

WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

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END OF AN ERA

Marissa Thomas looks back on Matt Beard's time as West Ham boss and we look at the changes in Tottenham's head coaches. We have all the latest from the Euro qualifying as the home nations aim to get their names in the draw and Ali Rampling interviews former FA Cup winner Jackie Slack.

THE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL MAGAZINE



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Hello and welcome to Issue 44!

Hello everyone, welcome to our latest issue.

It has been all change in the WSL this month with managerial departures and Marissa Thomas looks at what is next for West Ham.

We have all the latest from the European Championships 2021 (2022) qualifying campaigns as Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales attempt to book their place in the tournament.

Also this month, Ali Rampling interviews former FA Cup winner Jackie Slack, Simon O'Neill is back with his latest Simon Says and we have all the latest news from the WSL to the grassroots and across the world.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas. I hope you enjoy the festive period whatever you may do and are able to spend it with the ones you love.

Keep safe.

Helen Rowe-Willcocks

Editor-in-Chief

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WOMEN'S SUPER LEAGUE



After Matt Beard's departure, what next for West Ham?



Orlagh Gardner / Sports Press Photo

By Marissa Thomas

On the 19th of November, Matt Beard and West Ham agreed to end his time as head coach by mutual consent. He was in charge of the Hammers for two and a half years, joining in June 2018 before their first campaign as a fully-professional club. During their two seasons in the Women's Super League, West Ham have finished 7th and then 8th with Beard at the helm. Consistency has been an issue for West Ham in the WSL and after one win in seven league games this campaign, Beard and the club decided to part ways.

At the time of writing, West Ham are still managerless with goalkeeping coach Billy Stewart and first-team coach Paul McHugh taking temporary charge of the team.

West Ham's first game since Matt Beard's departure ended in a second consecutive defeat. The Hammers were beaten 3-2 by Chelsea but the performance was much improved. Sam Kerr opened the scoring for Chelsea in the 15th minute and just over a minute later, Rachel Daly pounced on a mistake and ran from the halfway line but, with the goal to aim at, she failed to convert the chance, instead hitting the ball at Ann-Katrin Berger in a one-on-one situation. Had Daly been more clinical, the complexion of the game could have changed entirely and that is West Ham's issue. They are not being ruthless when they have the opportunity and this is proving costly.

Whoever takes over next at West Ham has their work cut out. The Hammers are 10th in the league with just four points to show for the campaign so far. Despite the quality of attacking players they have; West Ham aren't scoring enough goals. In the league, Kenza Dali and Rachel Daly are joint top scorers with two goals while Adriana Leon has one goal and Alisha Lehmann, Martha Thomas and Leanne Kiernan are yet to score. All of these players have the capability to threaten any team in the league but they need to make more of the chances they create.

As well as scoring more goals, West Ham need to be harder to score against. They have not kept a clean sheet so far this term. Keeping clean sheets could act as a base from which to build on and gain confidence as they go in

search of consistency. Mackenzie Arnold has been making great saves and keeping West Ham in games but the defenders in front of her are not as solid as they should be.

In Matt Beard's first season in charge at the West Ham, he led them to the FA Cup Final against Manchester City which is undoubtedly the club's best achievement to date. While they did not win the final and have arguably regressed since, West Ham have the capabilities to get back to a higher level.





Rehanne Skinner joins Tottenham in managerial change



Tottenham Hotspur have announced Rehanne Skinner as their new manager.

The news came shortly after it came out that joint head coaches Karen Hills and Juan Amoros had been

“relieved of their duties with immediate effect.”

Skinner, who has been Phil Neville’s number two, has joined on a deal running until 2023.

Skinner also has experience as Women’s National Head Coach (U18s-U21s) and as assistant manager at Arsenal.

Speaking to Tottenham’s official website: “I am really excited to be joining Tottenham Hotspur and cannot wait to get started in the WSL after the international break.

“The Club’s philosophy and future plans are something I was really keen to be a part of.

“They have shown a real commitment to the women’s team and have come a long way in a short period of time which is a credit to all the players and staff involved.

“There is some incredible experience within this squad and I am looking forward to getting to work with the players so we can build on the progress that has been made so far and bring future success to the team.”

Tottenham Hotspur Head of Women’s Football, Heather Cowan, said: “We are pleased to welcome Rehanne to the Club.

“She has extensive experience in the women’s game and we are looking forward to having her with us now as we look to continue our journey forward in the WSL.”

Former joint head coaches Hills and Amorós speak out



Tottenham Hotspur's former joint head coaches Karen Hills and Juan Amorós have written statements after they left their positions.

Taking to social media, Amorós wrote: "I would like to thank Tottenham Hotspur for trusting my friend Karen Hills and I to make history and put one of the best football clubs in the world where it needed to be: at the top of women's football.

"I leave with no regrets, having given my all from day one. I have a smile on my face when I look back."

Hills added: "It has been an amazing 20 years of my life. From starting up the first junior girls football programme at local schools, setting up college football programmes and women's walking

football to having the privilege of taking Spurs Women to the top of the game - it's been a dream come true.

"The last 13 years with Spurs Women have been incredible, including three promotions and so many fantastic memories.

"The players and staff I have worked with along the way have all been exceptional and I feel extremely privileged to have worked with them all, especially my friend and co-head coach Juan Amorós.

"I can't praise enough the amazing support we have had along the way from the fans, who have been on this once in a lifetime journey with us, to my friends and family who have always believed in me."



The FA Women's Super League

Table after October games		P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1	Manchester United	7	5	2	0	10	17
2	Arsenal	7	5	1	1	24	16
3	Chelsea	6	4	2	0	16	14
4	Everton	7	4	2	1	9	14
5	Manchester City	7	3	3	1	10	12
6	Birmingham City	7	3	0	4	-1	9
7	Reading	7	2	3	2	-3	9
8	Brighton & Hove Albion	7	2	2	3	-7	8
9	West Ham United	7	1	1	5	-13	4
10	Aston Villa	5	1	0	4	-9	3
11	Tottenham Hotspur	7	0	3	4	-10	3
12	Bristol City	6	0	1	5	-26	1

November fixtures

Saturday, December 5

Aston Villa vs Manchester United (12:30)

Sunday, December 6

Chelsea vs West Ham United (12:30)

Arsenal vs Birmingham City (14:00)

Reading vs Bristol City (14:00)

Tottenham Hotspur vs Brighton & Hove Albion (14:00)

Everton vs Manchester City (14:30)

Wednesday, December 9

Bristol City vs Aston Villa (19:30)

Sunday, December 13

Reading vs Manchester United (12:30)

Birmingham City vs Everton (14:00)

Brighton & Hove Albion vs Chelsea (14:00)

Bristol City vs West Ham (14:00)

Tottenham Hotspur vs Aston Villa (14:00)

Manchester City vs Arsenal (14:30)

Sunday, December 20

Manchester United vs Bristol City (12:00)

Arsenal vs Everton (14:00)

Birmingham City vs Manchester City (14:00)

Chelsea vs Tottenham Hotspur (14:00)

Brighton & Hove Albion vs Reading (14:30)

West Ham vs Aston Villa (15:00)



December TV fixtures

Sunday, December 6

Chelsea vs West Ham United (12:30)

WSL

BBC Red Button/BBC iPlayer

Liverpool vs Crystal Palace (14:00)

Championship

LFCTV

Celtic vs Forfar Farmington (14:00)

Scottish Women's Premier League

BBC Sport Website

Everton vs Manchester City (14:30)

WSL

BT Sport 2

Sunday, December 13

Reading vs Manchester United

WSL

BBC Red Button/BBC iPlayer

Manchester City vs Arsenal (14:30)

WSL

BT Sport 1

Glasgow City vs Rangers (16:10)

Scottish Women's Premier League

BBC Alba

Sunday, December 20

Brighton & Hove Albion vs Reading (14:30)

WSL

BT Sport 1

A-Z of the WSL (Part Two)



Steffan Bowen/Sports Press Photo

By Charlotte Stacey

The 2020-21 season is now well and truly underway, and although we may not be able to get up close and personal to the action this time round, there is still plenty to keep us excited in what is quite possibly, the biggest year of the league so far.

So, let us steer you toward part two of the key players, pioneers and points, as we run you through a full A to Z of the Women's Super League.

N is for Ashleigh Neville

Yes, there is more than one Neville in English women's football. Whilst Phil Neville closes out his tenure with the Lionesses, defender Ashleigh Neville continues to build a solid reputation on the pitch with the Lilywhites.

The fullback is a principal figure in Tottenham's defence. Sprightly runs, clever interceptions and a developing capability of keeping the most devilish of oppositions contained means she is sure to catch your eye.

O is for Overseas Talent

The WSL has seen an influx of overseas talent over the past couple of years; players have hailed from every corner of the globe to join the top tier of English football, which speaks volumes as to the growing quality of the league.

Amongst these are Australia's Sam Kerr, Alanna Kennedy, Emily van Egmond, Caitlin Foord, Lydia Williams, and Hayley Raso; Switzerland's Lia Wälti, Alisha Lehmann and Malin Gut; Dutch powerhouses Vivianne Miedema, Daniëlle van de Donk, Inessa

Kaagman, Siri Worm, Danique Kerkdijk, Jackie Groenen and Jill Roord; Norwegian stars Maren Mjelde, Aurora Mikalsen, Maria Thorisdottir, Ingrid Moe Wold, Cecile Redisch and Guro Reiten; Denmark's finest, Pernille Harder, Stine Larsen and Nicoline Sørensen; Sweden's Madgalena Eriksson, Lotta Okvist, Nor Mustafa and Jonna Andersson; New Zealand's Ria Percival and Rebekah Scott, as well as sharp Canadians, Shelina Zadorsky, Adriana Leon and Janine Beckie.

With these players enhancing the already abundant talent from the four home nations, the WSL is the place to be.

P is for Pernille Harder

Danish captain, Pernille Harder, made history as the most expensive signing in women's football ever, with a transfer fee of a suspected €300,000 in her move to Chelsea from German Champions, Wolfsburg, in the summer.

Striker, Harder, known for her positional excellence and notable finish, comes to the English league with a success of victories under her belt, including four Bundesliga titles. The 27-year-old was also named as UEFA's Player of the Year in 2018, and has been most recently won Germany's Women's Footballer of the Year.

Q is for Quality

There is often a lot of comparison between the men's and women's game, typically with the onus of the difference in "quality".

Whilst there will always be differences of opinion on this, the Women's Super League unequivocally has a tremendous amount of "quality" running through it. World class players from across the globe, World Cup winners, captains of the four home nations, developing youth, intensifying competition; it's all there for the taking.



Romanian Fogliati/ Sports Press Photo



Steffan Bowen/Sports Press Photo

R is for Reading



With a festering pool of experience in their ranks, Reading are not to be underestimated.

Welsh midfielder Jess Fishlock, England's Fara Williams, Scotland's stout defender Emma Mitchell, the recently recovered Danielle Carter and captain Natasha Harding at the very core of the maturing side.

The knowledge these players bring to Kelly Chambers' squad should certainly not be overlooked this season.

S is for Sandy MacIver



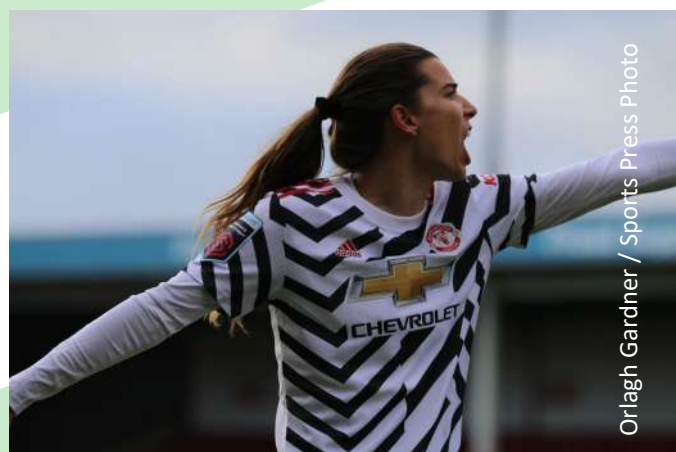
Everton's Sandy MacIver, is one of the league's most exciting goalkeeping prospects, and she looks ready to prove herself the same with England. Since returning to the WSL in January, the 22-year-old has been one of the Toffee's stand out players. Her critical decisiveness has been hugely influential in Everton's impressive start to the season thus far. Duly noted by Lionesses boss Phil Neville, MacIver was called up to this year's SheBelieves Cup, as well as the recent consecutive training camps, marking her as a future England staple.

