

# Against the Run of Play

## The History of Women's Football in Scotland 1960 to 2020

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# Declaration

I declare that I have composed this thesis myself and that it embodies the results of my own research. Where appropriate, I have acknowledged the nature and extent of work carried out in collaboration with and/or by others included in the thesis.

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**Against the run of play:**

When a football team scores a goal against the run of play, they score although the opposing side has had more opportunities to score.

# Abstract

Discourse within the predominantly white male heteronormative football community in Scotland, positions women's football as a recent phenomenon that has yet to earn respect. The exclusion of women from Scottish sporting and historical narratives has resulted in a lack of evidence to refute this assertion. Similarly, while woman's football has proved a valuable source of investigation for the social sciences, particularly sports history and gender studies, the study and analysis of the 'Scottish experience' has been limited. In countering these positions, this thesis provides a significant original contribution to knowledge by charting the history of women's football in Scotland across the past sixty years, from ad hoc matches with inadequate facilities to record participation levels following qualification for the FIFA Women's World Cup France 2019™.

The historical account renders visible three areas: the development and growth of the domestic and international game; the leadership and governance of women's football from amateur to professional organisation and the lived experience of the women directly involved, revealing voices previously excluded from the narrative. Additionally, the thesis examines the slow progression of Scottish women's football in comparison to other selected European countries, identifying factors which affected Scotland's rate of development. Drawing on feminist discourse concerning barriers to women's involvement in football, it positions both the slow rate of development and lack of awareness of women's long involvement in football, in the context of the hegemonic football community in Scotland.

The research information was gathered from oral history interviews with key players, coaches and administrators and archive material from Scottish Women's Football, the Scottish Football Museum and newspaper and private collections. These sources reveal the voices and narratives of the women who resisted barriers to them playing, persisted against the odds and worked tirelessly to develop and promote women's football in Scotland.

## Acknowledgements

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This thesis is dedicated to the strong determined women who played football in Scotland across the past sixty years, no matter what, resisting all barriers that were placed in their way. You deserve to be heard and celebrated.

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## **Abbreviations**

FA	Football Association (England)
FIFA	Federation Internationale de Football Association
PE	Physical Education
SFM	Scottish Football Museum
SFA	Scottish Football Association
SHAAP	Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems
SWF	Scottish Women's Football
SWFA	Scottish Women's Football Association
WFA	Women's Football Association (England)
UEFA	Union of European Football Associations

# 1. Introduction

On the 28<sup>th</sup> May 2019, at Hampden Park Stadium, a record-breaking crowd of 18,555 watched the Scotland women's national team play Jamaica ahead of their departure for the finals of the FIFA Women's World Cup France 2019<sup>TM</sup>.<sup>1</sup> This was the team's first qualification for the final stages of the tournament in eight attempts and women's football had caught the public's imagination.<sup>2</sup> The team did not progress beyond the group stage of the competition, but the enhanced promotion of women's football resulted in a twenty-percentage increase in registered players from the previous year (McIntyre, 2020).<sup>3</sup> Ahead of kick-off, a small group of women made their way pitch side to be presented with Scotland caps by First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon in recognition of their participation in the Scotland national team.<sup>4</sup> Within the crowd, there may have been some who were aware that when five of the women receiving caps played in the first Scotland international against England in 1972, women's football was still effectively banned by the Scottish Football Association (SFA). However, it is unlikely that many of the spectators in Hampden that evening, would be aware of the long and rich history of women's participation in the 'national' game.

Scotland's sporting culture is relentlessly male centric, with sports played by men dominating both media coverage and the historical information produced (Reid, 2004). As a result, the opportunity to learn about women who previously participated in a sport and defied convention to carve out room to play, is limited. This is particularly the case with football which remains emphatically aligned with men and masculinity and is therefore viewed as a male preserve (Cashmore and Cleland, 2012; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005; Kimmel et al., 2004; Scraton et

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<sup>1</sup> Hampden Park Stadium is the national stadium of football in Scotland. The previous highest attendance at a Scotland Women's National Football Team match was 4,098. Details within this introduction have previously appeared in an article the author wrote based on this research, 'Sisters doing it for themselves: the rich history of women's football in Scotland from the 1960s to 2020', *Sport in History*, 40:4, 456-481.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.genderequalmedia.scot/news/blog/how-transformational-was-the-womens-world-cup-for-scotland/>

<sup>3</sup> The number of registered players across 2019/2020 was 17,234, as confirmed by Fiona McIntyre, 2020, in email correspondence with the author.

<sup>4</sup> Through work on this research, the author was asked to assist in locating women who would qualify and organising the event. The women had not received caps previously because without affiliation to the Scottish Football Association, the Scottish Women's football association could not award 'official' caps.

al., 2005; Skelton, 1999; Stirling and Schulz, 2011). Consequently, whilst books about men's football dominate the sports writing genre, writing on women's football in Scotland is extremely scarce.<sup>5</sup> Details about women's football in Scotland have often come as a by-product of accounts of English teams such as those supplied by Gail Newsham (1994) writing about Dick, Kerr ladies, Wendy Owen (2005) writing about her playing career and Sue Lopez (1997) who wrote about both her career and the development of women's football. In a brief four-and-a-half-page section, Lopez detailed the little that was known about the history of women's football in Scotland at the end of the twentieth century.<sup>6</sup> Within academic work, although there has been a steady growth in writing about women's football in the past thirty years, historical accounts have been limited (Valenti et al., 2018). This growth in academic writing has not been replicated with reference to women's football in Scotland, which has received limited coverage. Williams (2003a and 2005) expanded a little on the work of Lopez (1997) but the main academic work until now has been undertaken by Macbeth (2002, 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2008).<sup>7</sup>

In 2002, Macbeth published an article entitled 'The Development of Women's Football in Scotland' in *Sports Historian* which contained an outline history of women's football for Scotland. This was linked to her PhD research which was

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<sup>5</sup> Until the production of Gibb's book *Lady Players, the strange birth of women's football* in 2018, there were no popular books that focused on women's football in Scotland, although McCuiag had written a short article for the Scottish Football Museum (2000) and Macbeth had written a chapter in an academic book in 2005. Gibb's area of particular interest is the emergence of women's football in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Whilst he does include a little information about the period covered by this research, it is thin and he states that he is awaiting the outcome of this research for more detail. In March 2021, *Arrival – the story of the Scotland national women's team and their journey to the World Cup* by Lawther was published in Spring 2021 as just the second book on Scottish women's football.

<sup>6</sup> In comparison, in Lopez's work, the USA covered eighteen pages, Germany eleven, Norway seven and Sweden six. However, there was less written about Wales and Northern Ireland who only had half a page of coverage.

<sup>7</sup> These pieces are a PhD thesis, *Women's Football in Scotland: An Interpretative Analysis*, (PhD Thesis Stirling University, 2004), journal articles: 'The Development of Women's Football in Scotland' *Sports Historian* 22, no. 2 (2002): 149 – 163. Becoming a Footballer: The Socialisation Experiences of Women Footballers in Scotland, *Football Studies*, 9 no. 1 (2006): 19-34, Attitudes towards Women's Football in Scottish Society, *Scottish Affairs*, 63, (2008): 89 – 119 and a book chapter Macbeth, J (2005) 'The Pals, the Professionals and the Conformers: The Meaning of Football in the Lives of Women Footballers in Scotland'. In: *A Bountiful Game? Football Identities and Finances*. Meyer and Meyer, pp. 79-97. ISBN 1-84126-178-5.

