	4	3	3	0	15
7 Norton & Stockton Ancients	11	3	4	4	1	13
8 Hull City	8	3	2	3	3	11
9 York City	11	3	2	6	-4	11
10 Chorley	9	2	2	5	-11	8
11 Merseyrail	10	1	4	5	-12	7
12 Bradford City	10	2	0	8	-12	6

Division One Midlands

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Stourbridge	10	9	0	1	37	27
2 Doncaster Rovers Belles	8	6	0	2	12	18
3 Lincoln City	11	5	1	5	9	16
4 Sporting Khalsa	9	5	1	3	7	16
5 Leafield Athletic	11	4	4	3	5	16
6 Solihull Moors	7	4	2	1	13	14
7 Peterborough United	8	3	2	3	3	11
8 Wem Town	10	3	1	6	-8	10
9 Sheffield	7	3	0	4	-2	9
10 Leek Town	10	2	3	5	-10	9
11 Northampton Town	7	1	2	4	0	5
12 Long Eaton United	10	1	0	9	-66	3

Tables correct as of November 7, 2022



TheFA Women's
National League

FANWNL

2022/23 Tables

Division One South East

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Hashtag United	8	7	1	0	39	22
2 Norwich City	7	5	1	1	13	16
3 AFC Wimbledon	7	5	1	1	12	16
4 Actonians	8	4	1	3	21	13
5 London Seaward	7	4	1	2	0	13
6 Cambridge United	8	3	2	3	12	11
7 Queens Park Rangers	8	3	2	3	6	11
8 Chesham United	8	3	0	5	-16	9
9 Ashford Town	7	2	1	4	1	7
10 Cambridge City	9	1	0	8	-14	3
11 Hounslow	7	0	0	7	-74	0
X Wyomondham Town	X	X	X	X	X	X

Division One South West

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Cardiff City	9	9	0	0	43	27
2 AFC Bournemouth	11	7	1	3	23	22
3 Exeter City	8	6	1	1	17	19
4 Southampton Women	8	5	0	3	3	15
5 Moneyfields	7	4	2	1	9	14
6 Selsey	8	4	0	4	5	12
7 Swindon Town	6	4	0	2	3	12
8 Portishead Town	7	3	0	4	-6	9
9 Keynsham Town	9	3	0	6	-23	9
10 Larkhall Athletic	10	2	0	8	-16	6
11 Maidenhead United	8	1	0	7	-23	3
12 AFC St Austell	9	0	0	9	-35	0

Tables correct as of December 12, 2022



TheFA Women's
National League



GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL

Frinton youngsters net World Cup funding boost from UK Power Networks



Youngsters at a Tendring football club have netted a timely funding boost during the World Cup from a supportive local power company.

Frinton & Walton Youth FC under-16s girls team will benefit from a £250 Team Sport award by UK Power Networks, who distribute electricity across the East of England.

The money will go towards supporting community sport by buying new training gear and equipment and takes to £1,250 the company has donated to this squad over the past five years. Such donations are becoming increasingly helpful to local sports club during the 'cost of living' crisis.

Employee Richard Procter, a project manager in Colchester, whose daughter Lauren plays for the team while he volunteers as an assistant referee during games, applied for the award.

Richard said: "I have been running the line for the team for a few years now and I really enjoy it. I get the best view of the games and it is also good exercise.

"Ours is one of around 20 boys' and girls' teams at the club ranging in age from U7s to U16s and a men's team. They also run 'Mini Kickers', 'Just Play' sessions for ladies and are a 'Weetabix Wildcats' centre for girls.

"The club has been awarded 'FA Charter Standard Club' status by the FA, for providing a high-quality football experience, for being well run and sustainable and for making child

protection, quality coaching and safety, paramount.

"This is the fifth consecutive year that UK Power Networks has supported the team with this award which is absolutely fantastic, and the money this time was used to purchase additional kits, training wear and training equipment for some new players that have joined.

"We have a very talented squad, with several players now also progressing well in development pathways at Ipswich Town, AFC Sudbury, and Colchester Utd. We finished second in both the league and the Cup last season.

The girls' under-16 team's manager Ben Pratt said: "The funding we have received from our sponsors over the seasons has been invaluable and has enabled us to maintain the right environment for the girls' development.

"Everyone at the club is extremely grateful for the continued support from UK Power Networks."

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

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

Bure Valley youngsters wrap up funding for new winter jackets



A Norfolk girls' football club will be winter ready after netting a funding boost from a local power company.

Bure Valley Youth FC received a £250 Team Sport award from UK Power Networks which distributes electricity across the East of England.

The money went towards new waterproof training jackets for the girls' under-15s team after John Holden applied for the funds as his daughter, Scarlet-Rose, is a member of the squad.

John, who has another daughter Eleanor in the under-14s team, only became involved with the Coltishall-based club last year

John said: "Everyone at the club is really grateful for the extra funding which can be difficult to come by for community teams.

"We need the new jackets so that the girls can be prepared for what the worst of the winter may bring.

"My links to the club are fairly recent, my eldest daughter Scarlet-Rose had been playing for about eight years before switching to Bure Valley. We chose them because they're a real family club where everyone works hard to develop the players.

"I could not be more happy with the club. It has seen rapid growth since being formed in 2015 and now has girls in every group from under-8s to under-13s.

"The club ethos is one of fun and enjoyment with girls joining from around the country. There is a link to Wroxham Women FC which provides a pathway for the girls' progression."

Ted McCarter, chair of Bure Valley YFC, said: "On behalf of the club and in particular the u15 Wildcats girls team I want to thank UK Power Networks for their kind and generous donation.

Grassroots football is totally reliant on sponsorship so support from businesses is greatly appreciated."

The Team Sport Award scheme, which has seen UK Power Networks supporting community sport since 2010, encourages their employees to volunteer in the community and is aimed at promoting healthy living, teamwork and developing sporting opportunities.

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

Ammo's Antics

Hi everyone, Ammo here.

It's been a while since my last Ammos Antics. I've got quite a lot to tell you.

First things first, the last time I wrote an article I was a Birmingham City u16 player. Today I write this as a Bristol City U16 player. I spent five seasons with Birmingham and I made some life-long friends. The decision to leave was a tough one and I truly wish my old team mates the best of luck for the future. Sometimes though, you must let your head rule your heart. As of this moment I've been with Bristol City for two weeks and played 3 matches. Wins against Derby and Wolves and a 1-1 draw with Sunderland in the FA plate which led to a penalty shoot-out and us narrowly losing. I managed to nick a goal on my debut against Derby and I stepped up and scored the first penalty against Sunderland. I've not been at Bristol long but I've just been asked to step up from the U16s to the U21 WSL Academy squad. It's a big step up for me and a real challenge, but it's one I am relishing. My goal now is to get a first team squad opportunity within the next 18 months. My dream of being a professional footballer is still on track and the environment at Bristol City is built to produce first team players so I'm excited to see what happens in the coming months. I can't criticise anything or anyone at Birmingham, it was just the right time for me to move on.

I'm also back playing for my County with Gloucestershire Schools U16s. We've played a couple of games, most recently a 10-1 win against Cardiff & The Vale where I scored four goals. I enjoy playing with a different group of girls and we hope to do well in the National cup this year. The last time I played for County was the U14s and we got through to the Final of the National cup but lost. This year we hope to go one better. Next up with Gloucester Schools is a trip to Cornwall, where I also get the chance to spend a couple of days with my Grandparents.

I have also been really busy with Wales, earlier this year Wales were invited to be the guest nation in the Concacaf cup which was being held in Tampa Florida. I was called up to the squad and we had an amazing experience playing teams like Mexico, Puerto Rico and Costa Rica. The heat was

unbearable at times which made it tough but we put in some good performances. We even got the chance to visit Busch Gardens which was epic. Tampa is an amazing place and the experience will stay with me forever.

After Tampa I was called up to play in an older age group with Wales U17s for a friendly in Croatia. We drew the game 1-1 but I was awarded player of the match and got to keep the Croatian pennant we were given. We stayed in Zagreb for the duration of the camp. Not as hot as Tampa but equally beautiful.

Following on from Croatia I was selected again to play up a year with the Wales U17s, this time it was an U17s Euros qualifier double header against Montenegro and then Israel. During our first game against Montenegro, I started in Centre Mid and after 8 mins we had our goalkeeper sent off and were down to ten players. We pulled together as a team and managed to win the game 4-0 even after playing the majority of the match with a player less. I was again awarded player of the match which I'm super proud about. I also got another pennant to add to my collection. In the second game against Israel I played the first half and then was rested and we won the game 4-0 comfortably. We are now through to the Elite stage of the U17 Euros which takes place in spring of 2023. Hopefully I'll be selected for the squad going forward.

I also played for Wales U16 in a 1-1 draw with England at St Georges park. It was the day the Lionesses were meeting up and I managed to get selfies with Beth Mead, Alessia Russo and Ella Toone, who were all lovely considering I was wearing my Wales kit.

I've had a really busy year for football, also just finished my Mock GCSE exams. I've found it tough finding the time to revise in between training four times a week then playing on a Saturday. Exam time can be really stressful and I'm fortunate that I have got football to keep my mind occupied. I think that's about everything I've been up to. I forgot how much I enjoy writing this blog and reflecting on what I've done. I will definitely try and do this more regularly next year.

Ammo

Women's and girl's game sees growth after memorable year



The Football Association has today provided an update on the strategic ambitions set out in the Women's and Girls' strategy, Inspiring Positive Change, two years since its launch in October 2020.

The strategy pledged to create a sustainable future for women's and girls' football in England through eight transformational objectives to be achieved by 2024.

One of the transformational objectives was to win a major tournament which was delivered on the 31 July when England lifted the UEFA EURO 2022 trophy at Wembley Stadium in front of 87,000 fans.

Since then, awareness of the Lionesses has increased by 32% across girls aged 5-16 in England*, and interest in

women's football is up 12% amongst girls aged 5-16 in England compared to before the tournament*.

Following the historic win, watched by a peak television audience of 17.4m on BBC One, there have been record-breaking league attendances in the Barclays Women's Super League and record average attendances in the Barclays Women's Championship. The momentous achievement of the England team has shown an impact across the whole women's and girls' game.

Since October 2021 there has been a 17% increase in female affiliated players across all levels of the game, a 30% increase in female registered football

teams, and a 15% increase in female youth teams – made up of girls aged between 5-18 years old.

Since the summer's EURO, there has also been a 196% increase in women's and girls' football session bookings through the England Football 'FindFootball' tool.

Growth has also been shown across refereeing and coaching. Since October 2021, there has been a 21% increase in female registered referees across all levels, and a 390% increase in female referees aged between 14-15 beginning refereeing training. The number of female coaches working in affiliated teams is up 75% compared to the same point last year.

The strategy set clear Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) objectives and since its launch, 94% of County FAs now have EDI plans specifically for the female game, nearing the target of 100% by 2024. 64% of County FAs

are currently offering FA-developed 'football for fun' recreational opportunities for adult women from all communities, with the aim of hitting 100% by 2024.

Baroness Sue Campbell, The Director of Women's Football at The FA said: "When we launched our Women's and Girls' strategy, Inspiring Positive Change, in October 2020 eight months into a global pandemic, we could not have foreseen the incredible two years that lay ahead. While things in the world have changed, we have remained constant in our belief that football has the power to change lives for the better and improve opportunities for girls and women across society.

"The power of women's football was evident on 31 July 2022, a day that will live long in the memory for us all. One goal in the strategy was to 'win a major tournament' but none of us could have imagined the impact of victory in a home tournament. When the Lionesses lifted the UEFA Women's EURO trophy at Wembley Stadium in front of 87,000 fans, it was a moment of great joy, but it was also a moment of great opportunity. The reaction to the success and

the way it transcended society has given us an unprecedented chance to change the future of the women's game forever. It has turbo charged our strategy with demand growing right across the game. We have seen more girls stepping forward to play, more fans filling our stadiums and new partners all wanting to be part of this great movement for change.

"Another big goal was our pledge to transform the game at the grassroots level by ensuring that girls have equal access to football in schools and clubs. It's a passion shared by our special group of England players, who are doing everything in their power to make change in this area. Our strategy sought to achieve this goal by 2024 but we know that we must capitalise on the Euros and work in partnership with government and other key stakeholders to drive this ambition as quickly as possible.

"Our strategy was based on understanding an individual's motivation to be involved in football. Whether that be playing for fun or competition, coaching, refereeing, volunteering or becoming a fan, we want to ensure there is access and

opportunity for every girl and woman. Building on our highly successful Weetabix Wildcats offering for primary age girls, we launched our SQUAD programme for 12-14-year-olds and saw 90,000 girls take part in the Let Girls Play Biggest Ever Football session. Alongside the development of our club pathway, we launched the Women's National League three-year strategy, produced a comprehensive plan for the development of the Barclays WSL and Barclays WC and saw a significant uplift in prize money for the Vitality Women's FA Cup competition. We have redesigned our talent pathway to ensure it is more diverse and inclusive, and produced a blueprint for success for our England teams from under 14 to senior level. All this progress has been underpinned by the rapid development of coaches and referees at all levels of the game and the support of an increasing number of commercial partners.

