

**THE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL
MAGAZINE**

June 2017

Issue 2

**LET THIS
COUNTRY**

**STAND
UNITED**



THE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL MAGAZINE



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Welcome

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Welcome and About My Month

Welcome to the new issue of The Women's Football Magazine.

With the horrible news breaking from Manchester as this issue was being put together, it felt only right to pay tribute to all those caught up in the attack.

Amongst those injured in the terrorist attack at Manchester Arena on May 22 was Martin Hibbert and his daughter. Martin is a huge part of the WSL and we wish them both a speedy recovery.

Our hearts go out to those who have lost loved ones and those who are grieving. Unfortunately, it has not just been Manchester affected. TWFM was devastated to hear about the attack of London as well and there were some quick editorial changes to honour those who lost their lives. The Red Cross has set up a donation page and the information is below.

We stand with Manchester and London, we stand for love.

Helen Rowe-Willcocks
Editor

www.redcross.com/love

<https://www.justgiving.com/campaigns/charity/redcross/UKsolidarityfund>





About My Month

The last month has been a very busy one here at the Women's Football Magazine. After a successful launch last month, we wanted to make sure that this month's issue was even bigger and better.

The last year I have been lucky enough to have been on the board for the SSE Player of the Round awards. It has been a great experience and I was really looking forward to the final.

I attended the Women's FA Cup Final with Jennie (4 The Love of Sport) and what a day out that was! It was great to see so many young fans enjoying the day and many congratulations to Manchester City.

We have also started making progress with the website and hopefully in the next month we will have some exciting content on there!

The magazine has welcomed its first full-time writer. Welcome to Jessica Pratt! We are delighted to have her on board. Jess has a really passion for women's football and you can see her first copy further on in the magazine where she leads us through the UWCL Final.

We are always on the lookout for new writers, photographers or social media experts so please do get in touch!

Helen x



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The Big Story: Kelly Smith



After announcing her retirement in January, Kelly Smith has not been using the time to relax.

The striker earned 117 England caps, played in six major tournaments and won 20 trophies with Arsenal Ladies. Since retiring from the sport where she was nicknamed “the women’s David Beckham”, Smith has found her new happy ending after announcing she is pregnant with her first child.

Back when Smith first started playing football women’s football was still an afterthought and she has previously spoken about how her first game in an England jersey saw her wearing men’s kit. Since then the sport has grown immensely.

Our editor Helen sat down with Kelly to discuss how the sport has changed since she started playing football.

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Last month UEFA announced that a study they had conducted showed that playing football boosts girls confidence and Smith admits, it helped her learn a lot of different skills.

She said: “I haven't read the report but I would agree that it does boost confidence. It also builds helps with social interaction build friendships, teaches teamwork and keeps girls active. [It helped build my confidence], when I was playing football I felt very confident, after a training session I would feel good about myself and have a positive outlook. It's good to work out as you release endorphins. When I was injured my confidence was knocked. I was frustrated I couldn't play football and began to have low self-esteem.”

Despite the changes in opinion about the women's game in the UK, there is still a long way to go before it has as many resources and funding for the game. The 38-year-old, who became the first English professional to play in

America, believes there are still many challenges for young girls who want to play football.

“There are still barriers and opinions that girls shouldn't play football but that's a load of nonsense,” she said.

“There are so many more opportunities in this era and the game has changed massively since I was younger, there are more and more girls teams with various age ranges which is fantastic. There is still a long way to go. [When I started playing] a few girls made fun of me but I think they were jealous, but I didn't care all I wanted to do was play football. Boys didn't care that I was a girl, they wanted me on their team in the playground because I was good, gender didn't matter. It's a lot more accepted in today's society. Although sometimes people still have their opinions about it, you can't please everybody. If girls want to play and enjoy it they should go with their heart, nobody should be told they can't play. What's good now is that young girls have role models to look up as the game is more accessible to fans via social media and has TV coverage.”

There has been so many steps forward for the sport in recent years with the Women's FA Cup final moving to Wembley and the WSL enticing a number of foreign players to play in the UK. Smith is confident that with the likes of Carli Lloyd plying her trade here there will be others who will follow.

She said: “Yes there are so many foreign players signing up the FAWSL league now and I think it is great that they want to be a part of the league and the culture. It's a very competitive league and it's exciting to see top talent




England



in the league.”

Since retiring from the sport Smith enjoyed making a brief cameo at her testimonial, despite being pregnant, attended the women’s FA Cup final in May and has taken up a role of coaching. She remains a significant figure at Arsenal where she is now coaching the Development Squad whilst also studying for her A-licence coaching badge. Her retirement saw famous faces from around the world message her to congratulate her on her career including Peter Beardsley and Steven Gerrard but the former Arsenal player has no regrets.