T is for Tottenham Hotspur



Former head coaches, Karen Hills and Juan Amos, had an active transfer window, bringing in the experience of Rachel Williams and Kerys Harrop from Birmingham City, as well as bagging USWNT forward, Alex Morgan, from NWSL side, Orlando Pride. Spurs finished in 7th place last season and will be looking for more of the same this time round. The early fixtures haven't been particularly kind to the Lilywhites, but there is still plenty of football left to play. Big performances from Lucia Leon, Gemma Davison and Becky Spencer look set to continue as Spurs head into their upcoming games.

U is for USA



Five, yes, FIVE, World Cup winning USWNT players have made the move across the pond. Four have landed either side of Manchester and the other in North London.

Forwards, Tobin Heath and Christen Press have bolstered Manchester United's attacking ranks, making them all the more dangerous. Whereas Sam Mewis and Rose Lavelle have



opted for a Manchester blue, completing City's finely-tuned set of midfield maestros. USWNT captain and new Mum, Alex Morgan, has joined Tottenham Hotspur just five months after giving birth, her hotly anticipated debut will hopefully soon be upon us.

V is for Vivianne Miedema

Arsenal's Vivianne Miedema is one of the greatest strikers in the world; a statement that on the face of it may seem a little exaggerated, but one that is absolutely true.

The Dutch forwards efforts often make the extraordinary seem anything but. She recently became the league's all-time top goalscorer reaching 50 goals in 50 games, significantly succeeding Nikita Parris' 50 in 110 games by some margin. Miedema has also achieved the same feat with her country, she is Holland's leading goalscorer in both the men's and women's sides.

W is for West Ham

Matt Beard's West Ham ended last season in 8th place, four points behind fellow London club Tottenham Hotspur. The Iron's first few games have been tough, the table perhaps not baring a true reflection of their performances thus far.

Yet, with steadfast captain Gilly Flaherty on hand, as well as Swiss dynamo, Alisha Lehmann, and Houston Dash captain, Rachel Daly, bringing an attacking fire power, the Irons will surely shake themselves into gear before long.

X is for Ex-Players

As the league grows, so does the level of coverage surrounding it. Fortunately, the WSL is on its way to obtaining the punditry and commentary it so deserves.

Much of this comes in the form of ex-players who use their first-hand knowledge to provide in-depth analysis, justified criticism and honest reviews.

Alex Scott, Karen Carney, Siobhan Chamberlain, Rachel Brown-Finnis, Rachel Yankey and Jane Ludlow are amongst those offering their expertise, spearheading the mainstream broadcasting of the game in the right direction.

Y is for Youngsters

Coursing through the league is a throng of budding young talent, each ripening with every match played. Manchester City's Chloe Kelly, Esme Morgan and Ellie Roebuck; Manchester United's Ella Toone and star-in-waiting, Lauren James; West Ham's Alisha Lehmann and Grace Fisk; Brighton's Maya Le Tissier; Birmingham's Jamie-Lee Naiper and Hannah Hampton, and Chelsea forward Niamh Charles are all sure to impress.

Z is for Katie Zelem

Manchester United captain, Katie Zelem, is fast proving herself as the perfect leader to drive Casey Stoney's Red Devil's to the next level.

The midfielder sits at the heart of United, often dictating the pace and flow of play, and she is also pretty handy with a set piece as well. Zelem has kicked off her season in style. Not only did she manage to grab Player of the Match in United's opener against champions Chelsea, but her growing leadership and pinpoint accuracy have led to her first senior call-ups with the Lionesses.



Tom West Sports Press Photo

What will Brexit mean for the WSL?



The FA have agreed on entry requirements for overseas players in England post-Brexit in 2021.

Football's Governing Body Endorsement (GBE) proposal was submitted to the Government last month by the FA, as the governing body for football, and has now been approved by The Home Office.

This GBE for the Women's game has also been approved and will operate on a points-based system

Points are scored on:

- Senior international appearances
- Quality of the selling club, based on the league they are in and former league position
- Club appearances, based on domestic league and continental competition minutes

The agreement is in accordance with the Government's required criteria and will come

into effect when the UK leaves the European Union, in the new year. It will be implemented in the January 2021 transfer window and reviewed in full ahead of the summer 2021 transfer window.

Mark Bullingham, our chief executive officer, said: "Despite having different starting perspectives on how Brexit should impact football, this is another example of how the football authorities can work effectively together for the greater good of the game.

"We have a strong working relationship with both the Premier League and EFL and will monitor this new agreement together to ensure it evolves to best meet our joint objectives over time.

"We will also discuss improvements to the player pathway for the mutual benefit of football clubs and homegrown talent in this country."

Spurs to train full-time at men's facilities



Tottenham women will now train full-time at the men's training facilities.

The team had previously spent only one day a week at Hotspur Way, with the rest of the time at The Hive.

Speaking to the BBC, new manager Rehanne Skinner said it was a "statement of intent" from the club.

She added: "It provides us with unbelievable facilities to start raising the standards that we are looking to achieve.

"Ultimately, we want to try to develop a more competitive team over time.

"The club [Spurs] are very aware of that and want to keep supporting aspects of what we need to be able to achieve that over a more sustainable period.

"We have everything in and around the players that we need to create a high-performance environment. It's now

on our doorstep.

"The stuff we have access to now is unbelievable and obviously the players are ecstatic about being in this environment, which is great.

"The club were very aware that the facilities the players needed, needed to evolve. It obviously shows their interest in the women's team because they felt it was the right time to make that move," she added.

"That made a statement to me about the intent that was around, looking after the women's team and incorporating them, so that's been a real positive step for everybody really."

Russo suffers hamstring injury



Manchester United have confirmed Alessia Russo has suffered a hamstring injury in training.

Russo joined the Reds from Brighton & Hove Albion in the summer and has played four league games, scoring three goals.

The forward has undergone surgery on the injury, as confirmed by manager Casey Stoney.

She told MUTV: ““Alessia pulled up in training with a hamstring, so it’s a longer-term injury.

“We’re upset for her, she’s been doing so well, but unfortunately it’s part of the game.

“We’ll get her fit; we’ll get her well and get her back as soon as possible.”

Raso on recovering from traumatic” spinal injury and returning to football



Hayley Raso has been interviewed for episode four of the BBC ‘The Players’ podcast.

Raso recalls her spinal injury, the pain and how her mentality got her through it: “It was the most excruciating pain I’ve ever felt in my life. I was being moved around, but now that I look back on it I know that wasn’t the right thing, with a spinal injury.”

“I think mentality gets me through most things... I think if I wasn’t as mentally strong as I am I don’t think I would have come back from that injury.”

“It something that happened to me but doesn’t define who I am.”

Raso discusses the long recovery process: “I was sent straight for a CT scan with the thought that I’d damaged my kidneys or had some kind of internal bleeding. They came back and said, ‘the good news is, your kidney’s fine...the bad news is, you’ve broken your back.’ My first thought was, ‘am I paralysed? I can feel my legs’. They quickly told me that I’d be fine, but that it would be a gruelling rehab but that I’d get through it and

I’d be able to play football again – for me, it was a shining light.”

“I spent time learning to walk again, learning to do everything again. It was tough. I didn’t think I’d ever be able to run again, let alone play soccer.”

She recalls the support of her mother during her recovery: “She slept on this couch next to me every night. I wouldn’t have got through it without her. She dressed me every day, she did my hair, she washed me, she took me to the toilet. Literally everything.”

Raso on studying to be a paramedic: “I’m studying to be a paramedic. I remember saying to my mum, ‘I’m fine, I don’t need to play football anymore. I’m good with just being a paramedic.’ My mum was pretty realistic about it. She was like, ‘You play football. It’s a really good life. You train two hours a day. You’re going to go to 12 hour shifts. Are you sure you’re ready to take that step?’ That was when I was like, ‘Maybe I’ll stick to football then’.”

The Players is available now on BBC Sounds

Christiansen reveals how World Cup heartache led to football commentary



Izzy Christiansen has been interviewed for episode four of the BBC 'The Players' podcast.

Izzy Christiansen remembers the moment she found out she wouldn't be going to the 2019 World Cup, admitting she was initially "a mess": "If I went I didn't expect to be playing because I hadn't played. How would I be match fit? I didn't know what the staff were thinking or feeling or doing – because I'd been so well looked after, I kind of thought I was being prepared to go. They'd waited on me hand and foot, rehab was vigorous and intense. I thought, 'all of this must be tailored towards something'."

"Then I was off on a weekend and got a phone call to say, 'you're not going to be going, you're on standby.' I was a mess. I turned my phone off for a week. I threw the toys out the pram. I was like, 'I don't want to do anything. I have the summer off, what am I going to do?' I don't feel afraid to say... 'I just want to drink'. When we'd won the Champions League, Lyon had given us a magnum of Champagne, which got drunk. I ended up going to Lisbon on a four day bender."

However, her absence from the squad resulted in her discovering a knack for football commentary, as she went on to join John Murray as co-commentator for the World Cup Final: "I got this call to say I'd had

requests from media to do some work. I was scared. I didn't even want to be seen, that's how afraid I was. I did co-comms for a game and they said I was brilliant and wanted me to go again. It snowballed and they flew me out to France. I ended up on co-comms with John Murray at the BBC. For me, he's a genius. The way he articulated sport on national radio is incredible. I ended up sitting next to him at the World Cup Final doing co-comms for the BBC. I'd never envisaged myself doing that. I got really good feedback and since then I've been doing quite a lot of work. It's all been good, but I've also been afraid of losing my identity as a player. For now, I'm a player. I play for Everton and I want to play for England."

Izzy on conflicted feelings when winning the Champions League with Lyon, having been injured for much of the campaign: "It was hard when we won the trophy. I was buzzing that we'd won but it was really weird for me personally. I was telling myself, 'you're a nobody and you've not been part of this. You don't deserve this.' I didn't even get a picture of myself with the trophy, which is horrible. I just didn't feel worthy. If I could go back and relive that moment I'd be different."

The Players is available now on BBC Sounds

Nominees announced for Fifa The Best Awards



Fifa has revealed the candidates shortlisted for seven of the individual trophies that will be presented at The Best FIFA Football Awards™ ceremony on 17 December 2020.

Two expert panels – one for women's football and one for men's football – have selected the candidates for each category.