"We still have a long way to go but we are making good progress on all fronts. Thank you to all our partners who have played a pivotal role in helping us make strides towards our strategic goals."

EA SPORTS™ and Show Racism the Red Card announce 'IT'S IN THE GAME' School Competition



EA SPORTS™ and Show Racism the Red Card (SRtRC) have announced that the winning artwork of this year's 'IT'S IN THE GAME' School Competition award will be integrated into FIFA 23 from today.

10 year-old Lina Reid was announced as the winner of the 2022 award in May with her artwork, titled 'We are All Equal', commended by judges as unique, powerful and inspiring.

The artwork design is now accessible to FIFA players across the globe as a digital TIFO in EA SPORTS FIFA 23 Ultimate Team.

Marketing Director, EA SPORTS FIFA, James Salmon said: "We're proud to have worked closely with Show Racism the Red Card since 2020, and this competition is another example of how our relationship continues to grow.

Lina's winning design is fantastic and I'm sure it

will resonate with our fans.

We're delighted to use our platform to help spread the charity's anti-racism message, with players across the globe able to access the Tifo from today."

Show Racism the Red Card - EA SPORTS FIFA Deputy Chief Executive, Show Racism the Red Card, Paul Kearns said: "Show Racism the Red Card (SRtRC) are absolutely thrilled to further extend our

partnership with EA SPORTS.

“The SRtRC School Competition is the largest equalities themed competition for schools in England and it is so exciting that EA SPORTS are helping us take it to the next level.

“The entries in the competition are always original, creative and inspirational.

“It is fantastic that EA SPORTS are providing a platform through the FIFA 23 game for Lina’s artwork to inspire millions of players across the world and helping to spread a strong anti-racism message.”

Q+A with Lina Reid, Winner of the EA SPORTS “It’s in the Game”

How was the experience of taking part in the Show Racism the Red Card School Competition?

It was really surprising. I thought there would be lots and lots of people entering the competition, so I was really surprised to win.

What is the meaning behind your artwork?

It was supposed to be a clover.

As in, all skin colours are lucky no matter what colour they are.

What would you like people to learn from your art?

That not everything looks as it seems.

That everyone is equal, and you can’t treat people differently just because of their skin colour.

How do you feel about your artwork reaching millions via EA SPORTS FIFA 23?

Very, very, very happy.

I’d never imagined that many people would be seeing it.

Would you recommend people taking part in the Show Racism the Red Card School Competition and why?

Yes, because it’s good to stand up for people’s rights.

The competition was open to schools across England, Scotland and Wales, with physical copies of games from across the EA portfolio, awarded to other winners.

It is the second initiative between EA SPORTS™ and Show Racism the Red Card, following the publication of a comic book, featuring

Leicester City’s Hamza Choudhury, that highlighted South Asian representation in football.

FIFA





CUP COMPETITIONS

The 2022/23 Vitality FA Cup so far...



By Paul Donegan

The FA Cup first round took place on Sunday 13th November. The winners in this round received £6,000 in prize money whilst the losers got £1,500. There were 56 ties and here are some of the stories from them.

Consett are the only seventh tier side left in the competition after they caused an upset by winning 2-1 against Warrington Wolves, who play a step higher.

Emma Hewitt and Nicole McEvoy scored their goals as they reached the second round for the first time. The only other seventh tier side that reached the first round, Mulbarton Wanderers, lost 8-1 away against FA WNL Premier Division South Milton Keynes Dons.

Other sides to beat opposition from steps above them include Newcastle United who beat Hull City 2-1 with Becky Ferguson scoring the winner in extra-time. Leeds United beat Brighouse Town 1-0 in a penalty shoot-out after the match had finished 1-1. Rebekah Bass scored the only penalty whilst Carrie Simpson saved three of Brighouse's spot kicks.

Fifth tier Cheadle Town Stringers knocked out York City, who play a step above, in a penalty shoot-out. The match had finished 2-2, and Cheadle won the shoot-out 2-1 to progress to the second round for the first time in their history. Coventry Sphinx, who play in the sixth tier, beat fifth tier Worcester City 4-3 after extra-time.

Sporting Khalsa, who play in the FA WNL Division One Midlands beat FA WNL Premier Division side Boldmere St Michaels 2-1. Sutton Coldfield Town, who play in the fifth tier, beat opposition from the level above when they won 6-5 on penalties against Leafield Athletic after a 1-1 draw. Sutton Coldfield are another side to reach the second round for the first time.

Amongst the other sides that will be making their first appearance in the second round after wins are Dulwich Hamlet, Peterborough United (a.e.t), Portishead Town, Bowers & Pitsea, Dartford (won on pens), Torquay United, Bournemouth Sports, Worthing, Merseyrail, Redcar Town and Solihull Moors (really sorry if missed any other sides).

Other ties to be decided on penalties include Stoke City beating Derby County, and Gillingham overcoming Millwall Lionesses.

At the match I was at, eight times winners of the FA Cup, Southampton Women's, scored in the

A few sides who had good runs in the cup last season went out in the first round this year. Clapton Community lost 2-1 to Ashford United in a battle between two tier six sides, and Bridgwater United lost 4-0 away to Cardiff City. Last season's quarter-finalist, Ipswich Town, started their participation in this years competition with a 7-0 win at Luton Town.

Amongst the other sides with big wins include Burnley who beat Tranmere Rovers 9-0, Wolverhampton Wanderers won 8-2 against Shrewsbury Town, Billericay Town scored the most goals in this round as they beat King's Lynn Town 12-0, and Hashtag United were victorious over Colney Heath 10-1.

Fleetwood Town 1 v 5 Liverpool Feds	Mulbarton Wanderers	Cheltenham Town
Middlesbrough 2 v 1 Bradford City	Luton Town 0 v 7 Ipswich Town	Norton & Stockton Ancients 1 v 4 Durham Cestria
FC United of Manchester 1 v 4 Merseyrail	Clapton Community 1 v 2 Ashford United	Consett 2 v 1 Warrington Wolves
Doncaster Rovers Belles 0 v 3 Huddersfield Town	Watford 7 v 1 Fulham	Stockport County 7 v 3 Penrith
Leeds United 1 v 1 Brighouse Town (Leeds United won 1-0 on penalties)	Abingdon Town 0 v 4 Portsmouth	Darwen 1 v 5 Barnsley
Hull City 1 v 2 Newcastle United	Moneyfields 2 v 3 Crawley Wasps	Wallsend 1 v 2 Redcar Town
Cheadle Town Stingers 2 v 2 York City (Cheadle Town Stingers won 2-1 on penalties)	Ebbsfleet United 1 v 2 Southampton Women's	Worcester City 3 v 4 Coventry Sphinx
Alnwick Town 1 v 4 AFC Fylde	Dartford 2 v 2 Ascot United (Dartford won 8-7 on penalties)	Peterborough United 2 v 1 Stourbridge
Tranmere Rovers 0 v 9 Burnley	Selsey 1 v 5 AFC Wimbledon	Sedgley & Gornal United 0 v 5 Solihull Moors
West Bromwich Albion 4 v 0 Crewe Alexandra	Oxford United 6 v 1 Chesham United	Sutton Coldfield Town 1 v 1 Leafield Athletic (Sutton Coldfield Town 6-5 on penalties)
Sporting Khalsa 2 v 1 Boldmere St Michaels	Worthing 8 v 0 Sutton United	Billiericay Town 12 v 0 King's Lynn Town
Oughtibridge War Memorial 0 v 6 Nottingham Forest	Hackney Women's 0 v 4 London Bees	Royston Town 2 v 3 London Seaward
Asfordby 3 v 5 Lichfield City	Bournemouth Sports 5 v 0 Pucklechurch Sports	Colney Heath 1 v 10 Hashtag United
Northampton Town 6 v 2 Dronfield Town	Portishead Town 2 v 0 Eastleigh	AFC Stoneham 0 v 3 Actonians
Shrewsbury Town 2 v 8 Wolverhampton Wanderers	Exeter City 4 v 2 AFC Bournemouth	Millwall Lionesses 2 v 2 Gillingham (Gillingham won 5-4 on penalties)
Loughborough Lightning 3 v 0 Sheffield	Cardiff City 4 v 0 Bridgwater United	Swindon Town 3 v 0 Frampton Rangers
Lye Town 1 v 4 Wem Town	Weymouth 0 v 5 Keynsham Town	Bowers & Pitsea 2 v 0 Needham Market
Stoke City 1 v 1 Derby County (Stoke City won 3-2 on penalties)	Bishops Lydeard 0 v 1 Liskeard Athletic	Norwich City 2 v 0 Enfield Town
Milton Keynes Dons 8 v 1	Warminster Town 0 v 2 Torquay United	Aylesford 1 v 3 Dulwich Hamlet
	Plymouth Argyle 4 v 2	

25 of the 28 FA Cup second round ties took place on Sunday 27th November, with Watford v Crawley Wasps and Liskeard Athletic postponed due to waterlogged pitches, and Southampton Women's v London Bees abandoned after an injury to Southampton's Rachel Okoro.

We wish Rachel a speedy and full recovery.

The winners in this round received £8,000 in prize money whilst the loser got £2,000.

Here are some of the stories from the matches.

There is only one place to start this round-up and that is at St James' Park where Newcastle United took on Barnsley, and 28,565 supporters turned up to watch. This is a new Women's FA Cup attendance record outside of a final. Barnsley took the lead in this tie between two sides in the fourth tier in the 15th minute when Emily Pierrepont scored.

Georgia Gibson equalised for the home side in the 68th minute, and Sharna Wilkinson scored the winner for them four minutes later.

Only one side so far in this round has beaten a team that plays in a level above them, and that was at Colston Avenue where I saw AFC Wimbledon beat Billericay Town 2-0. Ashlee Hincks gave the Dons the lead in the 13th minute. Faye Baker kept the home side ahead when she saved a Jess King penalty in the 33rd minute. Emily Donovan scored AFC Wimbledon's second in second half stoppage time.

The only tier 5, and lowest remaining, side definitely in the third round at the moment are Bournemouth Sports. They took on Torquay United, who play at the same level, at home. Bournemouth won 3-2 with the winning goal being scored by Jessica Fowell in the 73rd minute.

Consett had been the lowest, and the only tier 7, side in the second round. However, they lost 6-1 to Stockport County at home. The two remaining tier 6 sides also both went out with Coventry Sphinx losing to Solihull Moors 5-1, while Ashford United were beaten 3-1 by Actonians.

Third tier MK Dons scored two goals in injury time to overcome Worthing, who play two levels below. Nicole Pepper and Leoni Miceli scored the late goals for them. FA Women's National League Premier side Burnley beat fifth tier opposition in Cheadle Town Stingers 1-0. Millie Ravening scored the only goal in the 69th minute.

Other sides from the fifth tier to go out to higher opposition include Redcar Town who lost 7-2 to Leeds United, Sutton Coldfield Town were beaten by Norwich City 3-2, Bowers & Pitsea lost 7-0 away to Portsmouth, Dartford were beaten at home by Hashtag United 2-0, and Dulwich Hamlet went out after losing 2-1 to Gillingham. West Bromwich Albion had the biggest win of the round when they beat Lichfield City 8-0.

In ties between sides in tiers three and four, AFC Fylde beat Middlesbrough 5-4 after extra-time, whilst Huddersfield Town, Liverpool Feds, Nottingham Forest, Wolverhampton Wanderers, Ipswich Town, Plymouth Argyle and Cardiff City all overcame lower-level opposition.

Peterborough United beat FA Women's National League Division One Midlands rivals Sporting Khalsa 2-1, whilst Portishead Town reached the third round with a 2-0 win over fellow National League Division One South West side Exeter City.

Both Peterborough and Portishead, along with Bournemouth Sports and Solihull Moors, will be playing in the third round of the cup for the first time in their histories. In a tie between two sides who are in the National League Northern Premier Division, Stoke City beat Loughborough Lightning 3-1.

The remaining three ties took place on Sunday 4th December. Watford beat league rivals Crawley Wasps 6-0. Helen Ward scored two of the six, the first of which was her 150th goal for the club.

London Bees avoided an upset with a 3-0 win over Southampton Women's. FA Women's National League Southern Premier Division side Oxford United had a convincing 13-0 victory over tier 5 Liskeard Athletic which included a hat-trick from Carly Jones.