completed in 2004.<sup>8</sup> Her description of the development of women's football in Scotland built on the work of Williamson (1991), Newsham (1994), McCuiag (2000) and Williams (2003a). Through the original information gathered during her research, Macbeth demonstrated that the origins of women's football in Scotland were earlier than previously thought. She identified the earliest record in Europe mentioning women and football together, written in 1628 when a Church of Scotland minister in Carstairs, complained in the Church record about men and women foot-balling on the Sabbath (Macbeth 2002, 2004).<sup>9</sup> Prior to Macbeth's research the earliest recorded instance of women playing football in Scotland was attributed to an annual match taking place in the hills above Inverness between the married and single women of 'Caledonia' in the early eighteenth century (Williamson, 1991). The next evidence of women's football in Scotland are matches played in the late nineteenth century, including a women's football tour involving Mrs Graham's XI which consisted of both local matches and a 'Home International' between Scotland and England (McCuaig, 2000; Gibbs, 2018).<sup>10</sup> As in England, women's football was popular in Scotland during the First World War and works-based teams such as the one at Beardmore Forge continued to play after the War ended.<sup>11</sup> Tracing women's football in Scotland through the first decades of the twentieth century is made possible through the intersection with teams in England. The account of a tour by Dick, Kerr Ladies in 1921, for example, shows that they played matches in Aberdeen, Dundee and Dumfries; while in the mid-1930s the team played matches against Edinburgh Ladies for the 'Championship of the World' (Newsham, 1994). The references to women's football in the 1940s and 1950s are sparse and mainly comprise copies of letters held in the SFA archives, sent to men's football clubs to remind them of the

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<sup>8</sup> Although Macbeth filled a number of gaps in understanding of the development of women's football in Scotland, her PhD, *Women's Football in Scotland: An Interpretative Analysis*, (PhD Thesis Stirling University, 2004) focused on the experiences of women footballers playing at the time.

<sup>9</sup> A village in South Lanarkshire, Scotland.

<sup>10</sup> Further detailed exploration of this period is contained within Gibbs (2018) *Lady Players, the strange birth of women's football*, self-published.

<sup>11</sup> Information about this period is being recovered all the time, with recent work including Skillen, F and Bolton, S. (2021) Women's football in Interwar Scotland : Sadie Smith and the Legendary Rutherglen Ladies FC Part 1 <https://www.playingpasts.co.uk/articles/football/womens-football-in-interwar-scotlandsadie-smith-and-the-legendary-rutherglen-ladies-fcpart-1/> Part 2 <https://www.playingpasts.co.uk/articles/football/womens-football-in-interwar-scotlandsadie-smith-and-the-legendary-rutherglen-ladies-fcpart-2/> Both last accessed April 12 2021.

restrictions on women using their facilities (Macbeth, 2002, 2004). Macbeth's coverage of Scottish women's football from 1960 to 1999 centres on the emergence of teams in the 1960s, participation in English cup competitions, the formation of the Scottish Women's Football Association (SWFA), the removal of restrictions in 1974, and the formation of the Scottish Women's Premier League (SWPL) in 1999. Her writing about teams in the 1980s and 1990s is solely in reference to the potentially limited standard of play, given the poor performance of the Scottish women's national team in international competitions. The scant information on these decades is in contrast to the amount discussed regarding participation at both the turn of the twentieth century and the early 1960s.<sup>12</sup> This assessment is not made to critique Macbeth who provided the first narrative history of women's football in Scotland even though the focus of her PhD research was other than sport history. Rather this point highlights the paradoxical situation of having more information readily available about women's football in the late 1880s, 1920s and early 1960s than in the 1980s and 1990s.

In the period since Macbeth's article in 2008, there has been little more than headline information produced about women's football in Scotland in the past sixty years. The small number of articles that have appeared in the past ten years have tended to focus either on early matches from the late 1880s or very specific events or players and have either been published in specialist magazines or reported within specific documentaries.<sup>13</sup> This meant that at the start of this research, while it was possible to find fragmented pieces of information about a particular match or an individual player, no unified history of women's football in Scotland was available. Additionally, aside from particular individuals, there was limited opportunity to hear the voices of the women involved in football. The exclusion of women from the football narrative mirrors the paucity of detail of women in general Scottish historical accounts which renders them much less

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<sup>12</sup> The events during the 1960s and early 1970s were also written about by Lopez (1997) and Williams (2002, 2003a).

<sup>13</sup> These articles include obituaries for Edna Neillis (O'Neill, 2015), Susan Ferries (O'Neill, 2016) which appeared in *She Kicks* magazine; an article about two 1960s teams (Campbell, 2017) and one about Rose Reilly (Clark, 2017) both of which appeared in *Nutmeg* magazine in 2017. Purple TV (McCuaig) produced two films, one in 2015 which was mainly about the Honeyballers team from the 1880s which also gave some detail of more modern football and one in 2019 about Rose Reilly, which spoke a little about women's football in Scotland in the 1960s and early 70s, but chiefly focused on Reilly's career in Italy.

visible because their experiences and contributions are less valued by patriarchy than those of men (Abrams, 2006). Despite the growth in interest in women's history, there remains a lack of information about their endeavours and experiences (Abrams, 2006; Breitenbach and Abrams, 2006; Gordon and Breitenbach, 1990).

One of the reasons for the gaps in knowledge about the Scottish women's game is the lack of primary sources, including archival material, from which to build the history. This absence of material relating to women's football was highlighted by Macmillan, in his 2015 master's dissertation exploring the availability of archival material. He suggested that "the little which was found lacked organisation, metadata, detail, and context" (Macmillan, 2015:6).<sup>14</sup> The aforementioned accounts of women's football in Scotland utilised what information there was available, however, the research of both Williams (2003a) and Macbeth (2004), for their respective PhDs, had a focus other than the history of women's football in Scotland. As a result, whilst existing knowledge was collated and some new details located, the narrative still contained large gaps.

However, a lack of previous attention does not, on its own, create a warrant for the academic study of a subject, "the topic has to have some merit, other than the absence of prior attention. Neglect is not significant per se" (Thompson, 2019). So, why was it deemed important to fill gaps and add to the knowledge base about women's football in Scotland? There are a number of aspects to answering this question. The first is that it is not possible to really understand the past if we ignore the, "experience, perspective and influence of half the population" (Lindsay, 2019). The second is that women's history sheds light on the influence and effect of patriarchy, an issue that is lost, if the focus of enquiry about a subject is only in relation to men (Lindsay, 2019). Thirdly, writing the history of women footballers gives women and girls the opportunity to learn about them and the adversities they overcame to forge a path for them,

we draw strength and inspiration from those who came before us and those remarkable women working among us today. They are part of our story,

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<sup>14</sup> Macmillan gave his dissertation the title 'The forgotten twelve', a reference to the fact that at the time he wrote it, there was no record of winners for twelve of the years that the women's Scottish cup had been played since 1972.

and a truly balanced and inclusive history recognizes how important women have always been (National Women's History Alliance, 2019).

In tandem with these reasons, runs the importance of history to football. For the fans and players of clubs and national teams, there is much importance given to generating, "a shared narrative of their experiences of a collective shared history, out of which contemporary meaning and identity is forged" (Goldblatt, 2020b: 03:26). Although this has previously happened on a small scale in the women's game in Scotland, the narratives were only shared by a few women and generally around specific instances, teams or time periods.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, if the perception is that women's football has only been in existence for a short time, then it is afforded little credibility by the dominant male-centric football community.<sup>16</sup> Collating the narrative of women's football shows its rich history throughout the sixty years under examination and establishes a claim to be included in the cultural landscape, demonstrating 'time-served' to the prevailing male football community.<sup>17</sup>

The game of football is also, "a vast public theatre in which both sexism and challenges to sexism have been physically and publicly expressed" (Goldblatt, 2020b: 04:48). This thesis provides the opportunity to consider the effect on women's football of hegemonic patriarchy, within both the Scottish game and the wider society it reflects. In addition, it considers the ways in which those involved in the game sought to confront it. The centring of men's voices and interests has meant that men's football has long dominated the narrative. Without a clear collective history of women's football that domination has been able to continue

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<sup>15</sup> For example, there is a small but active group of women on Facebook who played at the same time in the 1960s and 1970s. One of the women has set up a site that shares information about women and men's football and the women post stories, photos and comments on there. This often results in conversations and group reminiscence; however, it would appear to be a small handful of women who are part of the group by invitation.