The Best FIFA Women's Player:

- Lucy Bronze (England / Olympique Lyonnais / Manchester City WFC)
- Delphine Cascarino (France / Olympique Lyonnais)
- Caroline Graham Hansen (Norway / FC Barcelona)
- Pernille Harder (Denmark / VfL Wolfsburg / Chelsea FC Women)
- Jennifer Hermoso (Spain / FC Barcelona)
- Ji So-yun (Korea Republic / Chelsea FC Women)
- Sam Kerr (Australia / Chelsea FC Women)
- Saki Kumagai (Japan / Olympique

Lyonnais)

- Dzsenafer Marozsán (Germany / Olympique Lyonnais)
- Vivianne Miedema (Netherlands / Arsenal WFC)
- Wendie Renard (France / Olympique Lyonnais)

The Best FIFA Women's Goalkeeper:

- Ann-Katrin Berger (Germany / Chelsea FC Women)
- Sarah Bouhaddi (France / Olympique Lyonnais)
- Christiane Endler (Chile / Paris Saint-Germain)
- Hedvig Lindahl (Sweden / VfL Wolfsburg / Atlético de Madrid Femenino)
- Alyssa Naether (USA / Chicago Red Stars)
- Ellie Roebuck (England / Manchester City WFC)

The Best FIFA Women's Coach:

- Lluís Cortés (Spain / FC Barcelona)
- Rita Guarino (Italy / Juventus Women)
- Emma Hayes (England / Chelsea FC Women)
- Stephan Lerch (Germany / VfL Wolfsburg)
- Hege Riise (Norway / LSK Kvinner)
- Jean-Luc Vasseur (France / Olympique Lyonnais)
- Sarina Wiegman (Netherlands / Dutch national team)

FIFA Puskás Award

Who will succeed 2019's winner Daniel Zsóri in taking home the coveted crown this year? The eleven-goal shortlist for the best goal of the year has been revealed. This year's selection:

- **Shirley Cruz (CRC)** – Costa Rica v. Panama [Concacaf Women's Olympic qualifying] (28 January 2020)
- **Giorgian De Arrascaeta (URU)** – Ceará SC v. CR Flamengo [Brasileirão - Brazil] (25 August 2019)
- **Jordan Flores (ENG)** – Shamrock Rovers FC v. Dundalk FC [League of Ireland] (28 February 2020)
- **André-Pierre Gignac (FRA)** – UANL Tigres v. Pumas UNAM [Liga MX - Mexico] (1 March 2020)

- **Sophie Ingle (WAL)** – Arsenal WFC v. Chelsea FC Women [FA Women's Super League - England] (19 January 2020)
- **Zlatko Junuzović (AUT)** – SK Rapid Wien v. FC Red Bull Salzburg [Bundesliga - Austria] (24 June 2020)
- **Hlompho Kekana (RSA)** – Mamelodi Sundowns FC v. Cape Town City FC [South African Premier Soccer League] (20 August 2019)
- **Son Heung-min (KOR)** – Tottenham Hotspur FC v. Burnley FC [Premier League - England] (7 December 2019)
- **Leonel Quiñónez (ECU)** – Universidad Católica v. CSD Macará [Serie A - Ecuador] (19 August 2019)
- **Luis Suárez (URU)** – FC Barcelona v. RCD Mallorca [LaLiga - Spain] (7 December 2019)
- **Caroline Weir (SCO)** – Manchester City WFC v. Manchester United WFC [FA Women's Super League - England] (7 September 2019)

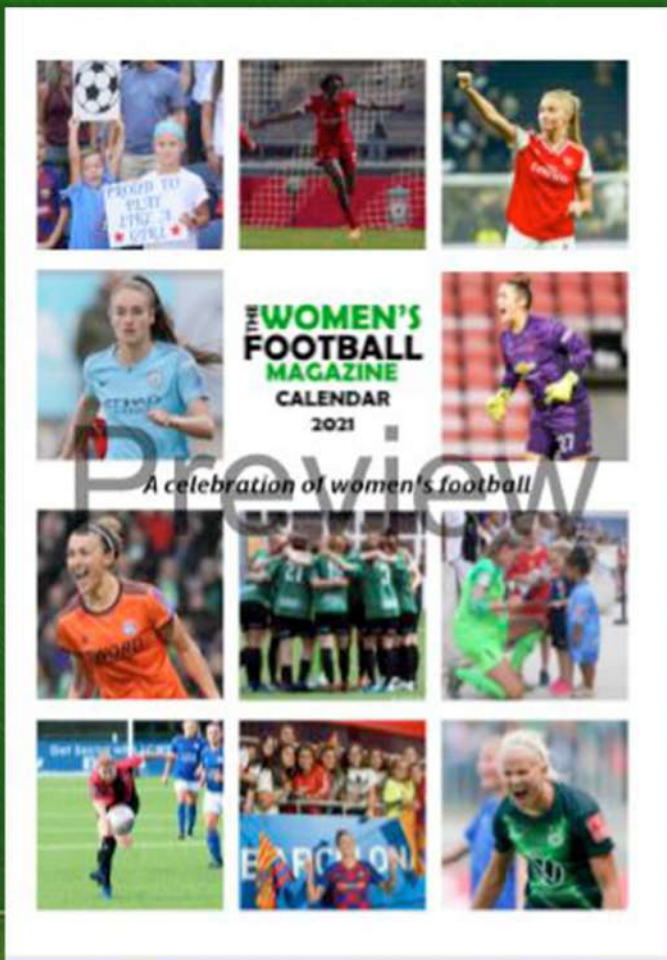
Public voting is open on FIFA.com and will run until 9 December 2020 (23:59 CET).

FIFA will announce the three finalists in each of the seven categories listed above on December 11.



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CHAMPIONSHIP



London Bees' Will face extended absence



London Bees midfielder Merrick Will faces an extended spell on the sidelines with a knee injury.

The injury was sustained in their Championship victory over Charlton Athletic in November.

A statement from the club said: "The Club arranged for scans to take place in the immediate days following the match and they have revealed that our stand in skipper has an ACL injury which will see her out for a sustained period of time.

"Our medical team and our partners at Schoen Clinic and TIC Health will ensure that Merrick receives the best care possible, as she begins her road to recovery.

"The Club prides itself as one of the leading semi-professional Women's Clubs when it comes to player care.

"We will now support Merrick with her recovery and we are sure she will be back out on the pitch stronger than ever once she can return to action."

Head coach Lee Burch added: "First and foremost we are all gutted for Merrick, she is one of our most important players and we are all disappointed she will be out for a long period.

"Myself, the staff and all of her teammates will ensure she is supported during her lay off from action and the Club will make sure they do all they can to support her with her recovery."



The FA Women's Championship

Table after October games		P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1	Durham	8	5	3	0	8	18
2	Leicester City	8	5	2	1	13	17
3	Sheffield United	9	5	2	2	12	17
4	Liverpool	8	4	3	1	8	15
5	Blackburn	8	4	1	3	1	13
6	Lewes	8	3	2	3	-2	11
7	Crystal Palace	8	2	2	4	-4	8
8	London City Lionesses	7	2	1	4	-2	7
9	Coventry United	8	2	0	6	-13	6
10	London Bees	9	2	0	7	-15	6
11	Charlton Athletic	7	1	2	4	-6	5

December fixtures

Sunday, December 6

Durham vs Blackburn (12:00)

Leicester City vs London Bees (14:00)

Lewes vs Charlton Athletic (14:00)

Liverpool vs Crystal Palace (14:00)

London City Lionesses vs Coventry United
(14:00)

Sunday, December 13

Charlton Athletic vs Leicester City (14:00)

Coventry United vs Durham (14:00)

Lewes vs Crystal Palace (14:00)

London City Lionesses vs Liverpool (14:00)

Sheffield United vs Blackburn (14:00)

Sunday, December 20

Durham vs Liverpool (12:00)

Blackburn vs Leicester City (14:00)

Crystal Palace vs Charlton Athletic (14:00)

London Bees vs Coventry United (14:00)

Sheffield United vs London City Lionesses
(14:00)



Durham and Amber's Law team up as charity partners



Durham have confirmed they have teamed up with Amber's Law who will become their first official charity partner.

The partnership will see the Amber's Law logo printed on the sleeves of the first-team home shirts and the club and charity will work in tandem to raise awareness.

Amber's Law is an ongoing petition to change the NHS guidelines around cervical screening so that it is available to high risk groups from the age of 18.

A statement about the news said: "As part of our continued work in the community, players and staff were keen to use our platform to support the work of a local charity doing important work.

"And we are delighted that Amber's Law have agreed to become our first Official Charity Partner."

Commenting on the partnership, Darren Cliff said: "We are very passionate at Amber's Law to get the message out there to

girls of certain age groups, so that they are aware of how cervical cancer signs can be spotted and what they should do should they see or feel anything that is abnormal.

"Joining forces with Durham Women FC is a fantastic platform to do this and we are very keen to get this moving.

"Amber's Law are very grateful to Durham Women FC for this opportunity as it is very possible that lives can continue to be saved."

Durham Women FC captain Sarah Wilson added: "We're absolutely delighted to be working with a charity like Amber's Law.

"It's so important that we utilise the platform that we have to raise awareness.

"It's something that if we can get comfortable talking about, and even just help one person, then we've supported and done our job."

Chance leaves Sheffield United



Sheffield United's midfielder Olivia Chance has left the club to join Brisbane Road ahead of the W-League season.

The New Zealand international made three appearances for the Blades after joining on a short-term contract at the start of the season.

The midfielder made her final appearance when she started in their 3-0 win at home to Crystal Palace.

Boss Neil Redfearn told the official website: "We did an agreement with Liv when we signed her that if something came up back home that she could go.

"She did great for us.

"She has a lot of quality, she'd come back from a knee injury but I think a 100% fit Liv Chance would be a real player for us, and hopefully that's something which might happen.

"She's a really likeable person, a great attitude and the girls loved her.

"She contributed for us and that's all you can ask."

Blackburn Ladies launch new partnership with UCLan



Blackburn Rovers have agreed a new partnership with the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan).

Although Rovers and UCLan have been working together for a number of years, they have now formalised an official partnership.

UCLan's Director of Sport, Dr. Adrian Ibbetson told the official website: "We want to support the Club on a number of fronts. Firstly, in terms of support for the first team squad with match analysis, strength and conditioning (S&C), physiotherapy and sports therapy.

"We also want to create a pathway for female players who are good enough to play for the university.

"And then potentially find their way to the Rovers setup, possibly even in the first team, through our scholarship programme."

The partnership also sees Rovers defender Jade Richards fulfil the role of High Performance Coach within Women's Football.

Richards added: "As coach I'm just trying to improve where they are now and have a pathway for Blackburn Rovers.

"It's good to be working for both parties to bridge the gap and recruit students for the university from elsewhere that could potentially play for Blackburn as well.

"When players go to university, they sometimes just go for the course as UCLan is a good university to study at, but we're trying to aim for them to go for the football as well.

"We integrate both to make it that wholesome package where they'll be using the facilities and the expertise of performance analysis, physiotherapists and more to form an elite programme related to the girls."

Porter signs for Lewes



Lucy Porter has been announced as Lewes FC's new signing.

The 22-year-old midfielder started her career at Aston Villa at the age of 11, where she stayed until she was 18.

At the age of 18, Porter headed off to the United States of America to study and play football at Hofstra University in New York.

In her freshman year (first year) she scored the first goal in the championship game which resulted in her side winning the league and a championship ring. Then in her sophomore year (second year) of study, Porter became the captain of her university side.

In 2019, Porter became an All American and All American Scholar

and was on the MAC Herman Trophy Watchlist.

She was also named the Colonial Athletic Association Most Outstanding Player of the Tournament and Midfield of the Year.

Away from club and university football, Porter has represented England at U15, U17 and U19 level. During her time with the U15s she captained her nation for the Euros.

Porter made her first appearance for the Rooks last Sunday against Leicester City when she came on from the bench on 78 minutes



WOMEN'S NATIONAL LEAGUE



Crawley Wasps 1-0 Portsmouth



Goal celeb Plewa Whinnett: Goalscorer Emma Plewa (number 7) is congratulated by Nikita Whinnett
(Picture: Ben Davidson Photography – www.bendavidsonphotography.com)

An outstanding defensive display, capped late on by a crucial Megen Lynch save, saw Crawley Wasps beat Portsmouth 1-0 at The New Defence on Sunday (November 1).

Emma Plewa's first-half finish was enough to seal the three points – and back-to-back home league wins – for Dave Cole's side.

Wasps started strongly and Portsmouth 'keeper Hannah Haughton palmed Nikita Whinnett's close-range strike onto the frame of the goal. Skipper Naomi Cole then tried her luck from a free-kick, which sailed just over the crossbar.

The deadlock was broken after 26 minutes. Immy Lancaster hooked the ball into the box where Plewa was waiting at the far post. The Welsh winger – who scored twice against Portsmouth last season – proved the hero again as she controlled the ball, turned and tapped it in.

Wasps' defence, so industrious to deny

Pompey time and space, also proved a threat at the other end. Seven minutes after the break, left-back Rachel Palmer whipped in a corner which was met by mud-stained centre-half Darcey James, whose header was denied by the diving Haughton.

Whinnett had the chance to double Wasps' lead after 57 minutes, rifling in a shot which had Haughton beaten but fell just the wrong side of the right-hand post.

Lynch proved to be Wasps' saviour in the closing stages. Not only did she dominate her box, punching and claiming Pompey's deliveries, but deep into injury time, she stretched to deny Katie James's shot as the Portsmouth forward had scampered into the box.

It confirmed the win for Wasps and helped Lynch seal her third clean-sheet of the season.