Second Round results

AFC Fylde 5 v 4 Middlesbrough
Cheadle Town Stingers 0 v 1
Burnley
Huddersfield Town 3 v 0
Durham Cestria
Redcar Town 2 v 7 Leeds
United
Consett 1 v 6 Stockport County
Newcastle United 2 v 1
Barnsley
Liverpool Feds 4 v 0 Merseyrail
Wem Town 1 v 5 Nottingham
Forest
Loughborough Lightning 1 v 3
Stoke City
Lichfield City 0 v 8 West

Bromwich Albion
Norwich City 3 v 2 Sutton
Coldfield Town
Sporting Khalsa 1 v 2
Peterborough United
Wolverhampton Wanderers
5 v 0 Northampton Town
Coventry Sphinx 1 v 5 Solihull
Moors
Ashford United 1 v 3 Actonians
Ipswich Town 3 v 0 London
Seaward
Portsmouth 7 v 0 Bowers &
Pitsea
AFC Wimbledon 2 v 0
Billericay Town
Dartford 0 v 2 Hashtag United

Dulwich Hamlet 1 v 2
Gillingham
Milton Keynes Dons 3 v 2
Worthing
Swindon Town 0 v 3 Plymouth
Argyle
Bournemouth Sports 3 v 2
Torquay United
Cardiff City 6 v 0 Keynsham
Town
Portishead Town 2 v 0 Exeter
City
London Bees 3 v 0
Southampton Women's
Watford 6 v 0 Crawley Wasps
Liskeard Athletic 0 v 13 Oxford
United

The draw for the third round has been made, and the sides in the Women's Championship enter at this stage. The ties are scheduled to take place on Sunday 11th December (check FA website/clubs social media for kick-off times and locations).

Third Round draw

Coventry United v Stockport
County
Burnley v Norwich City
Peterborough United v
Durham
Leeds United v Stoke City
Birmingham City v
Huddersfield Town
Blackburn Rovers v Sunderland
Liverpool Feds v West

Bromwich Albion
Sheffield United v Nottingham
Forest
Newcastle United v
Wolverhampton Wanderers
Solihull Moors v AFC Fylde
Cardiff City v Bournemouth
Sports
Bristol City v Southampton
AFC Wimbledon v Gillingham
Hashtag United v Actonians

Crystal Palace v Watford
Lewes v London Bees
Ipswich Town v Portishead
Town
London City Lionesses v
Portsmouth
Charlton Athletic v Milton
Keynes Dons
Oxford United v Plymouth
Argyle



Liam Asman/SPP

Chelsea in control against Real Madrid



By Paul Donegan

Chelsea made it three wins out of three in this season's UEFA Women's Champions League with a 2-0 win over Real Madrid at Kingsmeadow. After a scoreless opening 45 minutes, Sophie Ingle and Erin Cuthbert scored the goals during the second half. Afterwards, Emma Hayes described it as "a really mature performance from the team".

Hayes made three changes to Chelsea's starting line up from their win over Tottenham on Sunday with Niamh Charles, Johanna Rytting Kaneryd and Fran Kirby coming in for Eve Perisset, Jessie Fleming and Lauren James. Real Madrid were third in Liga F and sat second in the Champions League group behind their opponents going into the match. They had also knocked Manchester City out in an earlier round.

Chelsea started brightly with Fran Kirby having a shot pushed wide by Misa Rodriguez in 2nd minute. Charles then saw her cross land on the roof of net in the 8th minute.

Real Madrid's first chance came in the 16th minute but Caroline Weir's effort bounced through to Ann-Katrin Berger. Four minutes later, Esther Gonzalez header well wide for the visitors.

The home sides next opportunity

came in the 23rd minute but Erin Cuthbert shot over from around 25 yards. At the other end, Millie Bright stopped a Real Madrid attack in the 35th minute.

Chelsea had the final chance of the first half in the 41st minute when Bright got a slight touch onto a corner but it went just wide.

Gonzalez had an effort deflected wide for the visitors in the 51st minute after ball had bounced around in area from cross. Three minutes later, Real Madrid had another chance but Naomie Fuller's shot from 25 yards was easily saved by Berger.

Chelsea's first opportunity of the second half came in the 59th minute then a Reiten cross was headed by Sam Kerr into air but was caught by Rodriguez.

In the 67th minute, Chelsea took the lead when a corner was flicked on by Bright and Ingle headed in near enough on goal line to score her first goal in the Champions League. Hayes was asked about Ingle's form this season and said "She's been brilliant. She deserves a lot of credit for the work she's done. She pushed hard in pre-season". She also added that Sophie is a top professional.

Gonzalez had another effort for the visitors in the 72nd minute but this

time the ball trickled into Berger's hands.

Chelsea scored a second in the 75th minute, and what a goal it was! Cuthbert collected the ball from a throw in on the right-hand side and sent in a cross/shot from near the corner flag that dipped over the goalkeeper and into the net. Did she mean it? When asked about the goal by the media, Emma Hayes said "of course, she meant every part of that top corner finish".

The Blues had a chance to extend their lead further in the 88th minute when a great ball found Charles who had got forward but sent her shot into side netting.

Real Madrid had the final opportunity of the game but a cross was caught by Berger as match went into stoppage time. Chelsea remain top of their group after the win, now five points ahead of Real Madrid and Paris Saint-Germain.

After the match, Emma Hayes was full of praise for the squad at the moment, saying "this team are on another level", and describing them as "the best we've ever had". She also added that they have learnt from previous years and losing in the final.

Attendance – 3,336

Women's Champions League Results

Group Stage - Matchday 3

PSG 5-0 Vllaznia
 Slavia Praha 0-1 St. Polten
 Roma 1-1 Wolfsburg
 Chelsea 2-0 Real Madrid
 Zurich 0-3 Lyon
 Barcelona 3-0 Bayern
 Juventus 1-1 Arsenal
 Benfica 1-0 Rosengard

Group Stage - Matchday 4

Rosengard 1-3 Benfica
 Lyon 4-0 Zurich
 Arsenal 1-0 Juventus
 Bayern 3-1 Barcelona
 Wolfsburg 4-2 Roma
 Vllaznia 0-4 PSG
 St Polten 1-1 Slavia Praha
 Real Madrid 1-1 Chelsea

GROUP A							
	Team	MP	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1	Chelsea	4	3	1	0	11	10
2	PSG	4	2	1	1	8	7
3	Real Madrid	4	1	2	1	0	5
4	Vllaznia	4	0	0	4	-19	0

GROUP B							
	Team	MP	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1	Wolfsburg	4	3	1	0	8	10
2	Roma	4	2	1	1	0	7
3	St. Polten	4	1	1	2	-4	4
4	Slavia Praha	4	0	1	3	-4	1

GROUP C							
	Team	MP	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1	Arsenal	4	3	1	0	7	10
2	Lyon	4	2	1	1	3	7
3	Juventus	4	1	2	1	1	5
4	Zurich	4	0	0	4	-11	0

GROUP D							
	Team	MP	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1	Barcelona	4	3	0	1	13	9
2	Bayern	4	3	0	1	1	9
3	Benfica	4	2	0	2	-7	6
4	Rosengard	4	0	0	4	-7	0



Selhurst Park to host League Cup final



The FA can today announce that Crystal Palace's Selhurst Park will host the 2022/23 FA Women's Continental Tyres League Cup Final on Sunday 5 March.

The twelfth Final of the competition will kick-off at 3pm and is due to be broadcast live on the BBC.

Home to The Eagles since 1924, Selhurst Park is no stranger to hosting top level women's football, with the Vitality Women's FA Cup Final held there on three occasions between 2001 and 2003.

This year's FA Women's Continental Tyres League Cup Final follows on from a record-breaking attendance of over 8,000 at AFC Wimbledon last season, which saw Manchester City overcome Chelsea 3-1.

Kelly Simmons, FA Director of The Women's Professional Game, said: "We're really

looking forward to working with Crystal Palace over the coming months to put on a really exciting final.

"Selhurst Park hosts some of the best men's players in the world over the course of the season in the Premier League and has also played host to the brilliant Crystal Palace in the Barclays Women's Championship. It is a fitting venue for the Final to be held in March."

Steve Parish, Chairman of Crystal Palace, added: "We are delighted Selhurst Park has been selected to host the FA Women's Continental Tyres League Cup Final. Crystal Palace has a rich heritage of hosting FA Finals, being the home of the Men's FA Cup Final for twenty years before the construction of Wembley. As the Women's game continues to go from strength to strength, we are excited to continue this tradition by welcoming this showpiece

game to South London."

The competition is nearing the conclusion of the First Round Group Stage, with the Quarter-Finals due to take place on 25-26 January. Chelsea and Arsenal will enter at this stage due to their UEFA Women's Champions League commitments and will join the five group winners and best runner-up.

The two teams to walk out at Selhurst Park will be determined on 8-9 February when the two Semi-Finals take place.

Tickets for the Final at Selhurst Park are now on sale and are priced as follows:

Adult – £15 (Cat 1), £10 (Cat 2)

Under-16s - £2.50

Student / OAP - £5

Groups, adult tickets (9+) - £7.50 (Cat 1), £5 (Cat 2)

Conti Cup provides impressive displays

By Helen Rowe-Willcocks

There has been a lot of action in the League Cup over the last month with games in all the groups.

Here is your latest round-up:

Group A

Group A		MP	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1	Aston Villa	4	2	2	0	2	9
2	Manchester United	3	1	2	0	2	5
3	Everton	3	1	1	1	1	5
4	Durham	3	0	2	1	-1	4
5	Sheffield United	3	0	1	2	-4	1

Aston Villa 1-0 Durham

A close game saw the WSL side come out 1-0 winners against Durham.

Rachel Daly's late second half goal sealed the Villans victory but Durham Came close a number of times to get back into the game.

Sheffield United 0-3 Everton

A dominant second half performance from Everton saw overcome Championship side Sheffield United.

United put on a strong display but their resistance was broken after the break when a Katja Snoeijjs went flying into the net.

Hanna Bennison and Jess Park added late goals to secure the victory.

Manchester United 4-2 Everton

Manchester United are out of the League Cup despite their victory over Everton on December, 7.

Vilde Boe Risa scored either side of Rachel Williams' poked effort before Jade Moore made it 4-0 inside the first half.

Jess Park and Karen Holmgard pulled goals back as Everton attempted a comeback in the second half.

Aston Villa have secured Group A's top spot and Manchester United do not have enough points for a runners-up place.

Sheffield United 1-2 Aston Villa

Aston Villa have qualified for the knockout stages of the Conti Cup with a 2-1 win over Sheffield United.

First-half goals from Kirsty Hanson and Kenza Dali provided Villa with an insurmountable lead.

Mia Enderby scored from the penalty spot with 10 minutes to go to give the hosts a lifeline, but Villa held on to progress from Group A.

Group B

Group B		MP	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1	Manchester City	3	3	0	0	11	9
2	Liverpool	4	3	1	1	4	9
3	Leicester City	2	1	1	1	-1	3
4	Sunderland	2	0	2	2	-4	0
5	Blackburn Rovers	3	0	3	3	-10	0

Manchester City 3-0 Sunderland

WSL side Manchester City proved too strong for Sunderland.

The hosts went 1-0 up after just eight minutes through Julie Blakstad but it was not until the

second half did Hayley Raso and Khadika Shaw added to the goal.

Liverpool 1-0 Blackburn Rovers

A first half goal from Jasmine Matthews was all Liverpool needed to secure three points against Blackburn Rovers.

The game was relatively even but Rovers could not find the back of the net to equal the scoring.

Liverpool 0-2 Manchester City

City extended their winning streak to nine in all competitions with a 2-0 victory over Liverpool.

Second half goals from Filippa Angeldahl and Mary Fowler were enough to put them at the top of the Group B table.

Sunderland P-P Leicester City

The game between Sunderland and Leicester City was postponed after a pitch inspection decided the game could not go ahead due to a frozen pitch.

Details on the rearranged date for the fixture are yet to be announced.

Group C

Group C		MP	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1	West Ham	2	1	1	0	2	5
2	Brighton & HA	2	1	0	1	0	3
3	Birmingham City	2	1	0	1	-1	3
4	London City Lionesses	2	0	1	1	-1	1

London City Lionesses 1-2 Brighton & Hove Albion

A hard-fought game was eventually won by Brighton in

their League Cup game against the Lionesses.

Goals either side of half-time from Elisabeth Terland and Victoria Williams secured three points after Karin Muya had equalised for the WSL Championship leaders early in the second half.

West Ham 2-0 Birmingham City

West Ham put in strong show against Championship side Birmingham City.

Strikes in each half from Kate Longhurst and Dagny Brynjarsdottir were enough to see Darren Carter's side beaten for the first time in this season's competition.

Louise Quinn and Jade Pennock both had opportunities for the visitors, with the latter's effort crashing back off the bar in the closing stages.

Group D

Group D	MP	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Lewes	2	2	0	0	5	6
2 Bristol City	2	1	0	1	3	3
3 Charlton	2	1	0	1	-1	3
4 Crystal Palace	2	0	0	2	-7	0

Crystal Palace 1-4 Lewes

Lewes impressed as they made the short journey to Crystal Palace for their Conti Cup game.

Four goals in the first half with a brace from Emma Thompson, an own goal from Kirsten Reilly and a goal from Emily Kraft.

Palace got a late consolation goal after Molly-Mae Sharpe intercepted in midfield and took the ball through to the back of the net.

Charlton 2-1 Bristol City

City fell to a narrow defeat at Charlton Athletic in the FA

Continental as the hosts ran out 2-1 winners.

Addicks defender Kiera Skeels opened the scoring after 10 minutes as she guided a header inside the far post from a corner.

Skeels would grab her second of the afternoon on the hour mark, again nodding home from a set-piece before City, who grew progressively into the game, pulled one back through Abi Harrison in stoppage time.