<sup>16</sup> Obviously, some might still argue that the sixty-year history of Stewarton Thistle (now Kilmarnock FC) or the fifty-year history of the Scottish national women's team is still insignificant compared to the men's game where many of the clubs can trace their beginnings to the late nineteenth century. However, within the men's football senior leagues there are, at time of writing, three teams formed less than twenty years before Kilmarnock and one that was formed thirty years afterwards. Equally, given the barriers faced by women's teams discussed in this thesis it is testament to their tenacity that there any who can trace their journey back to 1961.

<sup>17</sup> Time served is a reference to apprenticeships within trades, where individuals are deemed competent based on training, apprenticeship or length of time working.  
<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/time-served> . Last accessed April 12 2021.



with little challenge, thereby denying women a collective space for shared narratives (Goldblatt, 2020a) and a sense of community belonging and identity (Haynes, 2020). Further, a collection of memorabilia can become a repository of cultural heritage (Haynes, 2020), so that the work undertaken for this thesis of collation, cataloguing, display and access has provided a valuable resource for a group wider than those within the women's football community. These resources enable the exploration of the meaning of sport within cultural values and assist in understanding why sport matters.<sup>18</sup>

These reasons together form the warrant for undertaking research centred on the history of women's football. Dr Kat Lindner, identified the need for research to recover the ignored history of Scottish women's football and to begin the process of rebalancing the gender representation in archival material, thereby contesting the male normative version of Scottish football (Goodwin, 2006).<sup>19</sup> Together with colleagues, she secured funding from the University of Stirling for a PhD studentship, supervised by herself, Professor Haynes and Dr. Jenkinson.<sup>20</sup> Initially, the proposed research had a wider scope referencing the overall history of women's football in Scotland. However, it became apparent that the lack of written and archival records made this challenging without a means of accessing the memories of those who had been involved and for this reason, the timespan was re-focused on a shorter sixty-year period. The aim was now to seek to detail the experiences of a previously disregarded group of women in Scottish football, collating the details of their account to highlight the challenges and limitations they encountered in striving to play football between 1960 and 2020 (Nicholson, 2015).

The decision to focus on this period was taken primarily because of the opportunity to seek oral history testimonies from individuals who were involved during the period as a method by which to supplement the scant archives. This, in turn, would facilitate the comparison of women's lived experiences across sixty years of women's football. It was also hoped that those interviewed may hold further material within private collections, which could be used in the research and

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<sup>18</sup> The ability of collections to do this depends on the attitudes taken to collection, storage and access and these issues are explored in more detail in chapter three.

<sup>19</sup> Dr Kat Lindner, a former elite football player and academic with an interest in the gender sport nexus.

<sup>20</sup> Dr Jenkinson joined the supervisory team to provide expert input on historical research and writing.

potentially be preserved for use by future generations. From the generic aim, emerged four specific research objectives:

1. To further uncover the narrative of women's football in Scotland across the period 1960 to 2020
2. To explore the experiences of the women involved in women's football in Scotland across the past sixty years
3. To examine the extent to which the rate of development differed from other comparable European countries and to consider what factors may have shaped the development in Scotland
4. To initiate the expansion of the existing limited archive of women's football in Scotland, through both tangible and intangible heritage with due regard to increasing the representation of women. To seek ways to effectively and appropriately share the findings of the research study with both academic and non-academic communities

Having established the aim and objectives, it was necessary to consider which sources would be appropriate to inform and ground the data generation.

Ultimately, a bricolage of sources across a number of disciplines was used to underpin the theoretical and methodological stances within the research. These are discussed below and in more detail in chapters two and three. However, it is important to consider my position within the research in relation to feminist scholarship. Throughout my working life and academic studies, I have engaged with the principles of diversity and inclusion. In 2014, I undertook a Masters course in Gender Studies at the University of Stirling. The course coalesced my values and ethos relating to equality and gender discrimination thereby reinforcing my feminist position. As a result, I embarked on the PhD studentship from this perspective. However, I sought to ensure that throughout the research I took account of my standpoint and sought to mitigate any effect this may have had.

For the majority of this thesis, I have used third person perspective to direct attention to the people who have been involved in women's football across the past sixty years. In particular, I have sought to amplify the voices and experiences of the women who have largely been ignored (FiLia, 2018). The exceptions to this

are this section where I have spoken about my standpoint and where, in chapter three, I discuss the methodology used to undertake the research, analyse the results and take account of my feminist subjectivity.

## **Outline of the thesis**

As indicated above, **chapter two** provides a review of literature that sets the context for the research and analysis detailing the academic influences on the specific research objectives. The chapter opens with a discussion of the feminist lens through which the research was viewed and the potential impacts of this standpoint. It then addresses the writing informing the research undertaken. There is then an exploration of academic writing on the initial exclusion of women from sport, history and more specifically the history of sport and the gradual inclusion of their contributions. The focus for this section is the development of women's football and the minimal historical narrative available for women's football in Scotland. Next, given that women's contribution to the Scottish football narrative has been predominantly ignored, consideration is given to the practice of centring women's lived experiences and reclaiming their story through the collection of their own words. Finally, the review evaluates approaches to archive creation and explores what materials an archive focusing on the contribution of women, would seek. The chapter places the research within the tradition of feminist sports history, centring women's voices and their experiences to reclaim space within the narrative.

Having established the academic context for the research, **chapter three** then builds on this to explore the research strategy employed. It considers the aspirations for the research, the methods employed and the degree to which the aspirations were achieved. Echoing the literature review, the chapter opens with a discussion of the effect of utilising a feminist lens through which to approach the research. The chapter then outlines the research strategy that was adopted, discussing the plan of action undertaken to facilitate the answering of the research questions in an appropriate manner (Denscombe, 2014). A strategy considers the focus of the research, the perspective, design and ethical considerations alongside logistical factors that may inform the work. This is done to allow the reader to follow the action plan and view an 'audit trail' for data generation and

analysis undertaken. This enables an assessment of the research methods, adaptations implemented and the rigour of the procedures used. This chapter is the only one written in the first person in order to recount my experiences as I undertook the study to provide clarity about what I set out to do, whether I achieved this and what I learnt in the process. The chapter closes with a discussion that builds on the literature review consideration of archives. It introduces the notion of archive activism and the influence of this on both archive creation and the sharing of this research through outreach activities including exhibitions, talks and engagement with the media.

Having provided the grounding for the research, the next three chapters detail the findings. **Chapter four** has two main points of departure considering first the history and development of women's football in Scotland from 1960 to 2020 and then reflecting on the progress during that period in comparison to other similar European countries. It opens with a brief examination of historical sociology and its relevance to the study of sports history. It then moves to an overview of the development of women's football. It does this through three overlapping phases – Resistance (1960 to about 1977); Persistence (1974 to about 1998) and Progression (1995 to 2020). The chapter charts the slow development of domestic leagues and cup competitions from 1960 through to a period between 1992 and 1998 when a combination of external funding and affiliation with the SFA mark a sea change in fortunes, heralding acceleration in growth. This period of progression, including the emergence of elite leagues is then discussed through to 2020. Alongside discussion about the domestic game runs an exploration of the Scottish women's national team (SWNT) from the inaugural game in 1972 through to their first-time qualification for the FIFA Women's World Cup France 2019™. The chapter highlights the extent to which women's football was being played throughout the period with previously unreported information about both the number of teams in existence and the informal playing structures. In doing so it utilises the historical sociological approach to considering developments as shaped by the wider societal context (Tomlinson and Young, 2011). Having presented this historiography, the chapter then compares the development in Scotland to developments in Denmark, England, Germany, Ireland, Norway and Sweden. This comparison clearly demonstrates the slow rate at which women's

football developed in Scotland and foreshadows the discussion in chapter seven about the factors inhibiting growth.