Midfielder Lancaster was named Wasps' player of the match by match sponsor Vita Risk Solutions.



Lockdown causing havoc again as FA Women's National League suspended



TheFA Women's
National League

By Emily Cassidy

On November 3 it was confirmed that the FA Women's National League would be suspended, including all training and fixtures until December 2. This was due to the announcement from the UK government regarding new national lockdown restrictions.

On the other hand, the Women's Super League and Championship would continue as they are classified as 'elite' sport. Some good news!

November 1 saw the last weekend of WNL Northern Premier fixtures be played before the lockdown restrictions came into place. Luckily, this brought goals, goals and more goals!

In a bottom of the table clash, Loughborough Foxes lost at home to Middlesbrough 2-1. Boro took the lead in the first half through Anna Young, but this was cancelled out by a tap in by Rebecca McGrother. A late Rocket from Boro's number 7 Tyler Dodds saw all three points return to Teesside.

Top of the table Huddersfield hosted 5th placed West Bromwich Albion in a game that gave us 5 goals. A Brittanny Sanderson brace and late winner from Laura Elford saw Town take all three points. Natalie Murray also saw red due which left Albion chasing the game with 10 players. Sunderland beat league favourites Nottingham Forest 1-0 through a goal by captain Kiera Ramshaw.

In the final game of the last weekend before lockdown commenced, 3rd placed Derby County beat Burnley 3-1. Burnley took an early lead through Katie Thomas, however goals from Callan Barber, Jodie Michalska and Sophie Domingo sealed it for the Rams.

In other fixtures that was due to be played, Hull vs Sheffield FC was postponed due to COVID-19 issues. Stoke were due to host Fylde, however unfortunately weather conditions prevented the game from being played. Both games will be re-scheduled for a later date.

Smith leaves Huddersfield town



Huddersfield Town Women have confirmed that Hannah Smith has left the club with immediate effect.

The statement read that Smith was “in a search of a new challenge.”

Smith featured heavily in the development squad before moving up to the first team.

Town manager Jordan Wimpenny told the official website: “ want to take this

opportunity to thank Hannah for all she’s done at the Club.

“I wish her all the best for the future and she will be missed by everyone here.”

FA believe they were 'as fair as possible' over points deduction for Yeovil Town Ladies



The FA believe they treated Yeovil Town Ladies “as fairly as possible” when they issued them with a points deduction in 2019.

Yeovil, who were in the top tier at the time were given a 10-point deduction after the club announced their intent to appoint an administrator.

The FA then gave Yeovil financial help in order to finish the 2018-19 season.

They subsequently did not enter formal administration and representatives from fans group Women's Football Fans United have since campaigned for explanations.

Speaking to the BBC, FA director of the women's game said: “The club contacted us, they were struggling to find the funds to complete the season and they asked us if there was anything we could do.

"We were mindful that we wanted to try and help save the club, but ultimately they were going to trigger our insolvency regulations, and we couldn't help them until they had done that, because we could not give them an

unfair advantage compared to other clubs.

"So we had to let them go through the process of triggering our insolvency regulations, a legal document. Once they'd had the sanction, we gave them a grant so that they didn't then have to call in the administrators and deal with creditors. We released it [the grant] after we'd got that notice. We

Yeovil's sanction was announced on 28 March 2019 - just hours before a deadline after which any points penalties imposed had to be applied in the following season rather than the ongoing one.

The club - second-tier champions in 2016 - were bottom of the Women's Super League table prior to the deduction being enforced and eventually finished on -3 points after their relegation was mathematically confirmed with a defeat by Reading.

However, the Glovers had declared their intention to revert to part-time status and apply to join the second tier for the 2019-20 season, regardless of their final league position.

FANWNL 2020/21

November Tables

Northern Premier Division

		P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1	Huddersfield Town	8	6	1	1	8	19
2	Fylde	7	5	1	1	11	16
3	Derby County	8	5	1	2	8	16
4	Nottingham Forest	8	4	2	2	11	14
5	West Bromwich Albion	8	4	1	3	9	13
6	Sunderland	8	4	0	4	-1	12
7	Stoke City	7	3	2	2	0	11
8	Burnley	7	3	1	3	0	10
9	Middlesbrough	8	2	1	5	-8	7
10	Hull City	6	1	2	3	-6	5
11	Sheffield FC	7	1	0	6	-13	3
12	Loughborough Foxes	8	0	2	6	-19	2

Southern Premier Division

		P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1	Watford	7	5	1	1	18	16
2	Milton Keynes Dons	7	5	0	2	15	15
3	Oxford United	6	5	0	1	14	15
4	Portsmouth	7	4	1	2	10	13
5	Crawley Wasps	6	4	0	2	5	12
6	Chichester & Selsey	5	3	0	2	8	9
7	Yeovil United	5	2	2	1	1	8
8	Cardiff City	3	2	0	1	5	6
9	Keynsham Town	6	2	0	4	0	6
10	Gillingham	7	2	0	5	-4	6
11	Plymouth Argyle	6	0	0	6	-36	0
12	Hounslow	7	0	0	7	-36	0



TheFA Women's
National League

FANWNL 2020/21

November Tables

Division One North

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Chester le Street Town	6	4	2	0	8	14
2 Brighouse Town	5	3	1	1	6	10
3 Norton & Stockton Ancients	6	2	2	2	1	8
4 Stockport County	3	2	0	1	2	6
5 Leeds United	4	1	2	1	0	5
6 Newcastle United	3	1	1	1	0	4
7 Chorley	3	1	1	1	-3	4
8 Durham Cestria	4	1	1	2	-5	4
9 Liverpool Feds	2	1	0	1	1	3
10 Barnsley	5	1	0	4	-2	3
11 Bradford City	3	0	2	1	-1	2
12 Bolton	2	0	0	2	-7	0

Division One Midlands

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Wolverhampton Wanderers	6	6	0	0	34	18
2 Doncaster Rovers Belles	6	4	1	1	8	13
3 Boldmere St Michaels	4	3	1	0	12	10
4 Solihull Moors	5	3	1	1	10	10
5 Lincoln City	5	3	1	1	10	10
6 Long Eaton United	5	2	1	2	7	7
7 Sporing Khalsa	5	2	1	2	7	7
8 Wem Town	4	1	1	2	4	4
9 Holwell Sports	6	1	1	4	4	4
10 Bedworth United	6	1	0	5	3	3
11 Burton Albion	5	1	0	4	3	3
12 Leafield Athletic	5	0	0	5	0	0



TheFA Women's
National League

FANWNL 2020/21

November Tables

Division One South East

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Ipswich Town	4	4	0	0	18	12
2 Actonians	4	3	1	0	7	10
3 Hashtag United	4	3	0	1	3	9
4 Enfield Town	5	2	2	1	4	8
5 AFC Wimbledon	5	2	1	2	4	7
6 Cambridge United	5	2	1	2	-7	7
7 Norwich City	3	2	0	1	0	6
8 Kent Football United	6	1	3	2	-1	6
9 Leyton Orient	3	1	1	1	1	4
10 Cambridge City	6	1	1	4	-8	4
11 Billericay Town	3	1	0	2	0	3
12 Stevenage	6	0	0	6	-21	0

Division One South West

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Southampton FC	4	4	0	0	17	12
2 Chesham United	5	4	0	1	15	12
3 Swindon Town	4	3	0	1	5	9
4 Cheltenham Town	5	2	1	2	4	7
5 Exeter City	5	2	1	2	-2	7
6 Buckland Athletic	4	2	0	2	-3	6
7 Larkhall Athletic	4	1	2	1	0	5
8 Maidenhead United	3	1	1	1	0	4
9 Southampton Women's	4	1	1	2	-1	4
10 Brislington	3	0	0	3	-13	0
11 Poole Town	5	0	0	5	-22	0



TheFA Women's
National League

GRASSROOTS



Get back in the kitchen



By Charlotte Stacey

As the second wave of lockdown begun in England, once again women's football found itself on the backend of overriding authority, fighting its cause for recognition to its own governing body.

The Football Association have announced that Women's Super League Academies and FA Regional Talent Clubs will cease to continue training for the duration of the lockdown period, alluding that their resources "do not meet the necessary 'elite' protocols."

A decision that would perhaps not have caused such a stir under current restrictive social measures, had the same applied across the board. Yet, the FA has ruled that boys' academies will remain open and continue to

operate as usual.

The decision comes in contrast to the government's definition of elitism as anyone "aged 16 or above and on an elite development pathway." If the WSL and its respective clubs are classed as elite, then by default, so should their academies be.

Unfortunately, this is not the only time that the FA have been called into question recently. On Saturday November 7, Bristol City released a statement explaining that they had "requested postponement" of their match against Manchester City, due to the self-isolation of five first team players, after one tested positive for Covid-19. Bristol had played Crystal Palace just two days before and were rightly concerned for the welfare of their

players, as well as others who would be attending the game.

The appeal to postpone was indeed the correct action to take. In a time where precaution is of the utmost importance, rearranging the fixture to minimise health and safety risks, and in the name of sportsmanlike conduct, would have fared well.

In response, the FA ruled that the clash with Manchester City should go ahead as planned, as Bristol had “accordingly drafted in players from the Academy”. Players that just a few days prior, were deemed as ‘non-elite’. The match was played and a depleted Bristol went on to lose 8-1.

When searching the FA’s mission statement, the very first line that fills the screen reads, “the FA aims to make football a positive and inclusive experience for everyone involved in the game.” But as constant contradictory decisions infer one half of the game as second best, perhaps a by-line should be added - “unless, of course, you’re female.”

This is not to say that the FA is not doing its bit for women’s football. They now provide a streaming service in which WSL, and some Championship fixtures, can be watched worldwide for free. They have committed to televising a number of fixtures and broadcasting Cup Finals on terrestrial channels. They have pledged “to create a sustainable future for women’s and girls’ football in England” over the next four years, and there are individuals within the association that work tirelessly to ensure that these goals are met.

Yet, these long-term projections pale when short term decisions appear contradictory. Would a Premier League fixture have gone ahead that threatened health with potential knock on effects for the rest of the league? Probably not.

Women’s football has enough of a fight on its hands without having to prove itself to one of its overarching bodies. As those within the sport know all too well, the game faces a





constant battle in gaining acceptance within the wider community.

Football is a sport, just as tennis, cycling and athletics are sports. Yet, Serena Williams is not compared to Roger Federer, Victoria Pendleton is not compared to Chris Hoy, Shelley-Ann Fraser-Pryce is not compared to Usain Bolt. These athletes are celebrated for their successes. Even in cases, such as a mixed doubles event in tennis, in which the two merge, men and women are appreciated for their different skillsets. It is a rarity to see discussions analysing the difference in quality of men's and women's sides in tennis, cycling or athletics; but in football, this is the norm.

There is not a day that goes by in which advocates of the women's game are not subjected to derogatory comments belittling their worth for simply enjoying the game. Whether this is a player, staff member, media representative or fan.

"Women's football is rubbish". "No one cares". "Get back in the kitchen". Just a few of the remarks you will find under any platform reporting on the women's leagues; the responses to those who dare to defend often far uglier. Yet these replies often have one thing in common. Typically, although one must stress, not exclusively, these injurious comments are made by men.

Of course, one does not wish to mislead nor to tie the masses with the same brush. There are men that do wish women's football success. Plenty, in fact. Plenty whom actively promote and defend the sport, weaselling out their stubborn brothers in their quest for growth and promotion.

So, what is it about women's football that divides opinion? Why is it such a hard pill to swallow for some?

Perhaps it was the enforced fifty-year ban on women playing football in the UK. A ban that consequently fed a narrative that football is a 'men-only' entity, in which the mere existence of a woman within its sacred realm threatens its very equilibrium.

Perhaps it is envy. The bruising of a collective

fragile ego that cannot comprehend the professionalism of women in a sport that 'does not belong to them'. A jealous patriarchal nod to the outdated notion that a woman should not succeed where I could not.

Perhaps it is a question of authenticity. Men's football is so deeply rooted within society, such an ingrained factor of national culture, that it may simply boil down to the indoctrinated idea that a true game of football is played by men.