Group E

Group E	MP	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Tottenham	2	2	0	0	5	6
2 Reading	2	1	0	1	2	3
3 Coventry United	2	1	0	1	-2	3
4 Southampton	2	0	0	2	-5	0

Southampton 0-3 Reading

Chambers will be delighted as she witnessed her Royals overcome Southampton in comfortable style with a 3-0 win on Sunday afternoon.

It was a bright start by Reading as they dictated the ball, with half a chance coming just after the second minute. Bryson's ball in fell to Rowe, who tried to bring the ball down before shooting, but she couldn't quite get the ball under her spell and the Saints central defender cleared.

Reading didn't have to wait long before their second chance. Harries did brilliantly to skip inside and deliver a delicate chip into the box which Troelsgaard brought down and leathered into the top corner.

Tottenham 5-1 Coventry United

Tottenham Hotspur Ladies made it two wins from two in the FA Women's Continental League Cup as they breezed past Coventry United Women this afternoon

with a 5-1 demolition of the Midlands at Brisbane Road.

Skinner made four changes from the side that was comfortably beaten at Stamford Bridge, with Kerys Harrop continuing her return from injury to come in alongside Rosella Ayane, Chioma Ubogagu, and first-time starter Gracie Pearse for Asmita Ale, Shelina Zadorsky, Celin Bizet and star player and captain Ashleigh Neville.

Goals from Eveliina Summanen, Rosella Ayane, Kerys Harrop, Amy Turner and Lenna Gunning-Williams showed the dominance of the performance.

Coventry got a late consolation goal from Fran Orthodoxou.

Upcoming Games

Games played between Thursday, December 15—Sunday, December 18.

Group A

Manchester United vs Sheffield United

Everton vs Durham

Group B

Blackburn Rovers vs Sunderland

Leicester City vs Manchester City

Group C

Brighton & Hove Albion vs West Ham

Birmingham City vs London City Lionesses

Charlton vs Crystal Palace

Group D

Lewes vs Bristol City

Group E

Coventry United vs Reading

Southampton vs Tottenham



HOME NATIONS

Wiegman honoured with prestigious award



Lionesses manager Sarina Wiegman has been awarded the Great Coaching Moment of the Year at the 25th annual UK Coaching Awards.

The event recognised the most impactful coaches across the country.

And after a remarkable year at the helm of England Women's team, in which the squad are relishing a 26-game unbeaten run under the Dutch manager while dousing the 56-year silverware drought on home soil, Wiegman was crowned champion of the Great Coaching Moment of the Year award by a public vote in recognition of her role in England's Euro2022 glory.

On receiving the honour, the 53-year-old Dutch coach said: "I feel very honoured to have been nominated for this award amongst other fantastic coaches, and I am very grateful for everyone who voted for me.

"I can't say it enough, but all the credit goes to our group of players and staff."

Awards have also come in thick and fast at the 2022 SJA British Sports Awards, sponsored by the National Lottery. Beth Mead was voted Sports-

woman of the Year, pipping Commonwealth gold medal-winning athlete Eilish McColgan (2nd) and World Championship bronze medallist Laura Muir (3rd).

The Team of the Year honours went to the England women's football team, winners of the UEFA European Championship on home soil. The Lionesses finished ahead of the T20 World Cup-winning England Team (2nd), and the Olympic champion Team GB Women's Curling Team (3rd).

The National Lottery made its own Spirit of Sport Award to Baroness Sue Campbell, who spent a decade at UK Sport overseeing the phenomenal success of Team GB and ParalympicsGB's performances at the Olympic and Paralympic Games before moving to the FA as Director of Women's Football with similar results.

Lionesses: The Early Years



Pedro Soares/SPP

By Clare McEwen

Despite the infamous ban by The Football Association (FA), women continued to play football.

In 1966, when England's men won the World Cup, it generated further interest amongst women as well as men. More teams were started and in 1969 the Women's Football Association (WFA) was formed to provide structure and organisation to the growing game.

In 1969, Harry Batt, a women's football visionary, formed the Chiltern Valley Ladies team with his wife, June. Not satisfied with keeping his vision local, he then formed the first unofficial England team and took them to a competition in Italy.

Unofficial Tournaments, Unofficial Teams

The 1969 Coppa Europa per Nazioni is considered a precursor to the Euros and was organised by the Federazione Italiana Calcio Femminile (FICF) (the Italian Women's Football Federation), formed in 1968. Matches consisted of two halves of 35 minutes and Italy, France, Denmark, and England participated.

Despite still officially being banned from playing in England, the first (unofficial) Lionesses came third. After losing 4-3 to Denmark in the semi-final, they beat France 2-0 in the third/fourth place play-off.

The Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) were yet to recognise the women's game so official World Cups weren't possible. That didn't stop the Italians. The first unofficial

World Cup was contested in Italy in July 1970 and was sponsored by Martini & Rossi. Once more, Harry Batt assembled a team competing as an "independent" side, so they didn't break FA rules.

Eight teams were due to take part in the inaugural World Cup but in the end Czechoslovakia (as it was then) were forced to withdraw, unable to get visas. Denmark, Italy, Mexico, England, West Germany, Austria, and Switzerland competed.

England beat West Germany 5-1 in Genova to progress to the semi-finals but were beaten 2-0 in Milan by Denmark (who went on to win the trophy). This time they missed out on third place, losing 3-2 to Mexico.

Excitement in the women's game grew as Mexico hosted the next unofficial World Cup in 1971, known as the Campeonato de Fútbol Femenil (Women's Soccer Championship). Once more Martini & Rossi were sponsors paying for travel, accommodation, and kits. Other sponsors would join later. This time Harry Batt's team went under the name of "British Independents" since they still didn't have FA backing.

Despite officially being the British Independents, the Mexicans thought of them as England and took them to their hearts. When the women touched down at the airport, they opened the doors to camera flashes going off all around them. They may have been unofficial in England but in Mexico they were super-stars.

FIFA had tried to halt the tournament, apparently fearing that promoters would take over. The Mexican football federation had witnessed the growing interest in the women's game, though, and weren't to be stopped. They treated the promotion in the same way they had for the successful men's tournament in the previous year. The commercial aspect even included a mascot □ a young girl dressed in her Mexico kit holding a football □ that appeared on merchandise.

Although they clearly respected the abilities of women footballers, they weren't against using the feminine angle for promotion, happy to appeal to the twin passions of men & women and football. The mascot may have had a kit and a ball, but she also had

pigtails and an hourglass figure.

If the men only came to see femininity on the pitch, however, they were going to be disappointed! The tackling was so brutal that in England's first game their captain Carol Wilson and right back Yvonne Farr both broke their legs!

The promotion worked though. Around 100,000 people came to the Azteca stadium in Mexico City to watch the opening game between Mexico and Argentina. Then 80,000 came out to watch England versus the hosts □ the tournament may have been unofficial, but Mexico loved it.

With only a small squad to begin with, England's loss of players through injury made it hard to compete. They finished bottom of their group having lost 4-1 to Argentina and 4-0 to Mexico. For the fifth/sixth place play-off against France, England had to field three Mexicans! They lost 2-3.

After playing to stadiums of excited fans they were in for a shock when they arrived home. No adoring crowd awaited them; instead, a six-month ban for all players and a lifetime ban for Batt for fielding an 'illegal' England side (despite being careful not to call them England himself).

Getting the FA On Board

Realising that women's football was going ahead with or without them, the FA dropped the ban in 1972 and the first official international game took place in November. Many international friendlies followed under different coaches.

In May 1976, England, Scotland, and Wales contested the Pony Home International Championship, their first official international tournament. England won by beating Wales 4-0 and Scotland 5-1.

Another unofficial Euros took place in Italy in 1979. This time John Sims could take an official England team to compete against Italy, Norway, Northern Ireland, Finland, Switzerland, Denmark, France, Scotland, Sweden, Netherlands, and Wales.

They won group B, beating Finland 3-1 and Switzerland 2-0, but lost 3-1 to Italy at the semi-final stage. The play-off against Sweden resulted in a penalty shoot-out... England lost.

The Beginning

Looking at this brief history, it's hard to see why women's football has been hidden for so long. There was no shortage of teams, talent, or international tournaments. Fans came out to watch in huge numbers, and there was no evidence that the physicality of women was a hindrance.

Despite this, it's taken a long time to build momentum and make it more visible. The players of the 1970s were women who simply wanted to play football, but they became pioneers. With the help of some visionary men, the journey had begun.

Although there was still a long way to go, the 1980s would build on this beginning; but that is another story for another day.

Player Profile: Mary Earps



By Clare McEwen

It's hard to believe that Mary Earps considered retiring from football in 2021. She only had a few months of her Manchester United contract left and had accepted that, having earned no caps since November 2019, her England career was over. Backed by her Business Studies degree, she considered stepping away from football.

Now she has a European Championship winners' medal around her neck: sport is a funny beast.

Earps' love affair with football began with a kickabout in the garden at her home in Nottingham. The beginning is unexceptional; the journey is anything but.

At the age of 9 she joined the newly set up local girls' team, West Bridgford Colts. She showed her goalkeeping class by saving a penalty on her debut.

At the age of 14, Earps successfully trialled for Leicester City youth team, having previously been rejected by Derby. For the 2009-10 season, Earps was promoted to Leicester's first team squad. Leanne Hall was the number one at the time and Earps was brought in to learn from her and provide competition. Although she learned plenty from training with Hall, she didn't make any appearances and moved on to get more football at Nottingham Forest.

Unfortunately, she only made a handful of appearances at her hometown team, and moved on once more. The 2011-12 season for Doncaster Rovers Belles was their first in the Women's Super League (WSL). Halfway through the season 18-year-old Earps became their number one and went on to make 27 appearances.

Earps moved to Birmingham City for the 2013-14 season, making her first Champions League appearance in November. Again, she didn't get the playing time she wanted so she moved to Bristol Academy. When Bristol were relegated at the end of her second season, she moved to Reading.

Meanwhile she earned England caps at under-17, under-19, and under-23 levels. She was called up as fourth choice goalkeeper for the 2017 Euros training camp, making her senior debut in a 4-0 friendly against Switzerland in June 2017.

Europe beckoned and Earps joined defending Bundesliga champions VfL Wolfsburg in the 2018-19 season. She kept a clean sheet on her debut and Wolfsburg went on to win their third consecutive domestic double.

She was named in the 2019 World Cup squad for England but was still third choice, behind Karen Bardsley and Carly Telford.

Following her domestic success in Germany, she came back to England to join the newly formed Manchester United Women's team for the 2019-20 season. She quickly became a fan favourite.

Despite her obvious talent, her international career had stalled. Although Bardsley and Telford were coming to the end of their careers, the young talents of Ellie Roebuck and Hannah Hampton were ready waiting. Mary accepted that her England chance was gone and threw herself into her club career.

Then, Earps' ability to command her area and pull-off sparkling saves caught the attention of Sarina Wiegman. And everything changed. Wiegman recalled Earps to the England fold, and the rest is history. Glorious history.

FA mark England Women's 50th anniversary with legacy numbers



The history of the England senior women's team is to be permanently celebrated with the introduction of legacy numbers.

The initiative will celebrate the 227 individuals who hold the honour of representing the nation at the senior women's level with their own unique number, mirroring the England senior men's team.

The full list of legacy numbers was revealed today to mark 50th anniversary of the team's first full international on 18 November 1972 against Scotland.

From 1972 goalkeeper Sue Buckett (no.1), through to latest debutant Katie Robinson (no.227), all former and current players will be able to collectively acknowledge their own part in England's history. A full list of legacy numbers and a list of every game in England women's history can be viewed here, the list from 1-227 is also included as separate attachment.

The numbers will be debuted on England's matchday shirt against Korea Republic on Thursday 16 February 2023 at Stadium MK when each member of the current squad will proudly display have their own

unique number on their matchday shirt.

The legacy numbers were initially announced in the build-up to the Lionesses' fixture against the USA which was dedicated to the 50th anniversary. As part of the celebrations on the evening, members of the inaugural 1972 team received their bespoke England cap with their legacy number as part of a special dressing room presentation.

Every former player will in due course receive the honour of a special velvet cap with their newly-established legacy number embroidered on the front.

All former players have been identified via a thorough research programme commissioned by The FA. The programme, to better recognise the history of the women's game, was assisted by grant funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund thanks to National Lottery players. JJ Heritage, former members of the WFA, FIFA, UEFA, the National Football Museum, the British Library and other members of the women's football family have been central to its creation.

Kay Cossington, Head of Women's

Technical at The FA, said: "Every former player has played their part in the team's journey and the introduction of legacy numbers is a permanent reminder of their impact and the history of the England senior women's team. All 227 players are valued members of the 'England family' and we hope they can reflect with pride on being part of a small group of women who have transformed football and made an everlasting impact on society.

"We want to thank each and every one who has worn the shirt since 1972 and epitomised what it means to be a Lioness. Their number will always remain unique to them and is a symbol of their legacy in growing the game.

"We remain indebted to many in the women's football family who have helped collate this historic list and the support of The National Lottery Heritage Fund. I would like to pay particular tribute to Professor Jean Williams and Patricia Gregory, who have worked tirelessly with FA colleagues over a number of years to bring this project to life."