When the research study commenced the main objective was to chart the development of the game in Scotland as presented in chapter four. However, through information from narrators, their private collections and the archive of Scottish Women's Football (SWF) revealed during the research, it became possible to initiate the formation of a parallel history of the organisation that worked to promote and grow women's football in Scotland. The results of this are presented in **chapter five**, which opens with a consideration of the literature on the professionalisation of sports governing bodies as a framework for the analysis. This resulted in the presentation of the findings through the use of three phases of transition between an amateur and a professional archetype organisation (Hoye et al., 2020). From small beginnings the SWFA faced many challenges in its attempts to promote and grow the women's game. The chapter charts the struggle to achieve affiliation with the SFA, the effect of this on the development of women's football and the journey of the SWFA to professional governing body. The chapter closes with a brief discussion of the current work of the SWF to ensure that the organisation of the women's game is future proofed as, pre Covid-19, it showed indications of entering a period of thriving (Skogvang, 2019).

A core driver for this research was to begin the process of re-balancing the historical football narrative in Scotland. It was imperative to ensure that those who told that narrative were the women who participated in it. **Chapter six**, therefore, centres the voices of the women themselves, placing their experiences in the narrative of football in Scotland (Wieder, 2004:23, FiLia, 2018). The point of departure is an examination of writing on the analysis and presentation of collected voices within research, which is framed by consideration of women's leisure, sporting lives and the athlete career path. Using a framework adapted by Macbeth from the work of Stevenson (2002), the experiences of the women are analysed in terms of the progression through an athlete's career or participation in 'serious leisure' (Jones and Symon, 2001; Raisborough, 2007; Bowness, 2020). This enabled exploration from the point at which women first started to be aware of and play football through to the end of their participation in playing or the time at which they were no longer involved in any aspect of women's football. The

experiences presented vividly document the 'careers' of Scottish women football players across the past sixty years. Some aspects have changed, with girls now encouraged to play at school while others, such as poor facilities echo through the whole period. However, what emerges is a picture of determination and endeavour that enabled these women to overcome the barriers placed in their way, to play and advance the game they were passionate about.

These three chapters show that, while there was an extensive network of women playing and organising football, in comparison to other European countries, the development was and continues to be, slower. The **final chapter** of the thesis considers the reasons for this, examining potential factors that together suppressed the development of women's football in Scotland. The analysis draws on the work of those who have written on the development of women's football and focuses on the factors identified by Fisher (2018). These are the mechanisms of legislation, society norms and financial constraints which have been used by dominant male football organisations to subdue women's football. The chapter discusses how these have been successfully used to suppress Scottish women's football across the past six decades. The discussion also considers the way in which this suppression was reinforced by wider society, building on writing by Macbeth (2008). It concludes that while elements may have changed, the media and the male football community have continued to underwrite the suppression of women's football, even though negativity may now have been replaced by disregard. The chapter closes by considering what can be done to dismantle the final, largely financial, barriers to development and build further on recent success in terms of growing participation, the expansion to separate elite and recreational football structures and future work with the SFA.

As will be shown through this thesis, the research achieved each of its objectives, while simultaneously highlighting areas for future research. Consequently, it makes a significant original contribution to knowledge about the development of women's football in Scotland, the experiences of those involved and the factors that impacted on that development. In doing so it has begun the process of ensuring that the historical football narrative in Scotland takes account of the contribution of women to that history. Information about the rich history of women's football in Scotland has been shared within an academic context, with

the women's football community and more broadly, to share the recovered information as widely as possible.<sup>21</sup> This is important because firstly, it demonstrates to those playing now that they are part of a long tradition of women participating in football. At the same time, it demonstrates to the male football community that women's football has a strong vibrant history. Secondly, it amplifies the voices of the women who have been involved in women's football across the past sixty years and recognises those who resisted and persisted to provide a platform for those now taking the game forward. Finally, it will bring to wider attention the long term and serious impact of hegemonic patriarchy within the male centric football community which has resulted in the suppression of women's football in Scotland.

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<sup>21</sup> Further details of the sharing and outreach work are contained in Appendix 4.

## 2. Review of Literature

The preceding chapter pointed to the lack of previous attention to the history of women's football in Scotland across the past sixty years. It also explored the fact that a dearth of information on a topic does not automatically justify the need for academic study. It demonstrated that the merit of this research is derived from a number of themes. Firstly, the necessity to better illuminate the history of football in Scotland by including women's narrative and to provide a means for women and girls to learn about those who played the game in the past. Secondly, to acknowledge the importance of history within football and demonstrate the rich history of women's football which has been part of the cultural landscape for many years. Thirdly, to explore the influence and impact of patriarchy on the development of women's football and to equally explore the ways in which women dealt with the constraints imposed by patriarchy. Finally, to collate memorabilia in a way that it becomes a valuable resource for a group wider than those within the women's football community. These themes were then reflected in the research objectives to further uncover the narrative for the period 1960 to 2020, explore women's experiences, consider why development in Scotland differed to comparable countries, initiate the expansion of the existing limited archive of women's football in Scotland and share the findings as widely as possible.<sup>22</sup>

The purpose of this chapter is to present the outcomes of the review of literature and, by detailing the academic influences on the research themes and objectives, provide a context for the research undertaken. This involves establishing what research and writing already exists in relation to the subject; locating gaps in that writing and in doing so identify the potential for the research to positively contribute to the field of study (Murray,2006). Taking the objectives as a starting point, it was necessary to identify appropriate literature to inform the research.

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<sup>22</sup> 1. To further uncover the narrative of women's football in Scotland across the period 1960 to 2020. 2. To explore the experiences of the women involved in women's football in Scotland across the past sixty years. 3. To examine the extent to which the rate of development differed from other comparable European countries and to consider what factors may have affected the development in Scotland. 4. To initiate the expansion of the existing limited archive of women's football in Scotland, through both tangible and intangible heritage with due regard to increasing the representation of women. To seek ways to effectively and appropriately share the findings of the research with both academic and non-academic communities.



The outcome of the review of literature is contained across the next two chapters, with the current one focusing on the themes within the research objectives and chapter three on the literature which influenced the methodological approach taken to gathering data, undertaking analysis, creating an archive and sharing outputs with a wider audience.

The chapter opens with a discussion of the feminist lens through which the literature was selected and viewed and the potential impacts of this standpoint. This is followed by an exploration of structural disempowerment and its relation to women and sport. The chapter then moves to examine relevant literature on women and sport including the historiography of women's sport, and in particular, football. This leads to an examination of the small number of examples of both academic and non-academic material on women's football in Scotland. Having discussed the limited writing on Scottish women's football within the academy, consideration is given next to the exclusion of women from the general narrative about Scottish history and sport. As a counterbalance to this, there is then an examination of the practice of centring women's voices and their lived experience as a basis for building knowledge (Hesse-Biber, 2012). The consideration of literature relating to themes of the research concludes with an examination of the omission of women from archive collections.

## **Feminist Lens**

The act of choosing which literature to review is neither random nor objective, being directed by both the anticipated outcomes and the researcher's frame of reference and standpoint (Murray, 2006). In order to examine the writing deemed most relevant, it was necessary to exclude numerous academic works to focus on the particular pieces of writing that are discussed in this chapter. This was not, however, a neutral act of reduction, rather it was influenced by a number of factors, which themselves were influenced by my views (Leavy and Harris, 2018). As these views continued to influence decisions throughout the design and undertaking of the research, it is important to examine, acknowledge and potentially mitigate these from the outset.