One may fear that by viewing a women's game, they are missing out on the 'real deal'. There are, of course, differences between men's and women's football and nobody will deny such facts. The two exude a different feel, display different on field strengths, draw different audiences, but this does not mean that either is less worthy.

Perhaps it is a lack of education. Disapproval of the women's game frequently comes with the unoriginal reasoning of differentiating standards. It is presumed that as the WSL is the top division of women's football, it must match the standard of the Premier League. Yet this is simply not true and such assumptions are often made with an

ignorance to the obstacles women's football faces.

Is a game that is catching up on fifty years' worth of resources, financial support, societal indoctrination and cultural relevance going to exude the same quality as its closest neighbour? Of course not. Yet, this is where those who so venomously oppose the women's game seem to miss the point entirely.

Women's football does not profess to be men's football. It does not proclaim to be at the same standard yet. It does not demand bells and whistles, the all singing and all dancing paraphernalia of its male counterpart. But what it does expect is a fair shot. It wishes to be judged without preconception. It wishes for its advocates to be treated with respect and tolerance. It wishes, from the grassroots up, to be met with acceptance. It expects to be taken seriously by the organisations that are supposed to endorse it.

Women's football is not out to replace or replicate, it simply wishes to coexist.



Hogging the ball: Gender equality needs to start in the clubhouse



Increasing participation alone isn't enough to shift traditional gender relations in sports that have traditionally privileged men, a new study led by Monash University and Victoria University shows.

The study found women and girls felt devalued within sports clubs through ongoing micro-practices including difficulties gaining access to quality facilities, poorer training times, less recognition on club's social media and lower recognition of their achievements and successes.

Using interviews and observations across a six-month period at a Victorian football and netball club, researchers investigated the impact these changes had on transforming gender relations and in challenging perceptions of the club as a privileged space for its male members.

The women footballers, along with the netball players, indicated that they didn't consider themselves to be fully embraced by the club. Many female players resented not having

their achievements celebrated as much as the men's teams, despite grand final and representative club success.

One young netball player said: "Men's footy probably comes first because it's the most important thing in the entire league, not just the club."

Some male football players and coaches even kicked women players off the oval during training times, despite knowingly breaching agreed training slot and space allocations.

One male football player was overheard yelling: "Why can't the girls get off the [censored] pitch", during a training session.

The study, published in *The Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, is one of the first to examine gender relations and gender equity in community sport from within the clubrooms and shared spaces.

Associate Professor Ruth Jeanes from the Faculty of Education at Monash University

and Professor Ramón Spaaij from the Institute for Health and Sport at Victoria University led this study.

“While participation in sport is changing through the involvement of more women and girls the ideologies surrounding what is valued and prioritised within community sport remain fairly traditional with the male senior teams still considered to be the most important element of the club,” Associate Professor Jeanes said.

“The profile of women’s elite sport is increasing. However, this has not necessarily translated to an equalling of gender relations within community sport.

“Though women and girls are more present than they have ever been in community sporting spaces, and involved in club leadership and coaching, women’s and girls’ participation is still deemed a lower priority and less important than men’s.”

The club involved in the study had several hundred members across junior and senior football and netball teams, with slightly more female than male members.

Across a six-month period, researchers visited the club weekly to observe training sessions, social activities, committee meetings, and match days.

Interviews with male committee members suggested ‘historical ideologies’ had been removed and the club was now a place for everyone. However, women members disagreed saying the club revered the dominant performance of masculinity and relegated the importance of women.

Despite the introduction of several women onto the committee and the growing number of women footballers alongside a well-established netball division, many coaches remarked that the men’s football

team brought crowds and sponsorship, and must be the priority.

During training and matches, the senior men’s team had priority use of the main oval, which was well-maintained and with easy access to the change rooms and clubhouse. The women’s team had to play on an oval at the rear of the clubhouse, and a fair distance from the change rooms and any spectators.

Professor Spaaij said the club had worked hard to remove the perception that it was a ‘boys’ club’.

He said this study provided a valuable illustration of the ways in which overtly negative and abusive practices towards women and girls can be removed from sporting contexts through strong leadership, policies and zero tolerance to negative behaviour.

“Girls and women are less likely to continue participating in sports where they don’t feel welcome and their achievements are undervalued. This leads to issues of retention, and girls and women losing out on the numerous health and social benefits provided by community sport participation,” Professor Spaaij said.

“If culture change towards full gender equity is to be achieved in community sport, more attention needs to be paid to the subtle ways in which women’s presence is marginalised or under-valued. Our study particularly shows how the allocation, use and representation of space (playing fields, clubrooms, social media) play an important role in this.”

Associate Professor Ruth Jeanes (Monash University) and Professor Ramón Spaaij (Victoria University) led the study with research support from Dr Georgia McGrath and Dr Jonathan Magee (Monash University); Professor Karen Farquharson (The University of Melbourne); Professor Dean Lusher (Swinburne University of Technology); and Dr Sean Gorman (Independent Scholar from Perth).

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CUPS



JACKIE SLACK:

The FA Cup-winning captain who took up football for a dare

By Ali Rampling

Seventeen-year-old Jackie Slack was sitting with her friends at college, nursing an elbow injury that was keeping her off the badminton court.

A copy of the local newspaper - the Lowestoft Journal - lay discarded on her table, an advert for the town's women's football team peering out from the pages.

She played badminton to a good level, but her dislike for needles meant that when she was offered a cortisol injection in exchange for an instant return to action or three months rest, it was always going to be option B.

"I jokingly said 'oh, I think I'll go and play football instead'," Slack explained. "So one of my friends said: 'go on, I dare you'.

"So I did."

Jackie Slack would go on to play 32 times for England.

Badminton would have been the more socially acceptable sport to pursue. It was 1977, and women's football was still coming out of hibernation, re-

building after the 50-year ban that had decimated the sport in 1921.

"It was quite sexist wasn't it?" She recalled. "You got the usual shouts of: 'are you going to change your shirts after the game?'

"It was funny because you didn't tell people that you played football. You were like: 'oh we're a netball team' because people looked down on it. But we played because we loved it."

Following the instructions of the advertisement in the paper, Slack joined Lowestoft Ladies; not only the top team in the area but one of the most ambitious women's football clubs in the country.

“

It was quite sexist wasn't it?

”

She honed her skills with kickabouts in the back garden with her dad and four brothers, and after less than a season with the reserve side, Slack was fast tracked into the first team fold.

Here she found herself playing alongside England internationals Angie Poppy and Linda Curl and competing for the top honours in the game.

"I wasn't too good at first," Slack admitted. "I was a sub for three years."

She watched on from the bench as Lowestoft reached the WFA Cup final for the first time in their history in 1979, and was a restricted to a substitute cameo as they lost 1-0 to an all-conquering Southampton side.

Slack was initially a winger by trade, but when Lowestoft's first choice left-back Anne Leggett hung up her boots to have a baby in 1980, a spot in the starting XI presented itself.

The left-footed Slack was the natural choice.

Come May 1982, just five years after taking up football

The Big Interview

for a dare, Slack was leading Lowestoft Ladies out in the WFA Cup final at Loftus Road. She was 22-years-old.

“Amazing. I sound like Beckham now don't I? Amazing,” Slack laughed, attempting her very best David Beckham impression.

Lowestoft ran out 2-0 winners thanks to a goal either side of half time from Curl and Poppy, and captain Slack had the honour of lifting the famous trophy aloft.

“It was brilliant,” she added. “Everybody wanted to win the FA Cup. Every year you hoped that you went further and then got to win it. Apart from playing for England, that was the one thing everybody wanted.

“And everyone wants to lift the trophy don't they? It was lovely.”

Did she have to go to work on the Monday?

“I did, as it happens. Terrible, isn't it? I remember we went for a meal afterwards but we had the long coach trip back. But we had a few beers.”

The brief celebrations where somehow fitting. Before the cup had arrived in Lowestoft, there were rumblings that the club's future was in jeopardy.

“Coming back I'm sure it was said we hadn't got a league to play in next season and what are we going to do?” Slack recalled. “So it kind of took the

edge off a little bit but at the time you thought: 'I can't worry about that at the moment, I've just won the WFA Cup. We'll deal with that when we have to'.”

Very soon they were having to deal with it. Various teams were dropping out of Lowestoft's South East Regional League and the division soon folded.

The club applied to five other leagues but were turned away because of their geographic isolation. Within six months of winning the WFA Cup, their first team squad had been dismantled.

“You just had to deal with things back then,” said Slack, who left to play for Bedfordshire outfit Biggleswade. “You had to go and play wherever you could.”

The left-back later joined a number of her former Lowestoft teammates at Norwich, who celebrated an FA Cup success of their own in 1986 with a 4-3 win over Doncaster Belles.

“I've got a lot of friends at Doncaster Belles because they had quite a few England players,” added Slack. “To this day they don't want to talk to me about it.”

International recognition first arrived for Slack in 1984, and she would go on to represent England at two major tournaments - the 1987 and 1991 European Championships.

“My only regret is not getting to the World Cup; we never qualified during my time,” the fullback said. “It didn't seem such a big thing as it is now, the Euros, I don't know why.

“But don't get me wrong, pulling on an England shirt and listening to that national anthem every game is just incredible. You want to cry.”

For Slack - a 32-time England international and FA Cup winning captain by the age of 22 - the possibilities in today's game would be endless; from lucrative sponsorship deals to mainstream media coverage, professional contracts to Panini stickers.

However, she paid to play while simultaneously juggling a full-time career as an evaluator. Her Wikipedia page is just three lines long - and incorrectly lists her as a forward.

But there is no bitterness, no 'what ifs'. Slack simply played for the sheer joy that football brings.

“Course I'd love to be earning a living doing something I love, but it just wasn't to be,” she reflected.

“That's just the way it was, and you have to accept that.

“But being with everyone - the team, the camaraderie - it was just special.”

Third round qualifying results

Fleetwood Town Wrens	0-3	Liverpool Feds	FC United of Manchester	2-1	Chorley Women
Brighouse Town	3-0	Merseyrail	Chester le Street	3-2	Durham Cestria
Holwell Sports	0-2	Lincoln City	Long Eaton United	0-1	Wolverhampton Wanderers
Redditch United	1-2	Boldmere St Michaels	Luton Town	1-2	Enfield Town
Billericay Town	2-1	Chesham United	Norwich City	1-3	Ipswich Town
Exeter City	7-0	AEK Boco	Cheltenham Town	3-1	Portishead Town
AFC Bournemouth	3-1	Buckland Athletic	Ilminster Town	0-4	Southampton Women
Barnsley	4-1	Leeds United	Newcastle United	4-1	Sunderland West End
Stourbridge	3-0	Crusaders	Wem Town	4-3	Coventry Sphinx
Harlow Town	3-3	Royston Town	Actonians	4-0	Worthing
	4-2				
Fulham	1-2	Maidenhead United	Kent Football United	PP	AFC Wimbledon
Eastbourne Town	1-4	Leyton Orient	Solihull Moors	3-0	Sporting Khalsa

First round proper fixtures

FC United of Manchester	vs	Liverpool Feds	AFC Bournemouth	vs	Southampton Women
Chester-le-Street	vs	Brighouse Town	Exeter City	vs	Cheltenham Town
Lincoln City	vs	Solihull Moors	Newcastle United	vs	Barnsley
Harlow Town	vs	Ipswich Town	Wem Town	vs	Boldmere St Michaels
Billericay Town	vs	Maidenhead United	Wolverhampton Wanderers	vs	Stourbridge
Leyton Orient	vs	Actonians	Kent Football United/AFC Wimbledon	vs	Enfield Town



THE WOMEN'S FA CUP ROUND DATES 2020/21

Extra Preliminary

Round: Sunday 6

September 2020

Preliminary Round:

Sunday 20 September 2020

First Round Qualifying:

Sunday 4 October 2020

Second Round

Qualifying:

Sunday 18 October 2020

Third Round Qualifying:

Sunday 1 November 2020

First Round Proper:

Sunday 15 November 2020

Second Round Proper:

Sunday 29 November 2020

Third Round Proper:

Sunday 10 January 2021

Fourth Round Proper:

Sunday 31 January 2021

Fifth Round Proper:

Sunday 28 February 2021

Quarter Final:

Sunday 21 March 2021

Semi Final:

Sunday 18 April 2021

Final:

Saturday 22 May 2021

Conti Cup round two results



Group A			Group D		
Sheffield United	0-6	Durham			
Hill 45+1 P, Gears 58, Roberts 60, Mcfadden 67, Galloway 75, Sharpe 80					
Coventry United	0-9	Aston Villa	West Ham United	3-0	Reading
Hanssen 7, 11, 28, Syme 19, Follis 50 P, Silva 56, 90+90+4, Hayles 71, 75			Lehmann 14, van Egmond 51, Daly 58		
Group B			Group E		
Chelsea	2-0	Tottenham Hotspur	Leicester City	5-2	Blackburn Rovers
Cuthbert 70, Leupolz 84			Flint 5, 32, Devlin 78, Bailey-Gayle 81, McDonald 90+4 OG		
			Hughes 51, Newsham 57		
London City Lioness	0-4	Arsenal			
Miedema 22, 28, 41, 54					
Group C			Group F		
Liverpool	0-3	Manchester City	London Bees	1-0	Lewes
Coombs 42, Lavelle 52, Park 90+2			Pickett 27		
Everton	vs	Manchester United	Crystal Palace	2-4	Bristol City
Wednesday, December 16 19:00, Walton Hall Park			Baptiste 55, 58		
			Bissell 19, Logarzo 30, 41, Wellings 51		

Conti Cup round three results



Group A			Group D		
Durham	1-1 2-4	Aston Villa	Brighton	0-2	Reading
Roberts 4 Follis 73			Harding 28, Eikeland 73		
Coventry	0-4	Sheffield United	Charlton	0-4	West Ham
Little 9, Wilkinson 22, Pennock 66, Johnson 77			Newborough 63 van Egmond 3, Kiernan 45, 50, Thomas 64		
Group B			Group E		
Arsenal	2-2 5-4	Tottenham	Birmingham	vs	Leicester City
Miedema 12, Foord 71 Percival 59, Zadorsky 88			December 9, 14:00, Damson Park		

Group C			Group F		
Everton	1-0	Liverpool	Lewes	1-3	Bristol City
Christiansen 6			Cleverley 55 Purfield 22, Bissell 30, Salmon 31		
Manchester Utd	0-0 4-3	Manchester United	Crystal Palace	6-1	London Bees
			Haines 14, Baptiste 17, 58, Nunn 30 OG, Khassal 45, Taylor 90 Hazard 8		

Conti Cup tables

(after round three*)

**two games left to play*

Group A						Group D					
	P	W	D	L	Pts		P	W	D	L	Pts
Aston Villa	3	3	0	0	8	West Ham	3	3	0	0	8
Durham	3	2	0	1	7	Reading	3	2	0	1	6
Sheffield United	3	1	0	2	3	Brighton & HA	2	0	0	2	1
Coventry United	3	0	0	3	0	Charlton	2	0	0	2	0
Group B						Group E					
	P	W	D	L	Pts		P	W	D	L	Pts
Chelsea	2	2	0	0	6	Leicester City	1	1	0	0	3
Arsenal	3	2	0	1	5	Birmingham City	1	1	0	0	3
Tottenham	3	1	0	2	4	Blackburn Rovers	2	0	0	2	0
London City	2	0	0	2	0						
Group C						Group F					
	P	W	D	L	Pts		P	W	D	L	Pts
Man City	3	2	0	1	7	Bristol City	3	3	0	0	9
Everton	2	1	0	1	3	Crystal Palace	3	2	0	1	6
Liverpool	3	1	0	2	3	London Bees	3	1	0	2	3
Man Utd	2	1	0	1	2	Lewes	3	0	0	3	0

Frappart makes history again



Stephanie Frappart made history once more when she became the first female to referee a men's Uefa Champions League match.

The 36-year-old took charge of Juventus' Group G match against Dynamo Kiev in Turin.

This is just another step she has taken in leading women's referees.

In 2019, Frappart became the first female referee to officiate a major men's European final when she took charge of the Uefa Super Cup between Liverpool and Chelsea.

Just a month prior to that, Frappart had seemingly reached the pinnacle

to women's refereeing when she took charge of the World Cup final between the US and the Netherlands in France.

She also became the first female referee to take charge of a French Ligue 1 match when Amiens played Strasbourg in April last year.

In October, Frappart looked after her first Europa League game when Leicester City hosted Ukrainian side Zorya Luhansk.

Is equality in the air for travel in the Women's Champions League?



© Joerdeli Photography | Daniela Porcelli

As the last 32 of the UEFA Women's Champions League prepares to get underway an air charter specialist has revealed that women's teams are finally starting to be granted the same travel perks as men.

Europe's biggest clubs, from holders Lyon to Barcelona, Man City, Paris St Germain, Chelsea and Wolfsburg, go head to head in the tournament which ends with a final in Gothenburg, Sweden, next May – and some are travelling in style.

For many years now the top men's teams have chartered aircraft to take their male stars to matches. But for the most part women's teams have flown alongside the public on scheduled airlines or even by rail or coach for shorter journeys.

Now, however, global air charter specialist Chapman Freeborn has noticed a new trend in women's European football – teams

finally getting the go-ahead to level up the playing field and see their athletes treated the same as the men.

Nick Lamb, Group Sports Director at Chapman Freeborn, said: "We have seen a significant increase in enquiries, certainly this year. This is predominantly due to greater investment in the sport plus the impact of the pandemic because teams are wanting to stay in their 'bubble' and travel in a secure and safe environment.

"It is early days, of course. Almost all of the enquiries we have received are within football and compared to the men's game, it's a minute percentage. But we hope to see this change soon with more investment going into many women's sports and with a greater focus on gender equality.

"The UEFA Women's Champions League is a good barometer and we received many enquiries, even during the qualifying stages.

“Teams are wanting to stay in their bubble and be socially distanced and are more likely to travel by charter to destinations where scheduled flights are complicated or non-existent.”

Nick believes the trend will gather pace over the next two years and will also be replicated in international football as Europe begins to catch up with the United States.

He said: “The US has historically led the way when it comes to chartering women’s teams, mainly because women’s football generates large income and is growing ever bigger. But as women’s football continues to grow in Europe, too, people are asking why the men should travel by charter in a safe secure way but the women be treated differently. We strongly believe that as the profile of women’s sport grows, flying by charter will increase.

“I expect by the time Euro 2022 arrives in England in June 2022, women’s football teams will be flying by charter far more regularly.

“In fact, this could be the tournament where we see a significant shift, even though scheduled flights are likely to be easily accessible in the host country. It will be interesting to see what national associations

choose to do because the trend to want women treated the same as the men is certainly there.”

The benefit of travelling by air charter is that flights are always direct and often leave from more convenient private or regional airports with private lounges and check-in facilities. Clubs can set their own flight departure times and ask for the aircraft to be tailored to suit their needs, for instance by sitting passengers further apart or by asking for extra safety or hygiene measures.

“Having flexibility over departure times means teams can often fly straight home after a match and not require an extra night in a hotel,” said Nick. “There’s no doubt that teams which travel by air charter give themselves an advantage because it is less stressful and more comfortable and can often be achieved with little or no contact with the general public.

“As women’s sport continues to grow, both in terms of both profile and finance, you would think it’s inevitable that teams will want to offer female athletes that same service and maximise player health, safety and recovery.”



HOME NATIONS



England Lionesses meet for training camp following cancellation



England Women spent the international break on a training match after their friendly against Norway was cancelled.

The Lionesses had been due to play Norway on December 1 but the Norwegian Football Federation confirmed they would be unable to travel due to Covid-19 restrictions in their country.

Speaking about the cancellation, manager Phil Neville said: “While I am disappointed for our fans and players, I fully respect Norway’s decision not to travel.

“These are still challenging times where health and safety for all is the most important thing to consider.

“We will still look to get the squad together for the final time this year, and continue the

work we have been doing in integrating younger players and building for the future.”

Neville then named an extended 29-player squad for the November training camp which was to be split in half to test themselves against one another in two in-house training matches at St. George’s Park.

The squad included Manchester United’s Lauren James, who received her first England call up and Laura Coombs who has back in the squad for the first time since October 2015.

Meanwhile, Rinsola Babijide and Lotte Wubben-Moy, of Liverpool and Arsenal respectively, both received their second senior call-ups following their involvement

in the September camp.

Neville added: “This has been a challenging time for everyone, but it will be good to finish the year with an intensive training camp during which the squad will develop further and in which every player has the chance to prove themselves ahead of our upcoming major tournaments.

“I’m delighted to give Lauren James her first senior call-up. She’s an exciting young player that we want to help develop further. She joins the squad alongside many other young players who we’ve introduced over the last few months.

“Laura Coombs is a player I have watched a lot this season and I have been very impressed with her progression in the game. She’s performed consistently at a high level which merits her call-up to the

squad.

“This camp will give us another excellent opportunity to integrate young promising players with our experienced internationals and align everyone on the team’s long-term vision.

“Although sadly we no longer have a competitive fixture, every minute spent on the training pitch and in planning is crucial and plays an important part in preparing for the UEFA Women’s EURO.

“I want to thank our supporters for their understanding and let them know that we cannot wait to play in front of crowds again in a competitive fixture when the time is right. Rest assured when that moment comes, we’ll be giving our all to make you proud.”



The Squad



Goalkeepers

Hannah Hampton (Birmingham City), Sandy MacIver (Everton),
Ellie Roebuck (Manchester City), Carly Telford (Chelsea)

Defenders

Lucy Bronze (Manchester City), Grace Fisk (West Ham United),
Alex Greenwood (Manchester City), Steph Houghton (Manchester City),
Esme Morgan (Manchester City), Demi Stokes (Manchester City),
Millie Turner (Manchester United), Leah Williamson (Arsenal),
Lotte Wubben-Moy (Arsenal)

Midfielders

Niamh Charles (Chelsea), Laura Coombs (Manchester City), Jordan Nobbs (Arsenal),
Jill Scott (Manchester City), Lucy Staniforth (Manchester United),
Georgia Stanway (Manchester City), Ella Toone (Manchester United),
Keira Walsh (Manchester City)

Forwards

Rinsola Babajide (Liverpool), Rachel Daly (West Ham United, loan from Houston Dash),
Bethany England (Chelsea), Lauren James (Manchester United),
Chloe Kelly (Manchester City), Beth Mead (Arsenal), Nikita Parris (Olympique Lyonnais),
Ellen White (Manchester City)

Manchester City goalkeeper Karen Bardsley and Manchester United midfielder Katie Zelem were also later called up to the training camp.

The duo replaced Birmingham City's Hannah Hampton and Manchester City's Chloe Kelly and Alex Greenwood.

FA and PFA's joint elite coach placement programme gains momentum



The FA and PFA's joint Elite Coach Placement Programme, which is now entering its third successful season, has now picked up momentum across England teams in the Women's game.

Rachel Yankey, Fara Williams, Mary Phillip and Coreen Brown will begin season-long coaching placements with England's women's development teams at St. George's Park this month, with former England Women head coach Hope Powell providing the opportunity to be mentored during their placements.

England and Arsenal legend Rachel Yankey OBE will join the U19 squad, working with head coach Andy Spence, while head coach Lydia Bedford will have her U18 squad strengthened by former England defender Mary Phillip, who won 65 caps for her country and was the first women's player to

compete in two FIFA Women's World Cups.

Fara Williams, England's most capped international, will be embedded with the U17 squad under head coach Gemma Grainger whilst continuing her playing career with Reading. Meanwhile Arsenal Academy coach, Coreen Brown, will work alongside U16 head coach John Salomon. Brown was first part of the programme two seasons ago and was appointed as assistant coach with the former U14 squad.

The participants will be embedded with their respective technical coaching teams, assisting with the delivery of coaching sessions and participating in technical meetings before, during and after each international camp. They are all looking forward to sharing their experience of international football as well as them learning the art and craft of coaching on the

international stage.

Earlier this month the four aspiring coaches, who already have their UEFA 'A' or 'B' licence, met online for their formal induction onto the Elite Coach Placement Programme.