Scotland U23s impress in Spain

Scotland U23s put in two impressive performances as they played Panama and Venezuela out in Spain.

On Saturday, November 12, the Scottish side came out 2-0 winners against Panama.

Brogan Hay was honoured with her first call-up and start for the side with Eartha Cummings coming in in net.

Scotland broke the deadlock on the half-hour mark through Abi Harrison.

Kirsty Smith's low drive into the box found Harrison to knock it in from close range.

In the second half, Scotland looked confident.

They doubled their lead on 58 minutes through Jenna Clark's driving ball into the top corner.

In Scotland's second game, Pedro Martinez Losa put out an entirely different side—except Erin Cuthbert.

Scotland had the ball in the net in the 27th minute, Brown receiving Emslie's cross, but the referee awarded a foul on the goalkeeper and the goal was disallowed.

Scotland only had to wait a few more minutes to break the deadlock though, Weir swung a corner in from the right side and Clark headed home at the near post on 36 minutes.

Goal number two came in the 41st minute as Brown swung the ball into the box from the right and an Emslie header made it 2-0.



Glasgow City pink lift 14s Challenge Cup

Glasgow City Pink have lifted the 14s Scottish Challenge Cup after a convincing 6-2 victory over Dryburgh Athletic in the final at Ochilview.

Some quick, mature passing, quick feet and goals from across the team proved to be the difference between the sides in dry but chilly conditions in Stenhousemuir, while Dryburgh showed a spirited second half fightback amid some nervy moments from City to see out the game.

After 17 minutes they opened up the Dryburgh defence and found Robyn Docherty at the back post who made no mistake to open up the scoring.

Glasgow City grabbed a second on 25 minutes, when Docherty drove into the box and sent a hopeful ball across the penalty area for Aioibhe Tonner to latch on to.

Ridell was unlucky two minutes later as she did brilliantly to punch a free kick clear but it landed at the feet of Isla Russell, who lobbed it home.

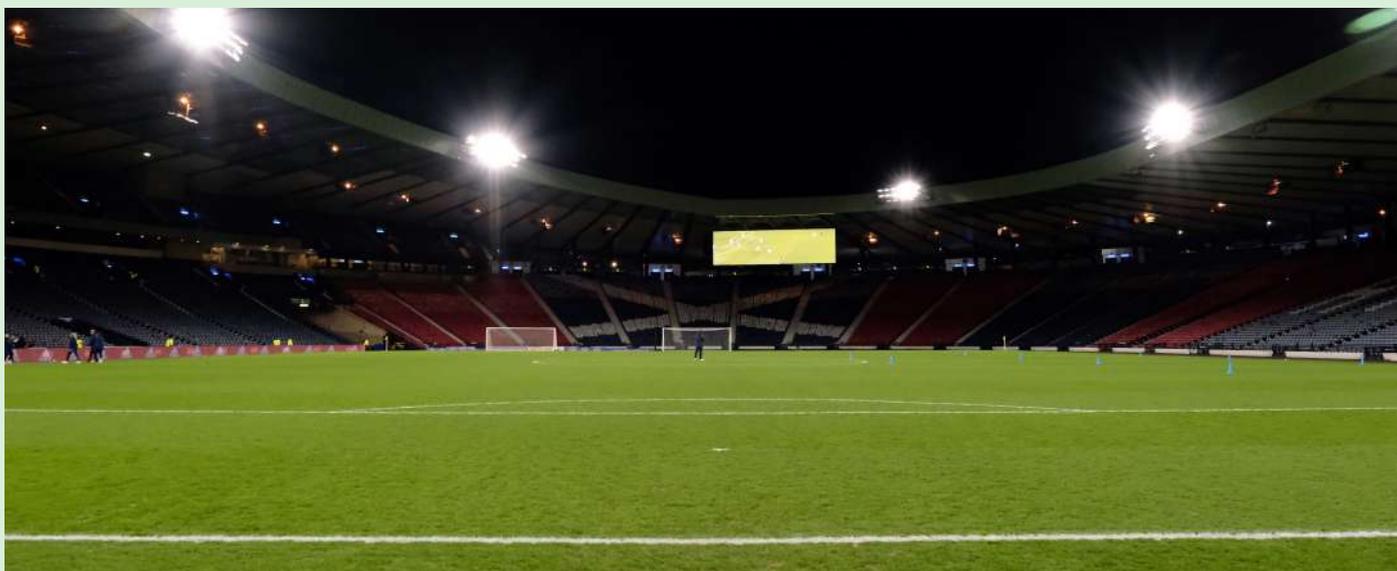
City added a fourth shortly as they poured forward, with Hannah Clinton with the finish ahead of half time.

Robyn Docherty added a fifth, slotting under Riddell after she had spilled a long shot into her path.

City gave away a penalty. Dryburgh's Natasha Towell made no mistake from the spot but Glasgow restored the five-goal cushion straight away with a great shot from distance from Aioibhe Tonner.

Dryburgh added their second with such a free kick, a fantastic looping shot from over 20 yards by Rebecca Lonie to end the game 6-2.

Championship & League One Cup final will support local children and young people with Christmas



Collections will be made at the SWF Championship and League Cup final in Alloa on Sunday 11 December to support two local charities in their work to provide gifts at Christmas.

Ahead of the showpiece game between Dryburgh Athletic and FC Edinburgh at the Indodrill stadium, Love In A Box Clackmannanshire will be collecting brand new toys and other gifts for primary-age children, while Home-Start Clackmannanshire will be collecting for older children and teenagers.

With a 2pm kick-off, the cup final is the showpiece event of the performance leagues run by Scottish Women's Football which is being held in Clackmannanshire for the first time.

Dundee club Dryburgh Athletic are the holders, the SWF Championship side having beaten Montrose 1-0 in last year's final in Falkirk thanks to a nineteenth minute goal by Megan Robb. FC Edinburgh currently sit six points clear at the top of SWF League One and are unbeaten so far in the league this season.

Scottish Women's Football is supporting the local work of the Wasps Community Club, including inviting the girls' team to participate in the game as ball girls and spectators will be entertained by the Alloa Bowmar pipe band at half time.

Commenting, Scottish Women's Football CEO Aileen Campbell said: "I'm delighted we are bringing a major national final to Clackmannanshire, offering girls across the 'Wee County' the opportunity to take in top competitive action.

"Like so many of our SWFL clubs, Alloa play a vital role in their community, and I'm delighted to support their efforts to give local charities a boost with their Christmas collections at a time when more people than ever are feeling the pinch. I encourage folk coming to take in this highly competitive final to bring with them a small donation to the collection for both wee ones and older young people too, who often get left out of these kinds of initiatives."

Vicky Jess at Wasps Community Club said: "It's so exciting to be welcoming the final to Alloa, and I'm pleased that we can use the occasion to highlight the important work both Home-Start and Love In A Box do in Clackmannanshire, especially around Christmas. Even if you can't make the game, it would be great if people could help out."

For those unable to attend the game, donations to Love In A Box can also be dropped off at the Alloa Morrisons Store, while donations to Home-Start can also be dropped at Office 92-94, Alloa Business Centre, Whins Road, Alloa, FK10 3SA.

'A quirk of serendipity'



Hi all,

What a great day of football we had in the Genero Adran Premier! By some quirk of serendipity, it was 1v2, 3v4, 5v6 and 7v8 and the fixtures delivered as the race is on for the all important place in the Championship Division in Phase 2.

At the Swansea.com Stadium nearly 1400 fans turned out for the South Wales derby. League leaders Cardiff City had a slight edge over 2nd placed Swans in the first half, but weren't able to convert and it was all square at the break. Swansea came out the brighter side in the second half and their energy paid off when Stacey John-Davies' cross pitch pass put in Katy Hosford for the opening goal (51'). The Bluebirds rallied and Pheobie Poole took a chance from outside of the box to loop over the keeper for an equaliser (71') and for her 10th of the season (and current top of the Golden Boot table). The game continued to be end to end but neither side could find the winner and it was points shared, enough for Swansea to confirm a top half finish in Phase 1. Final score 1-1.

Pontypridd were hoping to strengthen their grip on 4th place, but it was hosts Cardiff Met that emerged victorious. Erin Murray (28') got the only goal of the game to leave the Archers needing just a point from their last three Phase 1 fixtures to secure a space in the Championship Division. Final score 1-0.

TNS were in prime position to take advantage and close the gap to Ponty, away at Aberystwyth they looked to be in control of the game; Caitlin Chapman opened the scoring (20'), with Lucie Platt (34') adding a second to go in 0-2 up at half time. Chapman doubled her tally in the 59th minute, a goal that instead of securing the victory for TNS, inspired the Seasiders to mount a comeback. Elin Jones got the hosts' first (62') and Gwynllian Jones made it 2-3 just six minutes later, Tania Wylde grabbed the last minute equaliser in the 6th minute of added time – not only did the game end 3-3, but it leaves both teams level on points and level on GD and just three points adrift of 4th place.

The ball was therefore very much in Barry Town United's court, as they faced Abergavenny in a late kick off at Jenner Park. The Pennies however were there to spoil the party, Alana Murphy imitating Phoebe Poole from earlier in the day to loop in a shot from outside the box (23') to go in at half time 0-1. Mackenzie Olden equalised (56') and Taite Trivett doubled the Linnets lead three minutes later to put the hosts in front. Ellis Lunn hit straight back for Abergavenny (56') before Lauren Harris stepped up to retake the lead for Barry in the 72nd minute. With it looking like Barry set to jump up the table into 5th, Murphy stepped up again (86') to even the score and take Abergavenny's first point of the season.

Next week the FAW Women's Cup takes centre stage as the Quarter-Finals get underway, but the Genero Adran Premier is back for a festive set of ties on 18th December.

All the best

Ianthe

RESULT

Aberystwyth Town	3 (E Jones 62'; G Jones 68'; Wylde 90+6')
The New Saints	3 (Chapman 20', 59'; Platt 34')
Barry Town United	3 (Olden 52'; Trivett 55'; Harris 72')
Abergavenny	3 (Murphy 23', 86'; Lunn 56')
Cardiff Met	1 (Murray 26')
Pontypridd United	0
Swansea City	1 (Hosford 51')
Cardiff City	1 (Poole 71')

FIFA WOMEN'S WORLD CUP 2023

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Tisdale's Tidbits

The Last Dance of 2022

By Zoë Tisdale

How do you end a historic, landmark year for your country? Beating the Italians at a sold-out Seaview in front of your home crowd of course!!

I think it is safe to say the Northern Ireland women's team have surpassed all expectations this year and more. As the curtain came down on 15 November 2022, on what was the last international game of the year, no-one expected the NI women's team to beat Italy, who are ranked 14th in the world in comparison to NI who are ranked 49th in FIFA world rankings.

This was a supposed friendly international challenge match with ranking points up for grabs, but I don't think there is ever such a thing as a friendly in football. The NI women's team, who already made history this year by participating in their first ever major tournament at the Euros in Southampton, seemed to have got their tactics against the Azzurri, who have qualified for the 2023 World Cup, spot on.

In what was a tight affair how fitting that the only goal of the game should come from centre back Sarah McFadden, a stalwart in the NI team who currently plays for Championship side Durham, marking her 95th appearance in a green and white shirt. Special mention should also go to goalkeeper Jackie Burns, who pulled off some fine saves, especially in the second half to keep NI in front. As the game ended, it was NI who came close to getting a second goal with substitute Caitlin McGuinness unable to find the final touch in front of goal.

So, what now for Kenny Shiels' side? Shiels has said for the NI women's team to develop and progress that they need to be playing regular friendlies against top teams and surely with the women's domestic game in NI becoming professional next season this surely

can only aid the process. Shiels has already begun to introduce younger players into the squad such as Toni-Leigh Finnegan and Fi Morgan who have come up through the under 19s.

Shiels knows that senior players such as Julie Nelson, Marissa Callaghan and Sarah McFadden can't go on playing forever, it is important to introduce youth in with the experience to help them integrate into the side.

Shiels will be conscious that after the success of the men's international team qualifying for the Euros in 2016 under Michael O'Neill, that they have somewhat stuttered to regain the dizzy heights and are in the process of rebuilding.

Then there is the matter of the new UEFA Women's Nations league, which starts in Autumn 2023, the format of which is to be played like the men's competition. Basically, there is a league stage (teams will be split into three leagues depending on their UEFA rankings) there will be matches for promotion and relegation and finals comprising two semi-finals a third-place match and a final.

This will act as part of the qualifying process for the UEFA Women's Championship, FIFA Women's World Cup and Women's Olympic Football Tournament depending on the season.

With Shiels' contract coming to an end soon I am sure that the IFA will want to hold on to the most successful NI women's manager to date and build on the already strong foundations that are there for all to see.

This is a very exciting time not only for the NI women's team but for women's football in general and I for one cannot wait to be part of the journey! I don't think it will be the last time that I witness the NI women's team celebrating 'good times!'

Final 2022 Fifa Rankings announced



Georgia Soares/SPP

The final Fifa rankings have been published with a couple of moves for our home nations sides.

England remain fourth behind USA, Germany and Sweden.

Scotland are also none movers at 25 but Wales have dropped down a place to 32nd.