### **Feminist standpoint**

The essential ethos of feminism as articulated by bell hooks, “a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation and oppression” (hooks, 2000:1), has been expressed and/or enacted by women throughout history. In the 1960s and 1970s feminist activism became institutionalised in universities and colleges, heralding the development of feminist theories, perspectives and approaches across academic disciplines. It was necessary therefore to identify which feminist theories and principles, from the rich seam of work available, the research was concerned with and ultimately shaped by (Boyle, 2019).

By centring the account of women’s involvement in football, the research challenges the misogynistic attitudes within the football community in Scotland that renders women’s football as less than and othered to men’s football. Centring women as the subjects of a research study does not automatically make that research feminist, rather the identification of research as feminist comes from the attitude and approach adopted by the researcher(s) which are, in turn, informed by their ethos and values (Hesse-Biber, 2012; Stanley and Wise, 2008). This is explored in more detail in the next chapter but in summary, the research here employs a central tenet of giving voice to ignored women and exposing the long reach of the structural disempowerment of women in Scottish football that continues today. These two principles, are woven throughout the thesis, with threads emanating from this chapter on theoretical context, through the influence on methodology and are the focus in the presentation of findings. The threads are brought together in chapter seven, through the discussion of the factors influencing the delayed development of women’s football in Scotland. The theoretical context of the exclusion of women from the narrative is explored later in this chapter, while the next section considers the notion of structural disempowerment.

### **Patriarchy redefined**

One of the issues highlighted by early feminist scholarship was the gender stratification in society rendering women as essentially inferior and therefore open to domination, discrimination and exclusion by men (Ortner, 2014). The term given to the system of gendered power relations within social structures and practices by which gender roles, inequality and the oppression and exploitation of

women were reinforced was patriarchy (Walby, 1990). However, over time this concept was challenged and critiqued for having what was deemed a too simplistic and homogenising approach (Patil, 2013). Patriarchy, as initially defined, universalised and oversimplified the subtle realities of oppression (Higgins, 2018), which stem from an interlinking or intersection of numerous inequalities including gender, race, class and sexuality (Crenshaw (1991). The call for inclusion in analysis of concepts such as gender relations, gendered power, gender inequalities or institutionalised sexism (Acker et al., 1983; Acker, 2006; Bridges and Messerschmitt, 2017) has led to a more expansive interpretation:

the concept of “patriarchy” has offered itself as the invisible mechanism that connects a host of seemingly isolated and disparate events, intertwining the experience of women of vastly different backgrounds, race and culture, and ranging in force from the trivial and personal to the serious and geopolitical. (Higgins, 2018)

This version of ‘patriarchy’ views the subjugation of women as multi-layered, operating at several levels (the state, the law, home, the workplace) and utilising intersecting discrimination (race, class, religion, ethnicity) with women experiencing the resultant inequalities at different times and locations (Higgins, 2018; Patil, 2013). Importantly, this redefinition is concerned with the notion of a structure of stratified power relations rather than a focus on specific acts. It recognises that women have different experiences at different times and also acknowledges that not all men benefit from patriarchy with some being equally subjugated (Higgins, 2018). It is this wider, more complex patriarchy that is envisaged when referenced in this thesis.<sup>23</sup>

Gender difference and inequality have been embedded and institutionalised throughout political, socio-economic and cultural systems within society (Abraham, 2019, Bridges, 2017). Socially constructed gender norms are employed to control and limit how women conduct themselves, the spaces they occupy and the roles they undertake (Abraham, 2019; Molner and Kelly, 2013;

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<sup>23</sup> It is important to note that the limited diversity within the narrator cohort is one of several reasons why the outcomes from the research should be interpreted as being true for the cohort at this point in time, and not a generic finding or indicator.

Themen and van Hooff, 2017).<sup>24</sup> This is achieved through expectations that individuals will act in certain ways, that are regarded as 'normal' or 'expected', with sanctions imposed on those who deviate from the gender-appropriate behaviour within a particular context (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Fasting, 2016; Molner and Kelly, 2013; Smirnova, 2018; Sultana, 2010). This ideology is justified, legitimised and normalised through consensus, so that hegemonic masculinity and gender stratification appear, "natural and sensible rather than forced and oppressive" (Jewkes, R.et al., 2015; Molner and Kelly, 2013:95).

The pattern of practices linked to gender hierarchies and differential access to power are subject to movement and change across time and circumstances (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). This is key to explaining the persistence of patriarchy, which has needed to "devise new strategies for sustaining that complex system of masculinizing privilege" (Enloe, 2017:162) in the face of reforms introduced to rebalance inequalities.<sup>25</sup> Hegemonic masculinity and the patriarchy it supports, is able to perpetuate in arenas where what is happening is deemed unproblematic and unworthy of comment, investigation or action (Enloe, 2017). One such arena is sport, where discrimination against women has persisted, as discussed in the next section.

### **Feminism, women and sport**

Gender inequalities in sport are on par with those faced by women in other cultural and work situations but they appear not to incite the same level of anger and debate (Mertens, 2015). Sport and physical activity have been low on a list of 'feminist priorities' in comparison to equal pay, reproductive rights and protection from violence. However, this has been due to a lack of awareness of the links between sport and physical activity and key feminist issues such as equality of opportunity or resistance of sex or gender stereotypes (Lenskyi,1995). Sports academics contend that the wider academic community, "underestimate the cultural significance and political importance of sport" (Theberge and Birrell, 1994: 361). This can lead to missed opportunities to examine processes of power and

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<sup>24</sup> The term gender norm is an umbrella term covering the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers to be appropriate for men, women, boys and girls (Abraham, 2010). The actual norms will vary dependent on the given society and historical period in question.

<sup>25</sup> This is explored in relation to the development of Scottish women's football in chapter seven.

subordination that are mirrored in wider society, “sport is an excellent site for examining how patriarchal relations are played out and reinforced” (Theberge and Birrell, 1994: 362). Writing in 2006, Theberge noted that academic study within sport had begun to explore sport’s role in the challenging and reproduction of gender relations and ideologies. The thesis considers this theme, discussing structural constraints on women imposed by hegemonic masculinity within Scottish football and the resistance to and transgression of gendered stereotypes. It also considers the ways in which those in power, reinforced and adapted their approach in the face of challenges to their ideology (Fisher, 2018).

Amplifying the voices of unheard women (FiLia, 2018) and commencing the process of building knowledge about the long history of women’s football in Scotland, celebrates women’s resistance to oppressive, socially constructed, gender norms and stereotypes. These contribute to the historic (and ongoing) disempowerment of women’s football by hegemonic structures and male normative culture in the football community. Through their participation in football, the women can be seen as challenging notions of male authority, “the very presence of women in the male preserve of sport is evidence of ‘leaky hegemony’” (Birrell and Cole, 1994:24). However, it is not the intention to place the participants in the role of feminist activist if that is not their perception and this issue will be discussed in the relevant chapters.

## **The academic study of women, sport and sport history**

### **Women and sport**

The study of women’s involvement in sport or physical activity has been a relatively recent development in academia. The discipline of sports studies encompassing sociology, psychology and biology, which emerged as a field of academic inquiry in the 1960s, was predominantly undertaken by men researching and writing about male participation in men’s sports. In the late 1970s Ann Hall, a Canadian sports sociologist called for a feminist perspective to be applied to research in sports studies, using the concept of ‘gender’ (Bandy, 2012). According to Hall (1988), prior to this, gendered discourse on sport was famed by social psychological research that was obsessed with the perceived conflict between femininity and athleticism. The call for the use of a feminist lens was

reinforced by a number of factors including work in other disciplines and a gradual growth in the number of female scholars researching and writing about sports and in particular women's participation in sport. This research was often undertaken by academics who, either personally identified as feminist or whose research encompassed issues such as sexism, exclusion, gender stereotypes and harassment. According to Bandy (2012), these scholars established connections between feminist theory and the social practice of sport.