The programme, which is jointly funded by the Professional Footballers' Association, was introduced in 2017 to create opportunities for coaches from under-represented groups to work with the England national teams, aiming to build a bigger and more diverse coaching talent pipeline for the future.

The programme is already well-established across England Men's squads, with alumni including Sol Campbell, Kieron Dyer, Terry Connor and Paul Nevin. A further seven as-

piring men's coaches joined the initiative in 2019-20, working with Gareth Southgate, Aidy Boothroyd and age-group coaching teams across the development pathway.

The ECPP forms an important strand of The FA's three-year equality, diversity and inclusion strategy, 'In Pursuit of Progress', which was launched in 2018 to drive meaningful change within the organisation and across the game, focusing on initiatives to promote equality and increase the diversity of those playing, officiating, coaching, leading and governing English football. 'In Pursuit of Progress' is a key part of The FA's work towards tackling discrimination at all levels and ensuring opportunities are accessible for all.



England to create new tournament



The Football Association is planning an England-based tournament for February.

According to the Athletic, the tournament will be instead of the SheBelieves Cup, which England have already announced they will not be attending in 2021.

The FA is aiming to get three other teams involved for a February tournament.

In the last version of the SheBelieves Cup, England competed against Japan, Spain and US with the US hosts coming out victorious.

These games were the Lionesses' last international fixtures with Germany and Norway friendlies cancelled due to Covid-19.

In his press conference at the November training camp, manager Phil Neville said: "Because we've had a lack of competitive fixtures, (and are) not going to SheBelieves, Sue (Campbell) and Kay (Cossington) are working hard on doing something in February that we can't announce yet because nothing is guaranteed or signed, sealed and delivered.

"If it does come off, it will be really exciting for players, one that we can really look forward to and that will really benefit us going into the next twelve months of their development.

"I think that the need now for competitive fixtures is greater than ever. We've probably missed two or three opportunities to expose some of our players so we need to make up for that after Christmas."

Weetabix and The FA encourage nation to ‘Eat Well, Live Well, Play Well’ in new football partnership



Weetabix Food Company and The Football Association [The FA] have partnered to encourage the nation to embrace healthy choices through their new ‘Eat Well, Live Well, Play Well’ initiative. The partnership will see the nation’s favourite cereal^[1] become the Official Breakfast Category Partner of the England Women’s and Men’s Senior Teams and lead partner of Wildcats.

Weetabix will become the headline partner of The FA’s girl’s participation programme, Wildcats, which will be renamed to ‘Weetabix Wildcats’. Wildcats is for girls aged 5-11 who want to get involved with football for the very first time or want the opportunity to play with other girls their own age. There are currently over 1,600 Wildcats providers across England, giving girls the opportunity to play football in a fun and friendly environment which provides the perfect setting for girls to stay active, build confidence and meet new friends.

Weetabix and The FA are committed to doubling the number of Wildcats providers by the end of 2024 and will work closely with performance experts at St. George’s Park to implement learning about nutrition as part of the Weetabix Wildcats programme.

The new partnership will focus on Weetabix Original’s nutritional credentials, being low in sugar, salt, and fat, as well as high in fibre, helping to support the health of the nation with a strong start to the day.

Gareth Turner, Head of Brand at Weetabix, said: “This is huge news for Weetabix. We are already known as the nation’s favourite cereal and working with The FA will only cement this further.

“This partnership reinforces our belief that everyone can achieve their best with a proper, Weetabix start to the day, and we’re delighted that we can bring the Weetabix advantage to the next generation of talent through our work with the ‘Weetabix Wildcats’ and England Women’s and Men’s teams.

“We are looking forward to collaborating with our customers in all trade channels to bring this to life during what are set to be two huge summers of sport. Stand-out activations in store, warehouses and online will undoubtedly drive footfall to the cereal aisle and raise awareness of the entire category, tapping into heightened shopper interest.”

Kathryn Swarbrick, The FA’s Commercial and Marketing Director, commented: “Providing girls equal access to participate in football is an organisational priority. This will only be achieved with the support of committed partners and we’re delighted to welcome Weetabix to join us on this journey. The joint ambition to double Weetabix Wildcats sessions by the end of 2024 will play a crucial role in ensuring girls across the country have a fun, friendly and safe environment to play the game.

We’re thrilled to also announce Weetabix as the Official Breakfast Partner of the England Senior Teams ahead of the next two huge summers for English football.”

The partnership will run from April 2021, ahead of two big summers for England’s Men’s and Women’s teams with the UEFA Euro in 2021 and UEFA Women’s Euro in 2022. Supporting activity will feature across all Weetabix-branded cereal products, including Oatibix.



Portugal 1-0 Scotland

Scotland's international games got off to a difficult start with a 1-0 defeat to Portugal in Lisbon.

The result was a huge blow for their Euro 2022 qualification hopes.

The Scots were without head coach Shelley Kerr who is self-isolating, with the result leaving them third in the group.

The Scots had the majority of the possession early in the game with Jen Beattie failing to divert a close-range header.

Erin Cuthbert then had a chance but her shot went just wide of the post.

Towards the end of the first half, Portugal began to dominate but it was not until the second half that they managed to find the back of the net.

Tatiana Pinto clipped a perfectly-timed ball in behind the visitors' backline to Marques Borges who finished low.

Scotland 0-1 Finland

Just days later on December 1, Scotland's chances of reaching the 2022 Women's Euros came to an end with a 1-0 defeat to Finland.

Amanda Rantanen's stoppage-time goal gave the visitors a shock victory at Easter Road.

Shelley Kerr, who missed a second match because of Covid-19 protocols, had taken Scotland to last year's World Cup but her side are now seven points off Portugal and leaders Finland with games in Cyprus and at home to the Portuguese still to come in February.

Scotland midfielder Kim Little told the BBC: "We're incredibly disappointed. Three 1-0 results and ultimately we've not been good enough, we've not put the ball in the back of the net.

"We have to take responsibility for that. We had chances, a lot of the. We weren't clinical enough."

Scotland assistant coach Andy Thomson added: "I really feel for the players, their effort was outstanding. Some of their play was really good.

"However, in that box, the that final third, you need to take your chances. You create chances to score, if you don't, you leave yourself open for what happened and we don't deserve it."



Glasgow City beat Reykjavik on penalties in Women's Champions League



Glasgow City are through to the last 32 of the Uefa Women's Champions League for the 10th season in a row after beating Icelandic champions Valur on penalties.

The one-off second qualifying round tie ended 1-1 and went to spot-kicks.

After a goalless first half City went in front when Leanne Crichton found the back of the net from Hayley Lauder's free-kick.

But Mist Edvardsdottir bundled home an equaliser following a corner to send the game into extra time.

City keeper Lee Alexander made a couple of vital saves to keep Valur out in extra time and send the game to penalties.

Both sides missed two of their first three penalties but Crichton, Lauren Wade, Clare Shine and Zaneta Wyne all hit the back of the net.

Wales 3-0 Belarus



Wales put in a fantastic performance on a bittersweet night in their Euro 2022 qualifying campaign.

Jayne Ludlow's side cannot now qualify for the tournament which has been moved to 2022 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Natasha Harding prodded Wales into the lead from close range, and Rachel Rowe doubled the advantage before half-time with a fantastic angled finish.

Jess Fishlock's cool penalty made the result safe for Wales.

However, Northern Ireland's 5-1 win over the Faroe Islands saw them pip Wales to a play-off place.

Going into the match, Wales knew they needed to beat Belarus and hope the Faroe Islands - who had scored none and conceded 37 in their previous six qualifiers - caused an upset by avoiding defeat against Northern Ireland.

Wales manager Jayne Ludlow told BBC Sport Wales: "The girls stuck to the game plan, worked really hard and enjoyed themselves out there. It's been a tough, interesting campaign for us, but one that is going to make us stronger.

"There have been times where we have done excellent and got what we deserved and there have been times we haven't done those things and we will learn from those things and move on.

"As we've shown tonight, we have a great group of girls of different ages and we are looking forward to the future.

"Each campaign we are getting closer. Even points for second place this time, so we are frustrated.

"We are getting closer to making that final step and hopefully the youngsters coming through will help us do that."

McAllister stands for place on Fifa Council



Former Wales captain Laura McAllister is standing for election for the Uefa women's place on Fifa's ruling council.

McAllister has been deputy chair of Uefa's women's football committee since 2017 and is a former Sport Wales chair.

All British football associations support her bid to become Uefa's female delegate on the Fifa Council, a role currently held by Evelina Christillin.

Speaking to BBC Sport Wales, she added: "Whilst I've got a background in women's football as an ex-player, I'm also very interested and engaged in all aspects of the game, for boys and girls and for men and women.

"So it's areas like grassroots development, coach education, refereeing, funding, resourcing - all are areas where I think I can make a contribution.

"But I don't want to present this as being all about me. It would be a tremendous achievement for all of us in Wales if we were to have our first member of Fifa Council.

"And if I were to be elected, I'd also be the first woman of any of the British nations to sit on Fifa Council."





Northern Ireland

5-1

Faroe Islands

Northern Ireland recovered from an early shock goal to keep their Euro 2022 dream alive.

The 5-1 victory secured Kenny Shiels' side a play-off place as they aim to qualify for their first major women's tournament.

Rachel Furness scored twice with Chloe McCarron and the McGuinness sisters - Kirsty and Caitlin - also on target.

Jensa Kannuberg Torolvsdottir put the visitors ahead but Furness quickly levelled as the home side took control.

It was a fourth consecutive qualifying victory for a confident Northern Ireland team, who can now look forward to a two-legged play-off next spring for a place in the 2022 finals in England.

Speaking to the media after the game Shiels said: "I said before we went out 'let's go and make people happy'.

"Whether it was their family, friends, partners or whatever. I said 'let's try and do it for someone else just for this period, even though you will reap the rewards'.

"It's fantastic when you see them celebrating and you feel that maybe me and my staff have helped with that. That's why we are in football because we have a passion for the game and we want to make people happy."

"Don't forget the women's game had to close down in Northern Ireland for a spell because of a lack of interest, and a lot of these girls were part of that," he added.

"Now, it is up to me to develop the young players and take them through. Nine or 10 of the Under -19s have been with us for our training programme and they will provide a great underbelly coming through, because the older girls just cannot play for ever and ever."



UEFA
**WOMEN'S
EURO 2022
ENGLAND**

INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENTS



Fifa council passes landmark reforms for women's players and coaches



Professional women's footballers are to be guaranteed maternity leave under new rules approved by Fifa.

Under the new rules agreed on December 4, a player will be given 14 weeks maternity leave and her club will be obliged to reintegrate her afterwards and provide adequate support.

The rules will be incorporated into FIFA's regulations on the status and transfer of players and will be enforced worldwide.

While many players in Europe are already protected by employment law in their given countries, FIFA said its aim is to create "new global minimum standards" for female players, given the rapid emergence of new clubs and leagues around the world.

The global football body's president Gianni Infantino said new rules would also be introduced to give greater stability to coaches, although there were no immediate further details.

Speaking to reporters, he added: "If we are serious about boosting the women's game, we have to look at all these aspects.

"Female players need to have stability in their careers and if they take maternity leave, they should not have to worry about when they are ready to play again."