Northern Ireland, finish the year in 47th—two positions above their ranking in October.

While the eyes of the planet have been trained on the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™ for the last couple of weeks, women's football has not stood still.

Some 48 women's internationals have been played since October, resulting in some significant changes in the latest FIFA/Coca-Cola Women's World Ranking.

It is as you were at the top, however, with USA (1st, -) holding on to first place, which has been theirs since 2017.

That said, the gap between them and their new closest challengers, Germany (2nd, plus 1), is narrowing, with USA having lost three of their last four matches, including a 2-1 defeat to the Germans.

Sweden (3rd, minus 1) have dropped one place to the third, ahead of England (4th, -) and France (5th, -). Canada (6th, plus 1) are closing in on the top 5, while Spain (7th, minus 1) have lost a little ground.

Italy (17th, minus 3) have not had a happy end to the year, falling three places. In contrast, Portugal (22nd, plus 1) and Republic of Ireland (23rd, plus 1) have finished 2022 on a high, reaching their best-ever positions.

Turkey (64th, plus 3) had the biggest jump in terms of points (+10.23 pts) and Estonia (91st, plus 5) were the highest climbers when it came to places. No side

suffered a bigger fall in places than Montenegro (96th, minus 5).

Some 187 FIFA member associations featured in the December 2022 Ranking, out of 211 in all, the highest number ever recorded at the end of a calendar year.

The next FIFA/Coca-Cola Women's World Ranking will be published on 24 March 2023

Leader USA (unchanged)

Moves into top 10 None

Moves out of top 10 None

Matches played in total 48

Most matches played 39 teams (2)

Biggest move by points Turkey (plus 10.23)

Biggest move by ranks Estonia (plus 5)

Biggest drop by points Italy (minus 18.41)

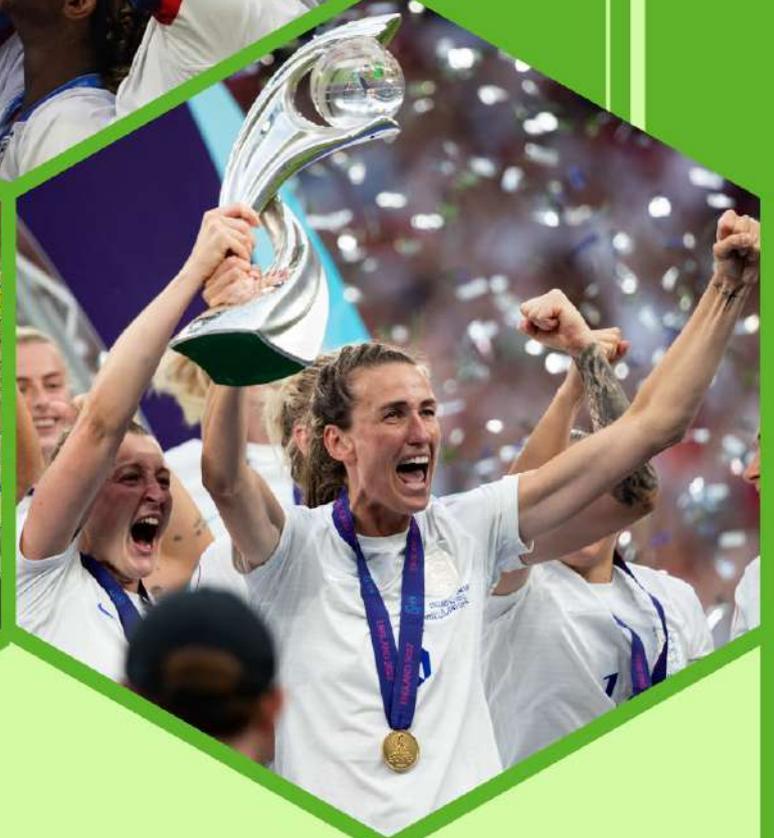
Biggest drop by ranks Montenegro (minus 5)

Newly ranked teams None

Teams that are no longer ranked None

Top 10

1. USA
2. Germany
3. Sweden
4. England
5. France
6. Canada
7. Spain
8. Netherlands
9. Brazil
10. Korea DPR



INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENTS

Valderrama's provides safe space for Women



Valderrama's in Islington has signed up to This Fan Girl's World Cup Pub Charter – a campaign dedicated to showcasing all the safe spaces for women to watch the World Cup this winter.

With much negativity around Qatar, Valderrama's, London's first ever inclusive sports bar, is committed to creating a comfortable environment for women and people from all communities, to watch all matches. Co-founders Dan Henry and revered chef James Cochran pledged to create a community space where no discrimination would be endured, so signing up to support This Fan Girl was a natural choice.

This Fan Girl is an award-winning non-profit digital platform powered by the global community of football fans. This year, will be the first time the majority of World Cup games will either end or start and end in darkness.

Knowing women in the UK already feel unsafe on their own at night with 1 in 2 women reporting they feel unsafe in comparison to 1 in 7 men, the World Cup being held in the winter for the UK could mean there is a potential additional risk for women.

This Fan Girl has pulled together a charter that shares experiences of being female fans and provides recommendations for small things pubs can do to improve the feeling of safety in their venues. The Charter is informed by female fans from our community and it aims to help pubs, understand and acknowledge breaking down toxic football culture. Valderrama's is the perfect place to catch the football, and is approved and listed on the official charter.

As well as a safe and inclusive space, HD screens and surround sounds, the delicious menu includes watermelon or mango frozen margaritas, fried chicken and cheesy burgers from Around the Cluck By James Cochran.

Dishes include The Original, with crispy buttermilk fried chicken, whipped blue cheese mousse, bacon scratchings, lettuce and the famous 12:51 scotch bonnet jam and the Hear Me Now with crispy buttermilk fried chicken, cheese n truffle fondue, smoked mushroom relish and slaw. For those looking for a sweet treat freshly made donuts are available to end any evening on the sweetest of notes.

First Female Referee at Men's World Cup

By Jamie Davies

History was made in men's football in Qatar as Stephanie Frappart became the first female to referee a match at a men's World Cup.

December 1st at the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar will be a memorable day for women's involvement in men's football as Stephanie Frappart along with her officiating assistants of Neuza Back of Brazil and Karen Diaz Medina of Mexico at Al Bayt Stadium took charge of Germany vs Costa Rica in the group stages.

During the opening days of the World Cup in Qatar we saw the faces of Frappart, Back and Medina in the background of some of the matches by either being a fourth official or an assistant – yes they even had a role for those to assist the fourth official.

But come the halfway point into the tournament, we saw the women's game's finest referees take charge to break new barriers and perhaps lead a new line.

This always felt like this had happened sooner at a World Cup but yet again we have seen glimpses in the past like the 2019 UEFA Super Cup between Liverpool and Chelsea. Frappart was the referee of that match to mark the first female to referee a UEFA men's competition.

It is fair to say Frappart has been making herself known for a while now and the French referee keeps climbing up the ladder to create a new path for other female referees to follow.

Frappart became a FIFA referee, 13 years ago in 2009, which in the football world is a long time, and you would estimate many matches were covered in that period.

The evening of December 1st has been a long time coming so why is it only now this is happening?

Qatar hosting this year's World Cup has been highly questioned ever since the Middle Eastern country was

awarded the rights to host, arguably the biggest sporting event in the world, back in 2010. 12 years later and the questions are still there, how did such a small country like Qatar convince FIFA to host the World Cup? How did a country where women's rights are strict get the green light from FIFA?

Well, this World Cup was the perfect opportunity for FIFA's officiating team to bring forward one of the most experienced female refs in a country where it needed to be addressed and inspire younger girls to get into football.

Frappart's career has been built for this moment as her refereeing CV has seen the French international officiate at the FIFA Women's World Cup in 2015 and 2019 including the final in France between USA and the Netherlands.

Before the 2019 FIFA Women's World Cup final, The 38 year old was also the first female

referee in Ligue 1, which is the top division in men's French football.

Frappart has come a long way and was no doubt a referee the governing body of FIFA can trust to officiate one of the biggest matches at the 2022 World Cup as Germany were playing to avoid a group stage exit.

The match concluded with Germany coming from behind at 1-2 to beat Costa Rica 4-2 but it was not enough to see the four time World Cup winners advance to the last 16 as Japan and Spain sealed the top two spots. It was a crazy night of football but Frappart looked ready for whichever scenario were going to be thrown at her – the only big challenge she had was a glitch in her earpiece, which lost contact to the VAR team near the end of the game, but luckily, her fourth official confirmed the details to her. It was a decision on whether Germany's fourth goal was offside or not, you cannot always rely on technology. The goal was given after a VAR check upstairs.

It is not just Frappart who is officiating at this year's World Cup, there are also two other female referees taking on the male players. They are Salima Mukansanga from Rwanda and Yoshimi Yamashita from Japan. So while I write this, we should expect to see at least a handful of more matches being led by female referees before the tournament comes to a conclusion on Sunday December 18th at the Lusail Stadium.

Ahead of the start of the tournament, Frappart said she hoped the inclusion of female referees in Qatar would "make

things happen" on a broader level. "It's a strong sign from FIFA and the authorities to have women referees in that country," she said to Sky Sports.

It's about time really that we have seen a female referee at a men's World Cup, it could have been sooner but now Frappart's debut could start to create a new addition followed by adding a normality to it. Either way, it doesn't matter what gender the referee is as long as they are professional and make the right decisions on the pitch.

The next step is to see if top divisions like the Premier League could follow this move from FIFA by having a first female referee in one of the biggest leagues in the world. We have seen Europe's top competitions of Ligue 1 and Bundesliga already do this in the last few years, surely it is time for the English Premier League to do the same?

It was around the 2010/11 Premier League season where Sian Massey-Ellis came onto the scene by being a match official for the top tier. She did a fantastic job by getting every decision correct on the sidelines in her second ever Premier League match between Wolves and Liverpool but sadly the headlines that followed was Ex-Sky Sports presenters of Richard Keys and Andy Gray make sexism remarks towards Massey-Ellis ahead of that match. The incident got the broadcasters sacked but this was over 11 years ago now, surely we are in overtime now of finding our first female Premier League referee?

There have been hints recently of a female ref in the Premier

League very soon but no confirmations as of yet. Normally a list of referees are normally published ahead of a new league season so it is highly unlikely we will see that for the remainder of the current campaign.

Meanwhile Massey-Ellis and Frappart have been brilliant ambassadors for female referees – they have both created huge possibilities for future generations.

This activity at the Qatar World Cup could accelerate things for female referees so watch this space.

US Women's Team being rewarded for men's World Cup progress



By Jamie Davies

USA Women are believed to be receiving \$6.5 million because of the men's side reaching the knockout stages of the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

This is part of the equal pay agreement that was forged earlier this year between both national teams.

It has been a saga going on for years with the likes of Megan Rapinoe and Alex Morgan fighting for better pay and to at least receive equal money with the men's side. Recent cases has shown good signs for the USWNT (US Women's National Team) as their global dominance in women's football is starting to get more recognition and you could say it is forming a legacy.

The US Women's team won back to back World

Cups in 2015 and 2019 before they aim to defend the crown again when the next edition takes centre stage in Australia and New Zealand next summer.

In a logical world, the team that wins more games and trophies would probably get more pay for their success but instead the football world favours the male teams more when it comes to payday.

Pretty much all the Women's Super League clubs in England earn a lot less than the men's group and the same goes for some of the national teams. But the USWNT players have argued for years that they should either get equal pay or maybe even a higher income than the men's because of their emphatic World Cup wins while USMNT have never even

reached a World Cup final let alone win one.

Earlier this week, USMNT beat Iran 1-0 to seal 2nd place in their World Cup group to advance to the last 16 with England. Their last 16 clash, as we write this, is with the Netherlands. Just reaching the second round of the tournament has guaranteed USA \$13 million in prize money so far and that will mean half of that will go to the women's team through the equal pay agreement.

USA became the first federation in history to split their World Cup prize money down the middle between their two national teams, which is a truly big moment for the future of the women's game in the United States.

As we said before, USWNT will at least get \$6.5 mil-

lion from the prize money pot just because of the men's success at their World Cup. Now that may seem a bit odd but you can look at this in two different angles. Those that do not support the equal pay could argue that the men's team generate more money from sponsors, appearances and attendances so that they should be expecting more than the women's side. However, the other angle could be that the men's team is paying back towards the women's side for all the years of success the USWNT have brought in.

It is a debate that has gone on for a long time but this agreement helps both parties, as this is a great investment for the sport in a country that populates other sports ahead of football including American Football, Ice Hockey, Baseball and Basketball.

There could be even more money to come if the US men's team go further into the tournament by beating the Dutch in the last 16 tie on Saturday December 3rd. Reaching the quarter-finals of the men's World Cup will earn your nation another \$17 million which would be split to \$8.5 million for each team. The USWNT could look at it right now as the more

they win, the more dollar we're going to get – another motive for the women to back the boys.

The highest payout at the 2022 World Cup is \$42 million for the tournament winner while the team that finishes third gets \$27 million and fourth receives \$25 million. The runner-up picks up a bag worth \$30 million.