A cornerstone of patriarchal societies is the construct of feminine and masculine genders, labels which are used to group ranges of physical, social, emotional and sexual attributes that are perceived to be different in men and women (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Risman, 2009). Integral to these constructs is the expectation that men and women will present their gender through appropriate behaviour based on the defined and labelled attributes. The construction and subsequent institutionalisation of these gender differences in social structures, beliefs and practices are fundamental to the maintenance of male power and privilege (Lenskyj, 1990). Within social structures and practices, the culturally embedded practice of sport provides an excellent site for both perpetuating gendered ideology and the reinforcement of the 'rules' for performing femininity or masculinity (Skillen and Osborne, 2015; Williams and Hess, 2015). The exploration of sport as cultural reinforcement of prescribed gender norms, has provided scope for much research, discourse and academic writing regarding women and sport across a number of disciplines (Bandy, 2012). Indeed, it is somewhat ironic that the institution of sport which has, for so long facilitated the construction and reconstruction of hegemonic masculinity "has become a key site for the development of a critical feminist scholarship on gender" (Dworkin and Messner, 2002:17).

Sport is a significant cultural practice and is where boys are inducted into the ways of being a man and men find comradeship (Hall 1996), which gives an insight into why patriarchy would seek to maintain sport as a male preserve. As more and more women are participating in sport the notion of it as a solely male arena has begun to diminish, although women are yet to achieve equality or parity

in many areas.<sup>26</sup> However, this has perhaps motivated some men to seek to hold onto male only spaces where possible and may be the reason for the determined resistance to women's involvement in particular competitive team sports such as rugby and football. It is by playing these sports that boys and men are believed to develop and display skills and behaviour (power, speed, strength, physical contact, violence and aggression) that are signifiers of power and authority which are deemed to be masculine traits (Hargreaves 1994; Stirling and Schulz, 2011). This has made the study of women who participate within male normative sports of particular interest to feminist research which has sought to redress the male centred view of these sports and make women who participate, seen and heard. Given the strong connection between football and the performance of masculinity, the study of women's participation in all aspects of football has proved a rich seam of investigation for feminist scholars and this theme is taken up later in the chapter. The next section provides an overview of a second theme informing the research, that is writing on women and sports history

### **Women and Sports History**

In an echo of the changes in sports studies, in the 1960s more women studying history in higher education began to question the preoccupation with men and their exploits. The absence of women in the record had previously been questioned by authors. For example, in 1946, Mary Ritter Beard had called on those involved in the study of history to research and write about the contribution of women (Voss-Hubbard, 1995). Men dominated the historical narrative because they were for centuries the ones to write and construct it including only that which was of interest and deemed important to them (Miles, 1993). It was not until the increase in number of women in the academy that there was persistent challenge to the preoccupation with men's activities by uncovering, "women's active role in the process of historical change" (Hannam, 1997:79). The increased use of a gender lens to analyse historical events coincided with wider questioning of what was deemed to be historically significant. This resulted in more than just restoring women to the narrative but rather a reconfiguration of the way in which the narrative was written (Hannam, 1997).

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<sup>26</sup> Though of course, on the whole it has never been open to all men, just those who fit the white heteronormative standards of behaviour and appearance.

These revised approaches brought the processes and experiences of everyday life under historical scrutiny (Pope and Nauright, 2012). Consideration of the history of sports first appeared in the 1950s and has been incorporated into the mainstream with academic legitimacy and acclaim (Pope and Nauright, 2012). The domination of men in sport meant that the analysis of its history was initially predominantly male in terms of both academic authors and their subjects. The dominance of traditional male-centred approaches to sports history meant that the influence of feminist ideology was slow to take hold and sports historians lagged behind humanities and social sciences in the use of gender as a category for analysis (Vertinsky, 1994). However, groundwork by academics such as Hall (1988,1996), Hargreaves (1994) and Vertinsky (1994) paved the way for the development of sports feminism and the work of diversification within this field that was to follow. This marked the development of a feminist critique of sport and sporting culture including the exclusions of women from participation and the social construction of notions of the female body. In line with developments in the wider feminist academy, feminist sports historians began to view gender not as a structure set in stone but rather something that is fluid and intersects with a number of other areas of the human experience such as race, ethnicity, class, age and political status (Brandy, 2012). Analysis of gender has enabled authors to consider issues of the social construction of gender and resulting relationships of power that have influenced the ways in which women's involvement in sport, in particular, has been framed (Vertinsky, 2006).

Research centred on women and gender in the field of sports history has taken time to gain a foothold but the case for inclusion (Hall, 2015) put forward by female scholars resulted in the discipline having finally to concede that:

the place of women within sports history is, firstly, not only worthy of greater consideration than hitherto given but secondly is more integral to the meanings attributed to sport in society than previously acknowledged. (Osborne and Skillen, 2015: 656)

Within writing on sport history, there has been a slow but steady flow of research and articles on women's sports history. In 2015, Osborne and Skillen argued that while the inclusion of articles within specific journals had increased the research agenda around the study of women's historical involvement in sport, they believed that there was still a lack of information outside of these publications. The lack of



consideration given to women's sport history limits the potential for understanding factors that shape women's lives outside domestic responsibilities and employment; recognising the challenges faced and to either learn from how these were overcome or to seek to find a way to address those that are still faced by women engaging in sports currently (Osborne and Skillen, 2015). In a journal special edition published at the end of 2020, they reflected on the intervening years and noted that while the number of articles on women's sports history had continued to grow within sports history journals, the topic remained neglected in publications centred on women's history generally (Osbourne and Skillen, 2020). It appears therefore, that women's sports history continues to be an underdeveloped area of research.<sup>27</sup> The next sections narrow the focus, to consider writing from the disciplines of sports studies and sports history, on women, football and Scotland.

## **The academic study of women, football and football histories**

### **Women and Football**

Football, "seen by many as the national men's sport" (Scruton et al., 2005:72), is an activity that is synonymous with culturally constructed masculinity. Sport is a place of cultural struggle and resistance to normative sex roles and expectations of behaviour (Hall, 1996) where women and girls who participate in activities traditionally ascribed as 'masculine' are afforded an opportunity to disrupt cultural prescriptions of gender roles (Shaw, 1994). This makes the study of women who participate within male normative sports of particular interest to feminist research, (Stirling and Schulz, 2011) and the study of women's participation in all aspects of football continues to provide a rich seam of investigation (Pfister and Pope, 2018).

From the 1980s onwards, interest and participation in women's football grew steadily so that by 2002, women's football was the fastest growing sport in the UK, overtaking netball in terms of participation levels (Stirling and Schulz, 2011). This interest was reflected in the number of books about women's teams and the experiences of women football fans that appeared in Britain during the late 1990s.

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<sup>27</sup> However, there are a number of PhD studentships researching women's sports history that have either been recently completed or are currently underway, suggesting that while the growth may be slow there is a steady stream of new researchers entering the field. Sports researched include hockey, cricket, rowing, football and rugby.

The authors of these books were a mixture of ex-players, enthusiastic fans or historians of a particular team who through their endeavours helped to ensure the recording of important, historically significant information before it was lost.<sup>28</sup> Exploration of the history of the women's game is only possible because of the work of these people and in particular the women who believed it was important to preserve a record of the virtually invisible women players and teams.