“Retirement is nice I have enjoyed resting my body, and being pregnant has helped me re focus and reevaluate my life. Coaching has been

enjoyable and a massive learning curve. It's great working with youngsters who are hungry and want to develop. It was a bit weird being back [at Wembley] knowing Arsenal weren't in the final but it brought back a lot of fond memories when we won last year and lifted the trophy.”

Smith remains the all-time record goalscorer for England with 46 goals from 117 appearances and she is looking forward to this summer’s Euros 2017 championships in the Netherlands where England have been drawn in a group with Scotland, Spain and Portugal.

Speaking ahead of the tournament, Smith told the magazine: “I hope they perform, play well, score fantastic goals and get to the final, beat



Germany and capture a whole new audience of football fans. [I was not really that surprised that Mark Sampson announced his squad early]. Mark is a forward thinking coach. He has a vision and knows what he wants and he's gone for it. Time will tell [if it was the right decision].

As the interview came to a close, we just had to find out if, Kelly, out of all the goals she had scored, had a favourite.

She said: "I can't just give you one memory I have so many stored in my brain. My debut v Italy at the age of 16, Scoring 2 goals v Japan in my first WC in 2007. Playing in the European Championship final in Finland, My 100th cap are all very special memories."

117

England Caps

6

goals in an
FA Cup final

16

The age she
won her first
England cap

46

goals for
England

KELLY SMITH IN NUMBERS

20

Trophies
with
Arsenal
Ladies

2

FA Women's
Players'
Players of the
Year



1

First female
professional
in England

1

UEFA Cup

L A D I E S

5

FA Cup trophies

9

Hatricks scored

125

goals for Arsenal

1996

began her professional career
at Wembley Ladies



UEFA

WOMEN'S
CHAMPIONS
LEAGUE™



Thousands watch Lyon triumph in UWCL final in Cardiff

by Jessica Pratt

L

Lyon proved once again to be PSG's *bête noire* in Cardiff last Thursday night as they won a tightly contested all-French affair to take home the coveted UEFA Women's Champions League trophy. Lyon, who were the holders after last year's success on penalties over Wolfsburg, were looking to complete a

second successive treble after retaining their French league and cup titles in recent weeks.

Penalty shootouts are becoming something of a recurrent theme for Les Lyonnaises in finals (they lost the inaugural edition of the UWCL to Turbine Potsdam on spot kicks) and this year's French Cup final - also against PSG, was no different. After a 1-1 draw in 90 minutes, Lyon went on to win the shootout 7-6 thanks to second goalkeeper Méline Gérard's save from Ouleymata Sarr and a winning spot kick from 2017 BBC Footballer of the Year Ada Hegerberg.

PSG went into this European final not only looking to restore some pride on the back of that narrow loss to Lyon; they were also aware that a win would secure them qualification for next season's UWCL competition after they had failed to qualify through their league position. The Parisians were hoping for a much-needed boost in the form of their first European title after they had endured a turbulent season in the Division 1 Féminine, which saw them drop from first place, after a win over Lyon just before Christmas, to a third-place finish. In January, Patrice Lair's side were on the receiving end of a points deduction for fielding an unregistered player during their first match of the season and a dip in form in the following months saw them finish behind rivals Lyon and Montpellier.

One positive for PSG was that Lyon had recently been proven beatable in Champions League competition, having lost 1-0 at home to Manchester City in the second leg of their semi-final tie. Luckily for Gérard Prêcheur's side, their convincing 3-1 win in the first leg gave them a one goal aggregate advantage that sent them to their sixth final in eight seasons. PSG were more convincing in their semi-final matches, securing a 5-1 aggregate victory over two legs against Barcelona on their route to Cardiff.

The main talking point pre-match was surrounding the fitness of Lyon striker Alex Morgan. After she had sat out their two most recent games with a



a hamstring injury, speculation began on whether the American would be fit to play a part in what could potentially be her final match for Lyon. Morgan is due to return to her parent club Orlando Pride this summer and there has been no word on the rumours that she could return to ply her trade in France again in the future. Coach Prêcheur, who is similarly moving on to pastures new this summer, opted to start Morgan in attack with Eugénie Le Sommer and Ada Hegerberg for his final game in charge.

The notable starters for PSG included Sabrina Delannoy, who shook off an ankle injury to ensure she started the final game of her career before retirement. Former Lyon player and current PSG captain Shirley Cruz Traña was also handed a start by manager Patrice Lair, who himself has a rich history with the opponents as he



as he was the man at the helm when the club won their first two European titles.