2021 Championship chatter

Thursday, November 26			
B	Georgia	0-4	Malta
F	Slovakia	1-3	Iceland
Friday, November 27			
I	Germany	6-0	Greece
H	Croatia	1-0	Lithuania
D	Spain	10-0	Moldova
C	Northern Ireland	3-2	Belarus
G	Kazakhstan	0-3	North Macedonia
A	Estonia	0-4	Turkey
A	Russia	3-0	Kosovo
G	France	3-0	Austria
E	Albania	4-0	Cyprus
E	Portugal	1-0	Scotland
Tuesday, December 1			
F	Hungary	0-1	Iceland
A	Slovenia	2-0	Estonia
H	Belgium	4-0	Switzerland
D	Czech Republic	7-0	Moldova
F	Slovakia	0-6	Sweden
C	Northern Ireland	5-1	Faroe Islands
C	Wales	3-0	Belarus
G	Austria	1-0	Serbia
G	France	12-0	Kazakhstan
B	Georgia	0-3	Bosnia & Herzegovina
A	Turkey	1-2	Russia
B	Israel	0-2	Malta
B	Denmark	0-0	Italy
I	Ireland	1-3	Germany
I	Ukraine	2-1	Montenegro
A	Netherlands	6-0	Kosovo
E	Portugal	1-0	Albania
E	Scotland	0-1	Finland

MANCHESTER



UEFA
WOMEN'S
EURO 2021
ENGLAND



MEGASTORE

ENTRANCE

E3

EX12



UEFA
WOMEN'S
EURO 2021
ENGLAND

2021 Championship chatter

Group A									
	Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	P
1	Netherlands	10	10	0	0	48	3	45	30
2	Russia	10	8	0	2	23	6	17	24
3	Slovenia	9	5	0	4	22	12	10	15
4	Kosovo	10	3	1	6	6	29	-23	10
5	Turkey	10	1	2	7	9	28	-19	5
6	Estonia	9	0	1	8	1	31	-30	1

Group B									
	Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	P
1	Denmark	10	9	1	0	48	1	47	28
2	Italy	9	7	1	1	25	5	20	22
3	Bosnia & Herzegovina	10	6	0	4	19	17	2	18
4	Malta	10	3	1	6	11	30	-19	10
5	Israel	9	2	1	6	10	18	-8	7
6	Georgia	10	0	0	10	3	45	-42	0

Group C									
	Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	P
1	Norway	6	6	0	0	34	1	33	18
2	N. Ireland	8	4	2	2	17	17	0	14
3	Wales	8	4	2	2	16	4	12	14
4	Belarus	7	2	0	5	11	15	-4	6
5	Faroe Islands	7	0	0	7	1	42	-41	0

Group D									
	Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	P
1	Spain	6	5	1	0	32	1	31	16
2	Czech Rep.	8	5	1	2	24	9	15	16
3	Poland	7	4	2	1	16	2	14	14
4	Moldova	7	1	0	6	3	42	-39	3
5	Azerbaijan	6	0	0	6	1	22	-21	0

Group E									
	Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	P
1	Finland	6	5	1	0	18	2	16	16
2	Portugal	6	5	1	0	8	1	7	16
3	Scotland	6	3	0	3	16	3	13	9
4	Albania	8	2	0	6	7	21	-14	6
5	Cyprus	6	0	0	6	0	22	-22	0

2021 Championship chatter

Group F									
	Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	P
1	Sweden	8	7	1	0	40	2	38	22
2	Iceland	8	6	1	1	25	5	20	19
3	Slovakia	8	3	1	4	7	19	-12	10
4	Hungary	8	2	1	5	11	20	-9	7
5	Latvia	8	0	0	8	2	39	-37	0

Group G									
	Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	P
1	France	8	7	1	0	44	0	44	22
2	Austria	8	6	1	1	22	3	19	19
3	Serbia	8	4	0	4	21	12	9	12
4	North Macedonia	8	2	0	6	8	39	-31	6
5	Kazakhstan	8	0	0	8	2	43	-41	0

Group H									
	Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	P
1	Belgium	8	7	0	1	37	5	32	21
2	Switzerland	8	6	1	1	20	6	14	19
3	Romania	7	3	0	4	12	16	-4	9
4	Croatia	7	2	1	4	7	18	-11	7
5	Lithuania	8	0	0	8	1	32	-31	0

Group I									
	Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	P
1	Germany	8	8	0	0	46	1	45	24
2	Ukraine	8	5	0	3	16	21	-5	15
3	Ireland	8	4	1	3	11	10	1	13
4	Greece	8	2	1	5	6	21	-15	7
5	Montenegro	8	0	0	8	2	28	-26	0

Around the World



Simon Says

This month I spent time talking to Dr. Michele Cox who is part of the New Zealand Football Foundation. Here is what she had to say.

What first got you interested in football?

My Dad was English and a former apprentice at QPR and Brentford. He encouraged my mum to play for the Eden Football Club when they started a women's team. She was 26 years old when she played her first game of football. I thought that was rather cool, so I wanted to play and subsequently joined the Eden Midgets (as we called the juniors then ...) at the age of 5. In 1973, it was pretty much me and 500 boys because it was so rare for girls to play then. It is a completely different story now, thank goodness.

Is the girls and women's game in New Zealand bog and is it growing?

Noting that we only have a population of 5 million, football is one of the biggest participation sports in NZ with 155,000 registered football and futsal players. 17,719 of these players are girls and women – a 32% increase from 2011. We expect this figure to increase drastically over the coming years with NZ being the joint host of the FWWC 2023.

When did you believe that you could make it as an international? And is it true your mother played in the same team?

As soon as I started playing, I wanted to play for the NZ Women's Football Team (the Football Ferns), just like my mum Barbara

who was the first captain of the national women's team and played until she was around 40. My first recorded A international was against USA in 1987 at the World Invitational Tournament in Taiwan. Mum and I played in defence together in that game and a couple after that. We actually won the game 1-0 against their star-studded line-up (eg Mia Hamm, Michelle Akers-Stahl) – the only time NZ have beaten the mighty USA. Something we are to this day all very proud of.

Outside playing sport your career education has played a big role in your post-playing career. Have you always been interested in education?

I have always felt it is exceptionally important to have a life outside sport. Until I was about 30, studying was the perfect balance to sport, and I used the time to finish a MA (Hons) in Psychology, a Diploma of Business in Marketing, and a Diploma in Naturopathy. All these qualifications and the skills I obtained from studying have helped me in some way, as has the PhD in Health Promotion I finished in 2012 (finally!). Working and studying was way more difficult than playing and studying!

Away from football, you have been heavily involved in both hockey and cricket how did those roles come about?

I played many sports as well as football - hockey and cricket being two of them. It is important for kids to play different sports not just for balance but also for fun and enjoyment. I was really a typical sporty kiwi kid of that time, trying everything from gymnastics

Simon Says

to gridiron and triathlon, and this continues now in my 50's – this week I am having surfing lessons for the first time to try something different. The roles therefore with cricket and hockey came through my connection to those communities and love for those sports and sport in general.

During your career, you have worked in Switzerland for UEFA, FIFA etc did you enjoy that work and what did it involve?

The work I did for FIFA and UEFA was as a consultant to their relevant member associations to assist in providing expertise and support in specific functional or product areas such as women's football or marketing and revenue generation. Concurrently I was also on the FIFA Committee for Women's Football and the FIFA Women's World Cup alongside English treasure Kelly Simmons who remains a very good friend to this day.

Looking at your career you have an interest in empowering women through sport and have worked to market and promote the Paralympics and Asian Federations that must be rewarding work?

Probably the thing I am most proud of is supporting Prince Ali Bin Al Hussein while I was working for his Foundation, in ensuring women across the world were consistently able to wear hijab on the field of play. This was a difficult campaign but the impact of the issue being resolved has, and will, change access to the game for many women and girls who want to play football. That is truly satisfying to leave such a legacy.

And finally, I believe you have au-

thored several books. Is there anything that you can't do?

Hahaha – there is a very long list. Running around the football field now is definitely one of them!

Yes, I have written 5 books, 3 of which are a series about a young girl called Sammy who plays in a mixed football team. They were published in Japan as well as NZ and Australia and having the rights just reverted to me is quite an exciting proposition in the lead-up to the FIFA Women's World Cup in NZ/Australia. I am in the process of finding a new publisher and one that will also support a very exciting project I am about to undertake with a former Football Fern teammate. Exceptionally exciting times ahead!

Michele, is currently the Chief Executive for the NZ Football Foundation. The organisation plays a key role in supporting women and girls in football in New Zealand. For example, they have provided hardship funding to the Football Ferns prior to the Rio Olympics, supported the Future Ferns Development Programme, and sponsored the Kate Sheppard Cup, New Zealand's national women's knockout competition.





News from around the world



Mara Gomez set to become first trans woman to play in Argentina

Mara Gomez is set to become the first trans woman to play in Argentina after the AFA confirmed her registration to play for Villa San Carlos.

Gomez will make history by taking her

place in the first division in Argentina.

She shared the news on her Instagram along with a picture signing a contract with the club.

Kennedy plays last game for Orlando Pride

Alanna Kennedy has played her last game for Orlando Pride after she was drafted by Louisville for the 2021 season.

Taking to Twitter she wrote: “I just want to thank everyone at Orlando Pride for everything over the past four years. This was my home away from home and I felt welcomed from the moment I arrived.

“We experienced many ups and downs as a playing group but what remained a constant for me was my happiness in this beautiful city, around so many beautiful people.

“I will miss you all. For now, I am focused on where my feet are and I’m excited for what the future holds.”

The Australian midfielder is currently on loan at Women’s Super League side Tottenham.

After not being able to play for Pride due to Covid-19 and was acquired by Racing Louisville in the 2020 NWSL Expansion Draft.





News from around the world



North Carolina Courage defender Daniels announces retirement

National Women's Soccer League defender Jaelene Daniels has announced her retirement.

The 27-year-old has competed in six seasons in the top-flight for North Carolina Courage.

She also earned eight caps the USA after making her debut in 2015.

Taking to Instagram, she wrote: "Well... Today I officially announce my retirement from professional soccer. This is

one of the most bittersweet days of my life.

"Soccer has been my life for 23 years. It was the first sport I ever played because my older siblings played it & I wanted to be just like them.

"It was the first thing I truly ever committed myself to because I couldn't think of anything else I wanted to do as a little girl.

"I know the days ahead will be hard. They'll be different & uncomfortable, but if soccer has truly taught me anything, it's that the greatest things in life come when we allow ourselves to be uncomfortable."

PSG Women join other A-list stars for charity single

Stars of Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) Feminales have taken time part in the unique We Are Family campaign music video.

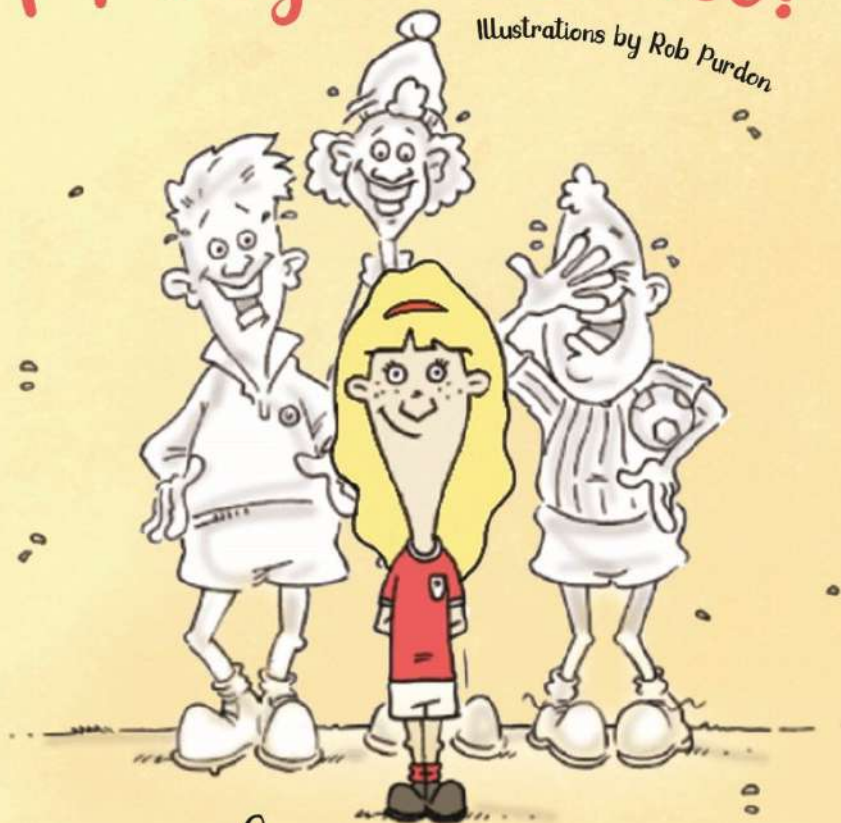
Some members of the team will star alongside celebrities, leaders, campaigners, frontline health heroes and members of the public in a spectacular sing-along music video for the release of the Special Edition Cover of the timeless hit 'We Are Family', presented by Natasha Mudhar, Founder of the global social impact enterprise The World We Want, and supported by the World Health Organization.



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