It just shows that the money in men's football is still miles and miles ahead of where the women's game is at this moment in time. This is all because the USWNT only earned \$4 million for winning the 2019 Women's World Cup and \$2 million for being crowned world champions at the 2015 Women's World Cup. That is a huge difference in prize money.

ABC did report in July 2022 that FIFA were in discussions to more than double the prize money for the 2023 Women's World Cup.

It is believed that next year's World Cup will be the biggest yet with the format, including 32 teams for the first time and the prize money could go all the way up to \$100 million in total. This would be a huge improvement as the prize money would go up from \$85 million.

After the 2019 tournament, 77 FIFA

President Gianni Infantino promised to “at least double” the prize pot once more for the 2023 edition.

With what is going on in the States between the men and women's teams could be a sign of things to come for other national sides especially those that have had more success in the women's game. England is a very good example where the Lionesses have gone that little further than the men's side by recently winning the Euros at Wembley Stadium while Gareth Southgate's men could not do that at the Euro 2020 final against Italy at the very same venue. Not much has been reported that Sarina Wiegman's squad want to receive the same pay as the men's team but if England Women can win their first ever World Cup down under next summer, then talks must surely be considered.

Women's football is still on a very long road to perfection but it really does feel as though the sport is being taken more seriously in this current period compared to any other. Be interesting to see how the US women's team invest that prize money from this winter's World Cup as it could be the key of their current success to last even longer.

SHE...



By Frankie Scott

She was born on 14th December 1983 in Val-d'Oise, France.

She grew up in Herblay-sur-Seine, a commune beside the River Seine in the northwest suburbs of Paris. The river itself is smooth blue, with trees climbing up the river bank, and she would have passed this stretch of water many times during her childhood.

Nowadays, tourists can be found walking along the riverside path in the summer, maybe with a dog, their children riding bikes, and a lunch ready to eat on the nearest bench – but very few of them would know of the brilliance that had been born there 38 years ago.

See, it is beautiful town, but not unique to other towns of the same level of beauty. Even so, a girl grew up in the town who would go on to do unique – at least, unique to the time period in which she grew up.

She was thirteen years old when she refereed her first match. With a love of football, she fought off the sexist attitudes that occupied the nineties, and took charge of men's matches in spite of the player's raised eyebrows.

She was refereeing under-19 internationals by the time she was an adult. But that was just the beginning of this story...

As residents of the UK, we all know of Ligue 1. They

boast teams such as Lyon, PSG and Marseille, and we can often find them on BT Sport.

Hell, I bet we can even catch a Ligue 2 match every now and then on subscription TV.

Yet you may be less aware of the Championnat de France National. The third tier of French football, consisting of 18 teams. This was the league that she began officiating on in 2011.

But why would you have heard of this league? I'm not even sure if all the teams were professional!

Still, it was an exciting season first season on this league. Nimes, Niort and Gazelec Ajaccio were promoted to Ligue 2, whilst

Beauvais, Martigues, Besancon and Bayonne were relegated to the Championnat de France amateur. Not that this meant much – several teams had been demoted at the beginning of the season as they couldn't cope financially.

But, whilst they were on the way down, she was on the way up.

In 2014, she became the first woman to ever referee in Ligue 2. In 2015, she officiated at the FIFA Women's World Cup in Canada, and followed this by officiating the same tournament in France in 2019. But this wasn't the only great moment of 2019 for her – in April, she was promoted again, and she officiated in Ligue 1.

From a girl who'd fought the sexism of football in the nineties as a teenager, she was now a woman who'd officiate at the highest elite level of French men's football.

On 28th April, she led out SC Amiens and RC Strasbourg for her first match. The game itself was a boring 0-0 draw. She gave 33 fouls and 4 yellow cards. No one walked away from the Stade de la Licorne that day with memories of a classic.

But she walked away with memories she would treasure forever.

It was a great achievement, and one would excuse her for deciding she'd reached

the pinnacle – that she'd already proven herself. But it didn't even cross her mind that she'd stop there.

She had started something, and she intended to break new records and reach new highs.

On 2nd December 2020, Juventus beat Dynamo Kiev at the Allianz Stadium by three goals. One from Federico Chiesa, one from Alvaro Morata – and one from a certain Cristiano Ronaldo. The person who took charge of this match?

It was her.

She was the first woman to lead out the teams at a men's Champions League match, on matchday 5 of the group stage.

When Netherlands beat Latvia by a single goal later that month, she was the first woman to referee an international men's match.

But this wasn't a token gesture. It wasn't pity, it wasn't to give an image of equality, it wasn't so UEFA could make themselves 'look good.' It was because she deserved it. Because she had earned the right to show her abilities.

She showed this once again on 7th May 2022 at the Stade de France. She gave a penalty that saw Nantes beat Nice with a single goal in the Coupe de France final.

And, in the final round of games in Group E, in the desert heat of Qatar, one woman put on her kit,

pocketed her cards, and led her two assistant referees out for their warm up. As she was to walk onto the pitch, she was to make a leap of progress that, only a decade ago, would have been the stuff of dreams.

Costa Rica would score two goals.

Germany would score four.

The result of Japan Vs Spain would mean that Germany would go out of the World Cup.

But she wouldn't.

Not someone who managed such a challenging game with skill and authority.

Not someone who moved around the field of play with relentless stamina.

Not someone whose decisions were executed with such accuracy that not even the misinformed pundits could question her.

She is Stephanie Frappart.

On 1st December 2022, she became the first woman to officiate in a men's World Cup.

And she's only just begun.

Arnold Clark Cup announced



After its launch earlier this year, the Arnold Clark Cup will make a return in 2023 in England.

Before the 2022 calendar hit February, the biggest women's international invitational tournament was over in the United States of America in what is known as the SheBelieves Cup. A competition that was born in 2016 to see four top teams compete for a trophy that technically does not really mean anything but it opens up more competition in the women's football schedule.

But just over 10 months ago we were spoilt with a new competition taking to the stage for the first time in the territory of the Lionesses. Just like the SheBelieves Cup, the Arnold Clark Cup invited four nations to take part and they were England (the hosts), Germany, Canada and Spain.

The line-up for its first edition was a strong one and certainly

had the organisers of the United States version a little nervous. This year's SheBelieves Cup could only attract USA, Iceland, Czech Republic and New Zealand. It was another tournament win for the world champions but having an unusual line up for the competition was valuable experience for the teams who are still developing their women's group.

No announcements have been made yet for the SheBelieves Cup to return for 2023 but if it is to have its eighth edition, it is expected to take place this February/March time.

Turning back to the Arnold Clark Cup brings back good memories for Sarina Wiegman's Lionesses as they topped the group after a win against Germany and draws with Spain and Olympic champions Canada was enough for England to bring it home.

It proved to be a vital warm-up ahead of the Women's Euros for England in which we all

know by now how that resulted on July 31st.

More regular matches, even if they are just friendlies, with teams at around the same level can only help the England players out by learning and experiencing what their rivals are capable of.

The attendance figures were a mixed bag in the first edition as thousands would follow England's matches that were played at Riverside Stadium (Middlesbrough), Carrow Road (Norwich) and Molineux Stadium (Wolverhampton) while only a few hundred would see the matches that didn't feature the hosts.

But ticket sales have already exceeded 20,000 for England's match against Belgium at Bristol City's Ashton Gate mostly down to the Euro success.

Here is everything you need to know about the 2023 Arnold Clark Cup...

The Teams Announced

England (Hosts)

Belgium

Italy

South Korea

It will be a debut appearance for all three of England's opponents as we see the return of Belgium and Italy after they took part in last summer's Euros.

When are they taking place?

Match Day 1 – Thursday February 16

Match Day 2 – Sunday February 19

Match Day 3 – Wednesday February 22

Where are the matches being played?

So far only two stadiums have been announced to host the matches for match day 1 and match day 3 but there is no venue attached to match day 2.

We expect an announcement to come soon for that one.

Match day 1 will take place at Stadium MK in Milton Keynes, a ground that hosted a number of Euro 2022 matches including the 2nd semi-final.

The final round of matches will conclude at Ashton Gate, the home of Bristol City on February 22nd, it means the venue choices are different to what we saw in this year's competition.

Fixtures Rundown

Six matches in three different stadiums in the space of six days, here are the fixtures with

the up to date information we have so far...

February 16th, 2023

Italy v Belgium – 16:45 – Stadium MK, Milton Keynes

England v South Korea – 19:45 – Stadium MK, Milton Keynes

February 19th, 2023

England v Italy – TBC

Belgium v South Korea – TBC

February 22nd, 2023

South Korea v Italy – KO time (TBC) – Ashton Gate, Bristol

England v Belgium – KO time (TBC) – Ashton Gate, Bristol

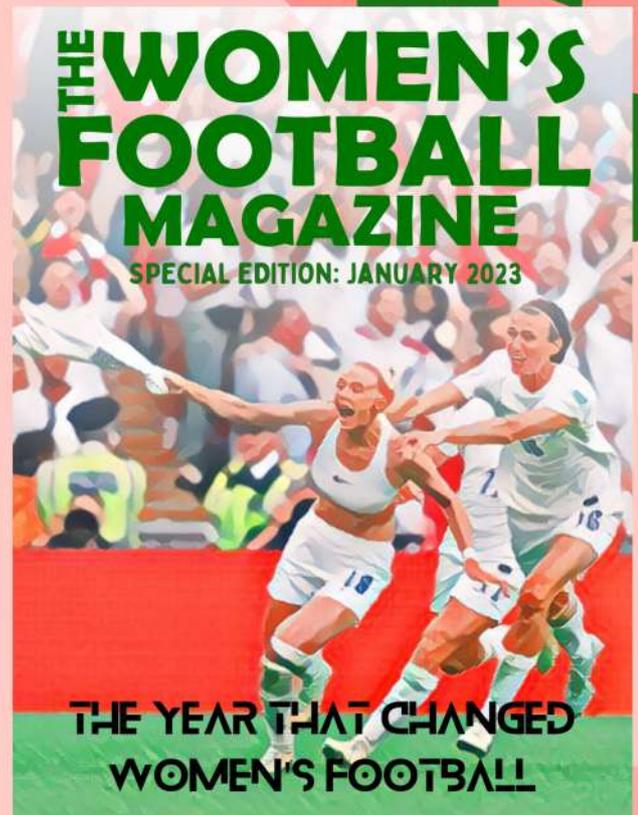
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AROUND THE WORLD

NWSL season draws to a close



By Peter Mann

The 2022 National Women's Soccer League season was, ultimately, a successful one, with Portland Thorns lifting the Championship Play-Off title, OL Reign claiming the NWSL Shield, and North Carolina Courage taking the Challenge Cup.

As reported in last month's issue, the Thorns would win their third, play-off title, this time defeating Kansas City Current 2-0 in October's final.

The Thorns' Sophia Smith, scorer of the opening goal, after just four minutes, was named as both the NWSL, and the Championship, Most Valuable Player (MVP), whilst the end of season awards themselves, they were dominated by San Diego Wave, who were beaten by Thorns, in the play-off semi-finals.

Naomi Girma would be seen to lead the way, taking both the 'Rookie of the Year,' and 'Defender of the Year,' awards; team-mate Kailen Sheridan was named the 'Goalkeeper of the Year,' whilst manager Casey Stoney, she was named 'Coach of the Year,' rather productive indeed for the fledgling side.

Alongside Sheridan and Girma, Alex Morgan was also named in the Mastercard Team of the Year, whilst also seeing herself nominated (13th), alongside fellow Americans, Catarina Macario (9th, Lyon) and Trinity Rodman (18th, Washington Spirit), for football's pinnacle, individual award, the Ballon D'Or Feminin, Alexia Putellas of Barcelona claiming that one.

SOPHIA SMITH (PORTLAND THORNS)

The League, and Championship, MVP, as well as being named in the Team of the Year, was a standout performer for play-off champions, Portland Thorns, this past season.

At just 22-years-old, Colorado-born Smith would join the Thorns in January 2020, as their #1 draft pick, from Stanford Cardinal College, where she would be seen to win the NCAA Division One championship, in 2019.

Since she joined the Thorns, it's heralded in a somewhat golden spell, for both parties, as well as benefitting the US Women's National Team; the 2022 success being Smith's fourth piece of silverware with the Thorns, including that of the 2021 International Champions Cup.

Meanwhile, in her country's colours, Smith was seen to be part of the sides which lifted the CONCACAF U20 (2020), SheBelieves Cup (2021 and 2022), and CONCACAF title (2022), victory in the latter ensuring the USAs qualification for the World Cup in Australia/New Zealand, 2023.

Sophia Smith 2022 statistics

Double MVP; 20 games played (18 starts); 15 scored (from 54 shots on target); one yellow card

KAILEN SHERIDAN (SAN DIEGO WAVE)

Named in the Team of the Year for the second successive season, the 27-year-old, Canadian-born shot-stopper would be seen to win Olympic Gold with her country in 2021, having debuted back in 2016.

Prior to that, Sheridan was with the Clemson Tigers (college), registering an impressive, 28 clean sheets, between 2003 and 2016, being named in the All-ACC team in consecutive seasons, the first of which, in 2014, made her the first Tigers nomination in some seven years.