It was a cagey affair in the opening stages of the first half at the Cardiff City Stadium with both sides struggling to carve open any clear openings. Lyon controlled possession in midfield and opted to feed balls into the box from the wide areas with Le Sommer and Morgan. The former saw one of her crosses almost diverted into the path of Hegerberg early on after desperate defending by Geyoro but the danger was eventually cleared by Delannoy. PSG's main threat appeared to be Cristiane, who was looking to add to her six goals in the competition leading up to this match.

Much like before kick-off, Morgan became the main talking point of the half when she pulled up inside 23 minutes and limped off with a recurrence of the hamstring injury that had made her a doubt for the match. Elodie Thomis replaced the

striker as the game began to open up with chances at both ends for Delie and Le Sommer respectively.

Cruz had the best chance for either side just after half an hour when a strong header down from Delie sent the PSG captain on a dangerous run into the box. The Costa Rican then created a fantastic opportunity for herself as she sidestepped the incoming Abily and curled the ball towards goal, forcing a fine save from Bouhaddi.

Whilst Lyon dominated possession, it was PSG who created the better opportunities and the Parisians clearly grew in confidence as the tie remained goalless. The half ended with another opportunity for them in injury time as Cristiane blazed the ball over the bar after a dangerous cross from Lawrence had found her unmarked 12 yards from goal.

Lyon created their best chance of the game just after the break when the uncharacteristically quiet Maroszan whipped in a set piece that bounced over the head of M'Bock Bathy and fell to Hegerberg. The striker's shot from 6 yards was initially well-saved by Kiedrzynek before the ball rebounded back to the Norwegian, whose hurried stab at the ball saw it fly just wide in a huge let-off for PSG.

There was no doubt that Lyon had stepped it up in the second half as they created more chances with their possession but after Kiedrzynek had saved from a long-range strike from Maroszan, it was PSG who missed another golden opportunity. Cruz showed off some excellent footwork to bypass Abily and Kumagai in the midfield with ease before playing in



league this season, side-footed the ball just wide of the post with her first-time shot from 10 yards out. It was the clearest opportunity of the match for either side and it should have seen PSG take the lead.

As the tie headed towards extra time Lyon looked more and more dangerous in attack, with Maroszan providing a constant threat with her set pieces and long-range shots. The withdrawal of PSG's midfield creator Cruz seemed to diminish some of their attacking threat but they nervously saw out the six minutes of injury time to ensure they did not concede a stoppage time winner, as they had done in their only other Champions League final appearance against Frankfurt two years ago. Lyon continued to dominate in extra time

but a distinct lack of quality in front of goal combined with some resolute defending from PSG and their commanding goalkeeper Kiedrzynek saw the game finish goalless in 120 minutes. In what must have seemed like *déjà vu* for both sides after the French Cup final shootout just weeks earlier, penalties were to determine where in France the trophy was headed.

A grandstand finish was the least the travelling French fans deserved, after both sets of supporters had created a fantastic atmosphere throughout a somewhat tepid final. PSG were first up in the shootout and Cristiane calmly put them 1-0 ahead before Majri levelled for Lyon with a lucky penalty that rolled in just underneath the diving Kiedrzynek.



Routine penalties from the next four sets of penalty takers followed which brought the scores level to 6-6 after seven penalties taken by each side. In a bizarre turn of events, Kiedrzynek then stepped up to take the next penalty for PSG which seemed an odd move as they still had outfield players to call upon. Lair will certainly regret the decision to let his goalkeeper go next after the Pole dragged a terrible penalty wide of Bouhaddi's right-hand post.

Kiedrzynek was then forced to pick herself up and go back in goal as Bouhaddi, not put off by her fellow keeper's miss, then stepped up to take a penalty of her own. The French international made no mistake and blasted the ball in to give Lyon another 7-6 penalty victory over PSG, which also saw them match Frankfurt's record of four Champions League titles.

It was a cruel end for PSG and Kiedrzynek in particular, who had performed admirably throughout the match.

The Parisians did a fantastic job to nullify Lyon's attacking threat and should arguably have taken at least one of their clear-cut chances. Lyon too deserve some praise, especially for holding their nerve after Le Sommer was the first to miss in the shootout.

The final, although not as spectacular as many were hoping for, is a prime example of how far French women's football has come in recent years. Since the rebrand to the UWCL in 2009/10, either Lyon or PSG have appeared in all but one final. There is no doubt that the high attendance at the Cardiff City Stadium will see both sides earn some new admirers and supporters.

Although PSG will unfortunately miss out on Champions League football next season, it will be interesting to see how well Montpellier fare and whether Lyon, with a new manager, can complete an unprecedented third treble in a row.

Photos courtesy of Richard Laverty

10 Questions with Keira Walsh



1. Do you have any rituals or superstitions before a game?

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

2. What is your best moment in football to date?

Probably winning the league and two Conti Cups with Man City.