The growth in participation and interest in women's football led to increased attention to the topic by, mainly female academics, a number of whom had been involved in the game. Initially, the study of football tended to focus on one of two themes (Macbeth, 2004). Either the development of the game in various cultural contexts or the exploration of the experiences of women participating in football through a particular lens, exploring the difference and diversity amongst the women involved in football. The analysis of difference involved either the examination of intersections with race, class, sexuality and disability or the diversity of roles women undertook within the football community including managers, coaches, administrators and more recently, referees. Although remaining far behind the numbers for men's football, a recent review of academic articles pertaining to women's football identified that 117 had been written since 1998 (Valenti et al., 2018).<sup>29</sup> The integrative review identified that whilst the literature continues to address the original two themes, identified by Macbeth (2004), there has been an expansion in themes covered and the experiences of a wider variety of those involved in football have been studied.<sup>30</sup> However, the studies demonstrate consistency in the challenges faced by women and girls within the hegemonic football culture. The male centric norms, values and traditions surrounding football create barriers to participation and sexist treatment of women who become actively involved (Valenti et al., 2018). Football remains

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<sup>28</sup> Examples include *Women on the Ball. A Guide to Women's Football*, Lopez (1997); *One of the Lads*, Coddington (1997) *I Lost my heart to the Belles*, Davies (1997), *In a League of their own*, Newsham (1994) and *Kicking Against Tradition*, Owen (2005).

<sup>29</sup> It should be noted that the review dealt specifically with articles and did not consider books or chapters therein that may have been written, for example the book and book chapter of Jean Williams (2007, 2017), the book chapter by Macbeth (2005) or the very early book chapter on women's football written by Woodhouse and Williams in 1991.

<sup>30</sup> Additional topics covered include fandom, marketing, determinants of success, migration, role models, club management and national governing bodies. Other actors studied include administrators, coaches and referees (Valenti et al, 2018).

positioned as something that men and boys do and acceptance of women's involvement varies between different aspects and levels of the game (Caudwell, 2011).

### **Writing the history of women's football**

Across the literature on women's football included in the aforementioned integrative review, historical accounts feature less than studies centred on the experiences of those involved, with under a quarter of the articles being about the evolution of the game in a specific location (Valenti et al., 2018). While there have also been book chapters written about historical aspects of the women's game, this is still a low representation within the literature.<sup>31</sup> If there is a view that football is for men, then it is unsurprising that when the use of, "history as 'negation' is combined with heteronormality ...participation by women in sport, and recognition of that participation, becomes constrained at best" (Williams and Hess, 2015:2117). The attempts to deny the fact that women have been actively involved in football for as long as men, is rooted in the desire to maintain its status as a symbol of male privilege and domination (Williams and Hess, 2015). As Bryson notes hegemonic masculinity, "revolves around domination and construction of the 'other' as inferior" and it is apparent that in the history of football this 'other' has often been women" (Bryson,1990: 181, cited in Harris, 2007).

The combination of the lack of attention from scholars and an active desire to hide or ignore women's participation, led to very little being written about the history of women's football until the late 1990s. In academia, the writing on women's football began to appear in the early 1990s but exploration of its history was slow to develop. Early references were made by Williams and Woodhouse and Williamson both published in 1991. In 1999, Melling completed PhD research on women footballers in Lancashire and the same year an article about the beginnings of women's football in England, Germany, Norway, and Spain (Fasting, Pfister, Scraton and Vazquez, 1999) was published in *European Sports*

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<sup>31</sup> For example, Herzog, M. (2018) *'The Beginnings of Women's Football in South-Western Germany: From a Spectacle to a Sport Event'* in Eds Pfister, G. and Pope, S. *Female Football Players and Fans: Intruding into a Man's World* London: Palgrave Macmillan UK

History Review.<sup>32</sup> In 2002, two PhD theses on the history of women's football were published in England with Jean Williams' research on women's football in England since 1960 and Donna Woodhouse's work on the development of women's football since World War II in England, Norway and the United States.<sup>33</sup> In 2003, the journal *Soccer and Society* published an edition which highlighted the growth of women's football across the world including Denmark, England, Norway, the Republic of Ireland and Sweden. From this point on histories or part histories of women's football in a number of countries have appeared in academic journals, PhD theses or books. The countries discussed include America, Australia, Austria, Brazil, China, France, New Zealand and South Africa. There has also been writing about specific teams or periods of time which is an indication that in some areas, the interest in the detail of the history of women's football is growing and research is being funded. Examples of this include an article about the women's football team based at Fodens factory in Sandbach in England and a chapter in an edited collection about the start of women's football in South-Western Germany (Day and Roberts, 2019; Herzog, 2018).

Although historical accounts comprise a small portion of academic writing on women's football, using what is available, it would be possible to construct an overview of the history of women's football from around the world. There would however, be gaps with little information made widely available about the development of women's football in a number of countries. Scotland is one such case with three articles recorded in the aforementioned integrative review, (Valenti et al., 2018).

### **Writing on women and football in Scotland**

Macbeth makes reference, in her PhD thesis, to the very limited written information available to her as she embarked on her research. There was a brief history produced by McCuaig, in association with the Scottish Football Museum (SFM) (Macbeth, 2004), which focuses on the most notable events during the

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<sup>32</sup> Melling (1999) *Ladies' football': gender and the socialisation of women football players in Lancashire, c.1916-1960* unpublished PhD, University of Lancashire.

<sup>33</sup> Williams, J. (2002) *The revival of women's football in England from the 1960s to the present* PHD Thesis De Montfort University (unpublished) and Woodhouse, D. (2002) *The Post War Development of Football for Females in England: A Cross Cultural and Comparative Study with the United States of America and Norway* PhD Thesis, University of Leicester (Unpublished).

1920s, that is the visit of Dick, Kerr Ladies to Scotland and the ban implemented by the English FA. There is, in addition, a brief summary of Scottish women's football given by Lopez (1997) in her chapter about the development of football in countries other than England, with reference to the national team, players and coaches, and media attention. Macbeth comments that this "provides one of the most comprehensive documentations of empirical facts regarding developments in women's football in Scotland" (2004:19). Given that the section is a little over four and a half pages highlights the paucity of available material, in comparison to other countries. The final piece referenced by Macbeth was an article by Begbie written in 1996 giving details about developments in women's football from 1991 to 1996, covering topics such as senior clubs, the junior performance plan, camps programme, international developments, coach education and links with local authorities.<sup>34</sup> Macbeth also made reference to the need to glean information from sources writing about English teams, "Scotland generally receives a token mention and usually only in relation to connections with the development of women's football in England" (Macbeth, 2004:4). She concluded that although she had uncovered new information, women's football in Scotland remained in need of significant research. In addition to her PhD in 2004, Macbeth produced an article encompassing historical aspects (2002), a book chapter and article on the lived experiences of women footballers who participated in her research (2005, 2006) and an article on the development of women's football in Scotland (2008).<sup>35</sup> Notwithstanding Macbeth's writing on the history of Scottish women's football, there remain large time periods with little or no information available. As discussed in the introduction, there is a little known about a handful of teams in the 1960s and early 1970s from the work of Lopez (1997), Williams (2002, 2003a and 2007), Macbeth (2002,2004) and these are discussed in chapter four. The period between the eventual recognition of women's football in 1974 and the late 1990s has little information available about women's football in Scotland.

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<sup>34</sup> This is not an academic piece but rather a reflection on the first five years of Begbie's role to develop women and girl's football in Scotland. Further details are given on this in chapters four and five.

<sup>35</sup> Macbeth: *'The development of Women's Football in Scotland'* (2002); *Women's Football in Scotland: An Interpretative Analysis*, (PhD Thesis Stirling University, 2004); *'Becoming a Footballer: The Socialisation Experiences of Women Footballers in Scotland'*, (2006) and *Attitudes towards Women's Football in Scottish Society*, (2008) and *'The Pals, the Professionals and the 'Conformers: The Meaning of Football in the Lives of Women Footballers in Scotland'* (2005) in: *A Bountiful Game? Football Identities and Finances*. Meyer and Meyer, pp. 79-97.