In 2017 Sheridan would join the NY/NJ Gotham side (then known as Sky Blue) and would spend five seasons before being snapped up

having finally gained Canada's number one jersey from the now-retired, Stephanie Labbe, and was named in the CONCACAF Team of the Tournament, as well as taking home the Golden Glove, conceding just one goal in five games (the 1-0 loss to USA in the final) as Canada qualified for the World Cup.

Kailen Sheridan 2022 statistics

Played 1829 minutes, over 20 games; kept eight clean sheets; saved three penalties; three yellow cards and one red card (the one dismissal came AFTER the final whistle vs. Orlando Pride for dissent; foul & abusive language towards the official)

NAOMI GIRMA (SAN DIEGO WAVE)

As with MVP, Sophia Smith, Naomi Irma is just 22-years-old, and, most certainly, a star for the present, and the future, of the women's game.

Born in San Jose, California, Girma, like Smith, spent her college

years at Stanford Cardinal, and was the first draft pick for the Wave, earlier this year, also being part of the successful Cardinal side of 2019, defeating North Carolina on penalties.

Having claimed individual honours whilst at Cardinal, Girma then followed suit in her debut, NWSL season, having also, previously, being named as the US Soccer Young Female Player of the Year two years ago, following in the footsteps of the like of Lindsay Horan, Mallory Pugh, and the aforementioned, Smith.

Girma would make her international debut, against Uzbekistan, in April this year, and has three CONCACAF titles to her name, U17s (2016), U23s (2020), and full honours (2022), her talent, seemingly, knowing no bounds, and rightfully making her a one to watch.

Naomi Girma 2022 statistics

Played in all 21 games (1920 minutes); only conceded seven

fouls from eighteen block; twenty-four interceptions; one yellow card

CASEY STONEY (SAN DIEGO WAVE)

The English-born manager of the San Diego Wave played for several clubs in England during the noughties, whilst also being capped more than 130 times; during that playing career she lifted fourteen trophies, including two league titles, and four FA Cups.

Having been awarded an MBE in 2015, the Essex native managed Manchester United (2018-21) before joining the then-new, NWSL franchise, San Diego Wave, in the July of that year, as their first manager.

Stoney would lead Wave to a third-place finish in her first season (play-off semis) and, without question, Stoney will be hoping to add to her sole, managerial success to date, the 2019 Women's Championship.

All to fight for in Bundesliga

Women's football, well. Competing for league championships that is, has been contested in Germany since the Seventies, clubs coming to fruition in that of the late Sixties, across both East, and West Germany.

As the reunification of one of Europe's powerhouses didn't occur until late 1990, the occurrence of women's football was taking hold, on both sides of the Berlin Wall.

East Germany would be the ones to be seen to lead the way, just, with the formation of BSG Empor Dresden Mitte (now known as Dresdner SC), in 1968, via the Bulgarian student, Vladimir Zvetkov, amidst opposition.

The first game, that was said to have taken place in front of some 1,600 spectators, on 4 August 1969, in the former, German Democratic Republic (GDR); little is known of that first encounter, just that

Dresden defeated Empor Posenndorf, 2-0.

A said reason for the women's game not taking off in Germany is that, because it was not an Olympic sport, therefore it was a recreational activity and patronized by the local authorities at the time, they've come a long way since those early days.

Meanwhile, in West Germany, TuS Worrstadt were formed in 1969, by Egon Rehbein, and began to tear all asunder, winning almost all of their games and becoming one of the more formative, most prominent clubs in the country.

In fact it would be they who'd be behind the formation of 'Goldpokal,' the first, unofficial, German championship, coincidentally won by TuS after they defeated Bad Neuenahr in the semi-final, and then Bayern Munich in the final itself.

TuS would go on to win the first, official championship, the following year (1971), beating DJK Eintracht Ene 4-0, in front of 3,500 fans, in Mainz.

Prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall though, the most successful sides were that of SG Bergish Gladbach, of West Germany, who won nine league championships, including six-in-a-row (1979-84), whilst in East Germany it was that of Turbine Postdam, the fall of the wall perhaps benefitting them the most.

Bergish Gladbach, based in the North-Rhine Westphalia region, amongst their successes, added three DFB-Pokal cups, alongside winning the Women's World Invitational Tournament, in Taiwan, in 1981 and 1984.

The success of the club was furthered in the production of some eighteen, international

players, including the legendary Silvia Neid, one of the most successful players in the women's game in Germany.

Neid would be seen to win seven league championships, and six DFB-Pokal cups, alongside lifting three European Championships as a player, in 1989, 1991, and 1995; Neid moved straight into managing the German national team immediately after her playing days were numbered.

With the German Youth side she led them to three, European U19 titles as well as the 2004 U20 World Cup, in Thailand, prior to assisting, then succeeding, Tina Theune-Meyer, as the main, Head Coach, in June 2005, holding the post for eleven years.

As Head Coach of Germany, Neid added the World Cup (2007), two European Championships (2009, 2013), Olympic Gold (2016), and three Algarve Cup victories (2006, 2012, and 2014), whilst also claiming three, World Coach of the Year awards, stepping down after their Olympic success when Germany defeated Sweden 2-1 in Rio de Janeiro.

Back in the domestic game meanwhile, and in East Germany, Turbine Potsdam were coming to the fore in the eighties, lifting six titles of their own, including a hat-trick between 1981 and 1983.

Having also been formed in the early seventies, Potsdam were one

of those prominent sides of the old east, and, following the fall of the Berlin Wall, continued, becoming the only side of that era to on and lift six, Frauen-Bundesliga titles, alongside two, Champions League successes, in 2005, and again 2010, whilst also being runners-up in 2006 (all-German final with Eintracht Frankfurt) and again in 2011.

Conny Pohlers was the hero of 2005, and, coming from strong, footballing stock, her parents both played, she netted three times over the two legs against Swedish outfit, Djurgarden, before going on to lift the trophy on three further occasions, with Frankfurt (2008), and again with VfL Wolfsburg (2013 and 2014).

Success attributed to those clubs, and those players alone, provide testament to the strength of women's football in Germany, strength added to by vintage performances of both Frankfurt and Wolfsburg in the DFB-Pokal, they lifting the German Cup nine times apiece since its inception in 1981.

Underneath the Frauen-Bundesliga, it's been a little more complex.

The 2. Bundesliga has seen a Nord, and Sud, divide in its shy of twenty year history, the Frauen-Regionalliga itself enjoying a history dating back to the mid-eighties.

Of those, five, regional leagues, Niederkirchen, in the Rhineland-

Palatinate (SW Germany), have been the most successful; currently in the 2. Bundesliga, having been promoted twice in recent years, 2016 and 2020, Niederkirchen have won six (southwest) titles, including back-to-back twice, in 2001 and 2002, and again in 2004 and 2005.

The afore-mentioned Pohlers is a former player, briefly, in 1997, whilst Heidi Mohr, capped over a hundred times for Germany, was voted the European Footballer of the Century, in 1999, and, a renowned goal-scorer, she died of cancer, in 2019, at the age of 51.

In recent years, in the Frauen-Bundesliga, apart from Bayern Munich's success in 2021, has been dominated by Wolfsburg, they lifting five of the last six, with four-in-a-row between 2017 and 2020.

In heading towards the halfway stage of the current campaign, it is they who are top of the table, with nine-from-nine, unbeaten in all competitions, their latest, a 5-0 thrashing of Frankfurt (Jill Rood with a hat-trick); meanwhile, sandwiched between them at the top, a Bayern side with seven wins and a draw following their dominant, 4-0 win, away to Hoffenheim (Lea Schuller with a brace).

Freiburg are also in the running in fourth, they having won 4-1 at home to Duisburg (Riola Xhemelli with two) in their last outing for their sixth win of the season.



Top Five Republic of Ireland players in English Football



By Aisling Hannon

One of the most heart-warming and memorable stories in women's football this year was the Republic of Ireland's qualification for the upcoming 2023 World Cup in Australia and New Zealand. The Girls in Green have never qualified for a major competition before, so this milestone was an exceptional achievement for the nation who have recently moved up to 24th in the FIFA rankings. The squad hosts an abundance of quality, and we have a look at five of those who are currently serving in English football.

Katie McCabe – Arsenal

McCabe is the jewel in the crown of Irish women's football. Captaining the Irish side and achieving 68 caps in the process is a huge advertisement of how capable the 27-year-old is of being a dominant force wherever she

plays. The Dubliner has just reached 100 appearances for Arsenal and is a fan favourite at both club and international level.

What makes her so gifted as a footballer is not only her natural talent, but the ability to play anywhere on the pitch. Winger, forward, midfield or defence – McCabe has been known to dabble in them all, and utilised her skill in helping Ireland to qualify for their first ever major tournament.

There seems to be a very high sense of composure about McCabe. Even though she captains her national side, who are renowned for not being the most successful of teams, she has a calm demeanour and expressed before the crucial qualifier against Scotland that the weight of expectation is not felt. Her confidence, leadership, talent and good nature will continue to shine

throughout the League campaign and into next year's World Cup.

Lily Agg – London City

Agg is one of the more heroic of Irish players, and little was known about the Brighton native until she scored the winning goal against Finland in September's group stage fixture – a goal that would secure a play-off with Scotland. Agg only began playing for the Irish team in June 2022, after being approached by manager Vera Pauw, but has been a whirlwind in the midfield and has easily become one to watch in international duty going forward.

Playing for the London City Lionesses at club level, Agg has had a glittering career, gaining experience at many clubs; Charlton, Frankfurt and Millwall, to name a few. The 28-year-old is gifted in that she can change a game completely with her energetic pace and sharp ability to think quick. Delays to her international debut, between injury and

passport issues, blighted the opportunity to make her mark sooner, but it is clear now that Agg can be a pivotal member of the squad heading to Australia next summer.

At club level, the Lionesses are currently on a decent streak in the Championship, sitting in second behind Bristol City as it stands, with Southampton creeping up on them to make it a tight competition at the top. Agg is a key player in the squad, being a creative asset to the London side, and will be determined to push the team into the Women's Super League for the first time.

Courtney Brosnan – Everton

Another hero in Ireland's victory over Scotland, Brosnan is one of the most gifted goalkeepers in the WSL right now. Hailing from New Jersey, but of Irish descent, the Everton star produced a crucial penalty save in the Scotland play-off that sealed a clean sheet and a win for the Irish on the night.

With plenty of experience gained across multiple leagues in the United States, France and England, the former West Ham number-one spoke to the media about her confidence going into said play-off, and the hours of practise pumped into preparing for that one game. A solid defence around her helps to keep potential goals at bay, but Brosnan must be admired for keeping a clean sheet in half of their group games, especially when the team can sometimes concede soft goals.

Brosnan embraces her maturity and is breaking the barrier in which surrounds the Irish team regarding poor performances before this group

stage began. The team have shown a distinct togetherness throughout the qualifying campaign and Brosnan is at the pinnacle of that mentality. The 26-year-old is clever, and can sniff out danger in the box quite effortlessly. Being vocal is of importance too, and although her club side Everton are hovering around mid-table during this WSL campaign, portraying that management and control in a game can only be a good thing in what is such a competitive and exciting season.

Chloe Mustaki – Bristol City

Versatile Mustaki has overcome quite a lot of difficulties for such a young player, but is deservedly shining at both club and international level in 2022. The 27-year-old was diagnosed with Hodgkin Lymphoma as a teenager and has also overcome a serious ACL injury in her time as a footballer, but her ferocious mentality has helped her to overcome the most dark and difficult times in her life.

A strong, talented defender, who also plays in midfield, Mustaki captained the Ireland under-19 squad who reached the semi-finals of the UEFA Under-19 Championship in 2014. Evidently an immense talent, she earned her first senior cap earlier this year and will continue to play a vital role in Vera Pauw's squad.

An essential engine in the Bristol City squad, who currently sit top of the Championship after a solid start to the season, Mustaki is a promising prospect for the future and with youth on her side, has plenty of time to showcase her talent and

resiliency on the biggest of stages.

Niamh Fahey – Liverpool

Fahey has been one of the most prominent players in Irish football over her decorated career. The defender, now 35, commenced in her native Galway where she played with her local team, Salthill Devon, before joining Galway United where she won the FAI Women's Cup in 2007.

From there, her career in football went on an upwards trajectory when she joined Arsenal in 2008 and starred at left-back in that treble winning season for the Gunners. Currently on the books at Liverpool, she gained experience with Chelsea and Bordeaux before joining the Reds in 2018.

Fahey is a crucial player for the Irish team as she has gained so much understanding of the game during her career. Not only is she a leader on and off the pitch, but the 100 caps gained for her international side, a milestone that was hit earlier this year, proves how reliable and trustworthy she is as a player.

Her trophy cabinet speaks for itself, with three WSL titles under her belt alongside five FA Cups and a Championship title with Liverpool. Captaining the Reds and being one of the most experienced players on the pitch both at club and senior levels speaks volumes about Fahey, who now has Leanne Kiernan under her wing at Prenton Park too. Kiernan, although blighted with injury as of late, is another highly talented Irish striker who, at 23, will be a huge name in the future.

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