3. Who is the best player you have played against?

Dzsenifer Marozsán- she is technically unbelievable

4. Do you have a set pre-match food?

It is not very exciting but chicken, rice and beans

5. Who is your best friend in football?

Leah Williamson

6. What is the hardest moment of your career so far?

The 3-1 loss in the Champions League [to Lyon in the semi-final]. It was hard going into the Champions League having to try and turn it around.

7. What is the favourite goal you have scored?

Scoring in the Champions League last year, it was a long range effort- probably shouldn't have gone in but it was my first goal for City. That's why it is my favourite.

8. Who is the most skilful player at Man City?

Toni Duggan

9. Who is your biggest supporter?

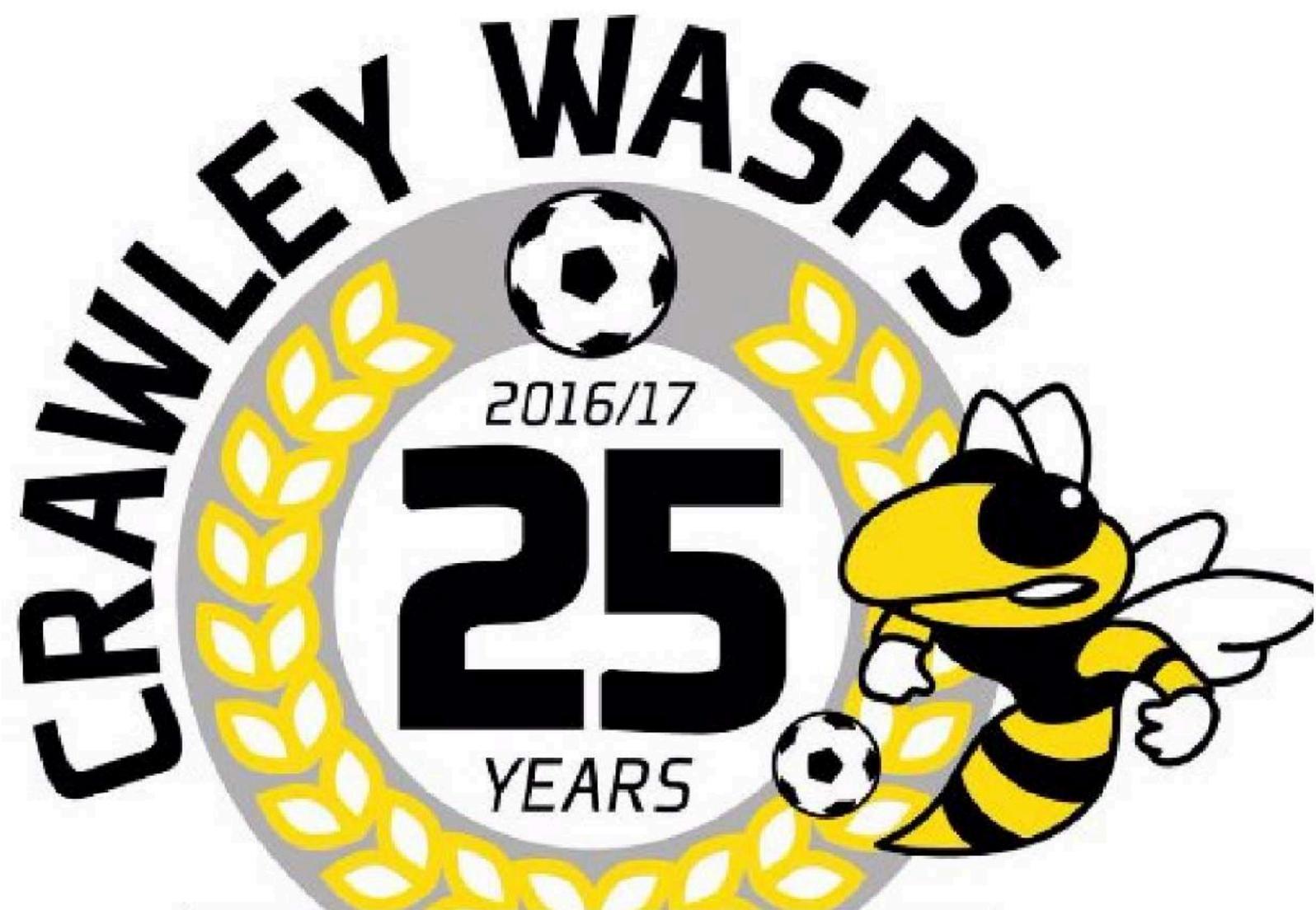
My mum and dad

10. Best player you have ever played with?

Either Carli Lloyd or Lucy Bronze



Grassroots football: Crawley celebrate 25 years



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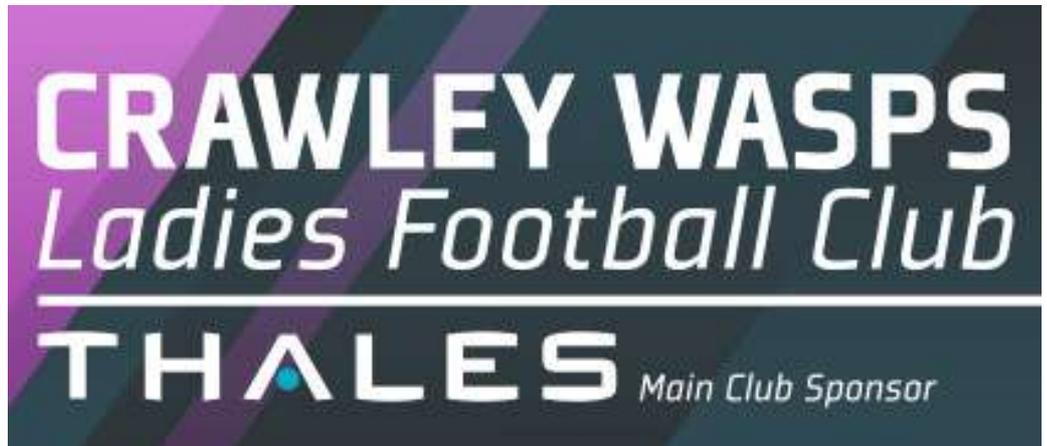
Get in touch

Crawley Wasps have teams in all age groups competing in a number of leagues in the South East of England and are the top club catering exclusively for girl's football in the local area.

We provide regular weekly training sessions run by qualified coaches for all age groups along with the opportunity to play competitive games against other sides in the South East.

If you would like to know more about Crawley Wasps, please contact: Dawn Keegan on email: dawn.keegan@crawleywasps.com

For new players email: newplayer@crawleywasps.com



Crawley Wasps are celebrating their 25th anniversary

The History of Crawley Wasps

Founded in 1991, Crawley Wasps have been instrumental in the successful development of girls football in the Crawley area. From the early days of playing 7-a-side on full size pitches in the Sussex Girls League, the club have expanded to over 100 playing members in teams at all levels from under 11 to under 16 and seniors. U11 and U12 teams now play mini-soccer in the Sussex County Women and Girl's League while the U13's play 9v9 and the U16's play 11-a-side in the Sussex County Women and Girl's League.

Crawley Wasps have had various 'home' grounds but in 2010 Wasps moved from Pease Pottage to Ewhurst Playing Fields in Crawley where we now maintain our own playing and training facilities with mini soccer, youth and senior pitches. Wasps have helped pioneer the development of ladies and girls football in Sussex.

The ladies 1st's team, formed in 2003, have been promoted 4 times and currently play in the Premier Division of the London and South East Regional Women's Football League while the ladies 2nd's play in the South East Counties Women's Football League.



Crawley Wasps Ladies 1st Manager: Paul Walker

Crawley Wasps Ladies 1st team manager Paul Walker has been involved with the club for the last decade.

After years helping from the sidelines, Walker took over as boss of the first team three years ago and has seen his side, and the club, go from strength to strength.

As the club celebrates its 25th anniversary, Helen went down to the club to chat the Paul about the successes of the club from the youngsters right up to the adults.

How long have you been involved in the club?

Like most people, I got involved with the club when my daughter expressed an interest in playing football. I stated off as an enthusiastic supporter and slowly began to realise that I could have an impact on the club. My daughter, Holly started playing when she was 7 and joined the club when she was 13. She turned 22 this year so it is coming up to 10 years that I have been involved and I am now the 1st team coach and vice chairman. Holly is still playing for the club, she is now in the first team and she has had a fantastic season. She is a centre-back and has also been picked for the Sussex Ladies side.



Have you seen more players join the club as coverage on TV becomes more?

As a club, we have seen a great increase in the interest across both the youth and senior section. The increase in interest in the country has been fantastic but at the beginning of last season we appointed someone to run the media side of Crawley Wasps and we have had more coverage in the local press, advertising and our website is getting updated so I think the fact that we have been able to do this and improve publicity has been instrumental in the changes the club has seen this year.

Do you think more needs to be done for girls who want to play football from a young age?

I think the answer is obviously yes. As we know, the direction of ladies and girls football is that it is professionalising. We have seen this with the Women's Super League, we are seeing the development of the FA Women's Premier League and as it professionalises it needs to have more of a structure through grassroots and that starts with schools. The FA have done a heck of a lot of work to create a pathway to the national team, the Lionesses, but the important thing now is there is another step-up. We want to have a very successful national team, and just like it is with the men's, we have to start encouraging that at grassroots levels and schools.

Do you think more schools should have options for girls to play football?

More needs to be done at schools level if we want the game to grow and flourish in the way that we would like.



Is there too much of a gap between grassroots and going semi-professional/professional?

As a club we are on the verge of the FA Premier League, which I would class as the top levels of the semi-professional sides. There are obviously players further up in the WSL that are not on contracts. The game is professionalising, it can only go from strength to strength. As more and more clubs improve, teams are getting better. The general trend is that more and more clubs are adopting ladies' clubs, giving them resources and giving them support. More and more is happening now. There have, of course, been some clubs countering that – we have seen the problems with Notts County. What we are going to see is the improvement of the development.

If the gap is not going to get wide [between grassroots and professional] we have got to see more support just below the semi-professional levels. Clubs just below that level need to be given the support, we need strategies so we can see them develop and see the pathway grow through all the levels. There is a danger that clubs outside that professional level could get left behind if the right support is not given. A lot of responsibility falls on the clubs themselves and we take that very seriously but it also needs support from the sporting bodies. It is important that grassroots grows at a good level.



What do you think needs to be done to improve the sport in the country?

I think if you look at men's football; that has taken decades to evolve to where it is now. You only need to go back to ten years to see the difference in the game, in the way it is marketed. If you go back 20 years it is even more dramatic. You only have to look at old footage to see the state of the pitches and the stadiums so men's football has evolved over a number of decades to the point where it is now awash with riches. The women's game is miles behind that. It is going to take a very long time for that to catch up. It also needs to go at the right pace because if it goes too quickly there is problems and if it goes too slowly there is as well. The big thing which makes the men's game tick is money and investment. What has to happen for the ladies' game, not only does it need the support from clubs and regulators but money needs to go into the game. Money is dramatically

disproportionate to the men's game. It is understandable but having said that it is on an evolutionary journey. For money to go into the sport, the game has to grow in its appeal. People have to start watching the game at a level that will attract funding. We have to get more people watching the ladies' game. It will take time but it is on a journey. Things like the Lionesses and the success of our teams is starting to take it in that direction. The FA Women's Premier League is building its brand. The games at that level are now videoed. Things are happening but it is a long journey. It will take time.

Crawley have had a lot of success in recent years, what are your hopes for the club?

We have had a great continued success across all the leagues. There is a lot of good things at the club. It is our 25th year, we are an all women and girls club. We are on the verge of the Women's Premier League and that really is the aim for our Ladies' first team this year. At the beginning of the season, we secured our first whole club sponsor in Thales. Their support has been vital in the development of our club. Not just that but we are also hoping to build a powerful partnership where we can help develop some of those teams. In our younger teams, we joined a boys league for the first time this year. It was an extremely hard season for the girls because it was a much harder level than what they were used to but every single girl has said that they have learnt an awful lot from the experience. We are now going to take that knowledge back into the girls leagues.

From a love to a passion

Follow Girls on the Ball

You can follow our women's football journey here:

Website:
girlsontheball.com

Twitter:
[@girlsontheball](https://twitter.com/girlsontheball)

Instagram:
[@girlsontheball](https://www.instagram.com/girlsontheball)

Facebook:
www.facebook.com/GirlsontheBall/



By Sophie Downey and Rachel O'Sullivan

It all started on 31 July 2012! Over 70,000 people packed into Wembley to roar Team GB to victory over Brazil. That night was a major catalyst for the women's game in England and for the two of us at GirlsontheBall. Football has been a passion for us since as long as we can remember.

Prior to the Olympics, we had followed the women's game from afar, catching England when they were on TV and watching the FA Cup Final every year. After that evening at Wembley, however, watching from a distance did not seem satisfying anymore.

We started coming up with ideas on how we could get involved and found a huge gap in information about the game. From this research, GirlsontheBall, was born. Initially, the idea was to go to a couple of games, tweet live, put out the weekly fixtures and maybe do a couple of interviews here and there. We set up a basic website and Twitter handle and decided just to see how it went. The rest, as they say, is history.

Now, almost 5 years on, we're due to hit our 500th game. On average, we travel 32,000 miles a year in our quest to see as much of the women's game as possible. Our bosses, families and friends think we're mad, some of them not seeing us for weeks at a time, but we love it too much to stop.

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



Our bunny, Scotty, joins us for some of our journeys, keeping us company over the long distances. We both have our roles in covering games.

Sophie is chief live-tweeter and has trained her thumbs to tweet at high speed during those tense moments. She also can often be found in a constant battle with website code.

Rachel is the creative cog in the GirlsontheBall wheel and will often be found with a camera attached to her face during games while often giving a witty running commentary.

While on the domestic front, we aim to provide a neutral view of the games from a fan's point of view, impartiality disappears when it comes to international football. One of our main focal points is following England's Lionesses, home and away.

@girlsontheball



Having rarely missed a game since we started, we have seen first-hand the growth in interest in the national side. We spent the month in Canada during the World Cup in 2015 and were completely struck by the buzz and excitement around the team when we arrived home. With the European Championships coming up in July, we are expecting the largest number of England supporters to date to be making the trip over to the Netherlands and we cannot wait to be a part of that experience.

Beyond the football, following England has taken us around the world and to places that would not normally be at the top of the travel list. We have been to Belarus, Estonia and Ukraine as well as East Coast America, Canada and Sweden. Next year we are already

planning for the 2019 World Cup qualifiers that will take us to Russia, Kazakhstan and Bosnia. To be able to have the opportunity to combine our two passions of travel and football is priceless.

We may have formed GirlsOnTheBall but it in turn, and subsequently the whole women's football community, has given us so much back. The friends we have made, the experiences we have had, and the passion for the sport ultimately drive us to carry on.

Our aim is to continue to help grow the game in any way we can. We've seen it come on in leaps and bounds since 2012 and we're so glad to be involved in some way in a sport that is inspiring a generation. The future is certainly very bright!



Lionesses:

England U17 disappointed
with early exit at Euros finals
By Sylvain Jamat



John Griffiths' team exited the UEFA European Women's U17 finals in Czech Republic at group stage level after an underwhelming performance and a 2-0 defeat on final day against Norway.

The tournament had started well for the Lioness youngsters with a 5-0 win over Ireland in their opening game. After Griffiths had led the squad to a third-place finish at last year's tournament, many were hopeful of another successful campaign. Goals from Poppy Pattinson, Beth O'Donnell, Jessica Ngunga, captain Lauren Hemp and Nicole Douglas saw them make a dominant start to their campaign.

They were then defeated by the Netherlands 2-1 conceding a goal late in the game with nearly to time to equalise. The Lionesses went ahead through Aimee Palmer in the first half but were pegged back on the stroke of half time by Jill Bajings. With just three minutes of the game remaining,

Netherlands took the lead as they secured their place in the semi-finals.

On final day, they only needed a point against Norway to go through as Group B runner-up. The game was delayed by four hours because of the awful weather in Pilsen with heavy rain and wind featuring but finally the game went ahead.

We have to remember that England qualified for the finals by winning their Elite Round beating, for the first time ever at U17 level, eventual tournament winners Germany. There was therefore a lot of hope for that age group to do as well as the previous one that finished 3rd at last year's Euro and made to the u17 World Cup semi-final.

England usually played in a 4-3-3 system, but on this occasion played in a 4-2-4 system that left Norway in control of the game. Norway scored early in the eighth minute from a penetrative run down the middle. From that point England did all the chasing and were stretching themselves even more as the game passed by, struggling to create chances against a solid Norwegian team.

Norway saved their best performance until last and the Young Lionesses conceded a second goal from a set piece when Malin Sunde found the back of the net. It became a mountain to climb for the young England side who seemed to lack idea and creativity.

They were also really struggling in midfield where the two central midfielders were regularly up against three Norwegian players.

At half-time John Griffiths made a double substitution to try to change

John Griffiths on his players: "I've never had one player over who hasn't been committed. They sacrifice so much to get to this international stage. They do it all because they love football, but also because they love playing for England."

things and get back into the game.

He made a tactical decision, changing the right-back and putting on a midfielder for one of the two forwards to get back to a 4-3-3 system.

Although the team was more balanced, they did not create many chances and I think the introduction of Ella Rutherford who had had a superb Spring Series with Millwall came a little too late, with only ten minutes to go, to try to get two goals back.

It finished Norway 2 England 0 and an early trip home for the young Lionesses. It is a shame that a wrong tactical choice on the day combined

with tiredness that led a lack of sharpness and creativity in the final third resulted in that talented group going home early and disappointed.

The majority of those girls should go up to the England U18 team for the 2017/18 season and the best ones like goalkeeper Hannah Hampton or forward Lauren Hemp might even get involved in the England U20 squad should they qualify for the U20 World Cup to be played in the Summer 2018 in Brittany, France.



England team (v Norway):

1. Hampton; 2 Boydell, 5 Cooke, 6 Morgan, 3 Pattinson; 4 Palmer, 10 Syme; 17 NGunga, 8 Taylor, 7 Douglas, 11 Hemp

Subs: Neville for Boydell HT, O'Donnell for Taylor HT, Rutherford for Syme 71'

Subs not used: 13 Ramsey, 9 Ravenscroft, 14 Rodgers, 15 Smith

Around the world in 9 stories



Steph Houghton signs new Manchester City Women deal

England captain Steph Houghton has signed a new deal with the Sky Blues. The 29-year-old joined the club in 2014 and is set to start her fourth season in September. The length of Houghton's new contract has not been disclosed.

Pachuca wins first Copa de la Liga MX Femenil

Pachuca won the first Women's Cup held in Toluca at the beginning of May. There was a rough start to the competition when four clubs failed to field a team. Berenice Munoz scored a hat-trick for Pachuca as they went on to beat Tijuana 9-1 in the final.



Barcelona in talks to field team in American National Women's Soccer League

The Catalan club are in talks with the NWSL about entering a team for the 2018 season after opening a permanent office in New York in September. Barcelona have six academies across the US but so far the 10 franchises in the NWSL has never seen a European side competing.

Chelsea move to Kingsmeadow

Chelsea Ladies are set to relocate to a new home for the 2017/18 season. The club will play their home games at AFC Wimbledon's Kingsmeadow stadium as they make the move for better facilities. The move comes after five years at Staines Town.

Scotland names squad for warm-up games against Romania and Sweden

Head coach Anna Signeel says places in her Euros 2017 squad are still "up for grabs" after she names squad for their two friendlies in June. Jenny Beattie, Rachel Corise, Jo Love and Caroline Weir return to the squad after missing the defeat by Belgium. The Scots will take on Romania at Falkirk Stadium on 9 June before facing Sweden at the Myresjohus Arena, Vaxjo, four days later.

Everton pay tribute to Zoe Tynan

Everton Ladies paid tribute to former youth player Zoe Tynan as they celebrated winning the Women's Super League Two Spring Series. The former England Under-19 midfielder died in August aged 18 and, on what would have been her 19th birthday, the players wore shirts with "19 – for you Zoe."



Josée Bélanger announces retirement

Team Canada veteran Josée Bélanger, who helped Canada win a bronze medal at the 2016 Olympics, has announced her retirement. Bélanger played 57 times for Canada also playing football in Sweden and with the Orlando Pride. The 31-year-old plans to start a soccer school for girls.



Spanish girls side wins the junior regional boy's league

Whilst women's football is growing in the UK and across other countries, the sport still remains uncommon in Spain. The country's top league did not sign its first major corporate sponsorship deal until last summer but amateur club AEM Lleida, who had dominated the girls' leagues in 2014 decided to join the boys' league. After finishing 12th out of 18 in their debut season they have grown in strength beating the other teams to the title this season.

Phoebe Leitch moves to the USA

After six years at Brighton and Hove Albion FC, Leitch has decided to leave the club to move to America to study. Leitch joined the under-15s in 2011 and in a statement on her Twitter said: "This has quite possibly been the hardest decision I've had to make. The club has been my home for nearly a third of my life and has been the most incredible and valuable experience."



The Back Page Quiz

Test your knowledge!

Tweet us and tell us how you do! @womensfooriemag

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Question 1 Who scored Man City's opening goal in their 4-1 win over Birmingham in the FA Cup final?

a) Carli Lloyd b) Lucy Bronze c) Jill Scott

Question 2 Which former Notts County player has announced she will not be joining a new club before the Euros this summer?

a) Laura Bassett b) Carly Telford c) Jo Potter

Question 3 Which stadium are Chelsea Ladies moving to for the start of the WSL in September?

a) Stamford Bridge b) Craven Cottage c) Kingsmeadow

Question 4 Who won the WSL 2 Spring Series?

a) Everton Ladies b) Doncaster Rovers Belles c) Millwall Lionesses

Question 5 Who has been appointed as head coach at Aston Villa Ladies?

a) Iain Sankey b) Corrairie Mitchell c) Dave Stevens

Question 6 Who did Lyon beat to reach the Women's Champions League final against PSG?

a) Arsenal Ladies b) Manchester City Women c) Chelsea Ladies

Question 7 How many Birmingham players have been named in the Lionesses U23 squad for the Annual Nordic Tournament?

a) 8 b) 9 c) 6

Question 8 Which Brighton Ladies player has left the club to study and play in the USA?

a) Phoebe Leitch b) Sophie Perry c) Alessia Russo

Question 9 Who won the BBC Women's Footballer of the Year 2017?

a) Melanie Behringer b) Hedvig Lindahl c) Ada Hegerberg

Question 10 How many goals did Fran Kirby score on her return from injury in the 7-0 win over Sunderland Ladies?

a) 0 b) 3 c) 2

Answers: 1b, 2a, 3c, 4a, 5c, 6b, 7a, 8a, 9c, 10c