Macbeth's (2002,2004) writing began the process of documenting the development of the women's game, however, historical data was not Macbeth's main focus and therefore certain elements remain low on detail.<sup>36</sup>

Since the publication of Macbeth's work there have been a handful of non-academic pieces written about the history of women's football in Scotland, the largest of these being a book by Gibbs, self-published in 2018. This focuses on the origins of organised women's football in late 1800s and includes a reporting of previously known details of women's football in later periods. As a result, this did not increase information on the period being investigated by this research.<sup>37</sup> Other writing was prompted by specific events, such as the deaths of Edna Neillis and Susan Ferris, two of the most skilled women footballers of the late 1960s and early 1970s.<sup>38</sup> These pieces have added additional details to events that were already known about, rather than bringing to light new information. The historical information available at the start of the research, focused on particular prominent players or teams without providing a picture of the whole situation or context of women's football in Scotland. A book focused on the Scottish women's national team from 1998 (Lawther, 2021), was published at the very end of the research period. Although informative about the national team in this period, it has a narrow focus and so could only contribute limited additional information. Within the writing that was located prior to embarking on the research, there was nothing written about the structures of the game or the Scottish Women's Football Association (SWFA) or its successor, Scottish Women's Football (SWF).

The collation of existing information about women's football in Scotland from 1960 and building on this through archival and oral history testimonies became a central driver for the research. While the lack of historical information was the foundation for this objective, it was also influenced by the exclusion of women from the wider Scottish narrative and from football archives as research on the history of

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<sup>36</sup> Macbeth's primary research was with contemporary players and had a focus on sociological aspects of the game rather than historical. Aspects of this work are also of interest to this study and this is discussed in more detail in the section on lived experience.

<sup>37</sup> Gibbs (2018) *Lady Players, the strange birth of women's football*, self-published.

<sup>38</sup> Edna Neillis - <https://shekicks.net/edna-neillis-passing-of-a-pioneer/> and Susan Ferris - <https://shekicks.net/stewartons-first-star-remembered/> . Last accessed January 30 2021.

women's sport can be problematic due to the lack of written records (Skillen, 2017). These issues are explored in the following sections.

## **Exclusion from the Narrative**

Previous research has shown that women have been involved in football in Scotland since 1628 (Macbeth, 2002). However, there is a general lack of awareness of this or more recent history, in both the wider football community and amongst the general public. The exclusion of women from the football narrative mirrors general Scottish historical accounts. Until more recently, these rendered women almost invisible, through the fragile and partial nature of their inclusion because their experiences and contributions are less valued by patriarchy than those of men (Abrams, 2006, Asproth, 2017). Whilst some analyses have placed women in roles outside domestic and caring responsibilities, the use of gender as a category for analysis and thereby making women visible has not been central to the work of studies on Scottish society, history or culture (Abrams, 2006, Breitenbach et al. 1998):

Thus, women in Scotland have been rendered almost invisible in the production of historical narratives. This process is accomplished by a variety of means- denial, dismissal, incorporation and contained – all of which serve to deny women's agency in history. The production of knowledge is located within a particular set of power relations and often serves to reproduce these. (Breitenbach, 1997:89)

Further, even as research into women's contributions grew, "the new perspective on women's active engagement in historical process did not substantially alter the dominant narratives" (Abrams, 2006: 5). Initial endeavours tended towards adding details about specific women into the wider male dominated narrative but this approach did little to challenge the ways history is written and structured. So, although there may have been expansion of the elements described and the addition of women as an embellishment, the framework remained the same (Abrams, 2006). This is particularly true for specific categories of historical analysis, such as sport, which, as discussed earlier, remain steadfastly male centric.

At the beginning of the 1960s, the long reach of Victorian attitudes towards women continued to impact on and limit, women's involvement in a number of

sports (McCrone 1986; Skillen, 2012; Themen, 2016). The limitations emanated from culturally embedded views about suitable domains of action and space; gender roles and stereotypes and the maintenance of notions of femininity and masculinity.<sup>39</sup> As other social and cultural arenas were challenged by demands for equality, the defences around sport were resolute in maintaining this as a male preserve (Hargreaves 1994). In Scotland, there has been a general lack of formal acknowledgement of women's contribution to Scottish sporting culture. Sport does not happen in isolation, attitudes towards those who participate reflect existing socio-culture norms and the male centric articles within the *Scottish Journal of Physical Education* during the 1970s and 1980s provide an insight into that sporting culture. There were only a few articles about women or girls and this resulted in calls for the inclusion of information about women and sport, the ending of reinforcement of gender stereotypes within articles (Moir, 1976; Thomas, 1985).and a challenge to the view that sport is male:

The traditional role of the male has allowed him to determine the range of behaviour he will condone as being feminine and this does not include those behaviours that appear essential for success in competitive sport (Harris, 1975).<sup>40</sup>

The situation was little better in 2004 when Reid asked, '*What About the Flowers of Scotland?*' in an article which pointed to the lack of attention paid to the experience of women in Scotland's sporting culture in historical and sociological analyses of Scottish sport. While the international body of literature about women and sport was growing, as shown above, there remained a deficit of female writing about women's sport in Scotland. This, alongside the assertion that most histories and sociologies of sport have been written by men for a male audience (Hargreaves, 2000) led Reid to observe:

It is as if the gendered nature of Scottish sport and its representations of hegemonic masculinity are unproblematic for those men who undertake academic critiques. (Reid, 2004:60)

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<sup>39</sup> There is a considerable amount of academic historic writing about separate internal and external spheres and the limitations caused by adherence to views of strict demarcation and distinct containments of women indoors and men outside. There is insufficient room to give justice to the debate, although due regard is given through the omission of the term, separate spheres.

<sup>40</sup> The other pieces are discussed in chapter seven.



Although there has been a slow increase in writing about women in Scottish sport, football remains an area where the extent and range of women's interest, participation and contribution remains marginal. This is indicative of the lack of value placed on the lived experiences of women especially when those experiences do not fit with the hegemonic narrative that football is a sport that 'belongs' to men. To reinforce this message, information about women's participation in football, past and present, has been minimised, belittled and silenced within writing, be it academic or popular (Bennett et al., 1987). This phenomenon can be easily be observed today, by the use of the term 'football' used to denote men's football with women's football othered and in comments and responses to any information about women's football on social media.

### **Lived experience**

Examining literature about women's exclusion from the narrative, led to consideration of the use of accounts of lived experience within research and the value this can bring to amplifying women's voices (FiLia, 2018). The imperative to collect and value the voices of women detailing their perspectives, feelings and lived experience has become a central element of the philosophy of feminist research and knowledge building (Hesse-Biber, 2012). It is seen by many feminist researchers as a counterpoint to the 'add women and stir' approach initially adopted within feminist research. The aim was to construct knowledge by listening to the unique details of women's lives and experiences instead of correcting studies by merely adding women (Hesse-Biber, 2008). Within writing on feminist research, the phrase 'lived experience' has evolved into an umbrella term, used to denote the practice of centring women's experiences, emotions and values in research on topics relating to women. Indeed, for some theorists such as Smith (1988), the analysis of the misalignment between expectations of women's behaviour and situation and the reality of their lives or lived experience is what informs research studies and provides more accurate and richer findings (Hesse-Biber, 2008). It was anticipated that research focused on the collection of personal testimonies would allow consideration of the mis-match between the socially constructed and prescribed interests and abilities of women and girls and the 'masculine' sport of football. In addition, as highlighted in the introduction, what is known about women's football during this period is derived from the personal

testimony of individual players who had careers that have been deemed noteworthy retrospectively. What is missing is the background detail, the “everyday acts of resistance” (Sachs, 2008:650) that intersect and build the foundations for the individual highlights.

Within the field of sports history research there has been a move to embrace less traditional sources for the research of sports history including oral histories. This is particularly important for research on women and women’s sports as historical written records are often scarce and using an oral histories methodology provides access to women’s hidden and ignored lives (Skillen, 2015). The intention at the outset of the research was to add to the background detail through the interviewing of women who played football across the whole time period. This is explored in more detail in the next chapter.

### **Women in the Archive**

One of the known facts from the start of the research was the limited amount of archival material about the history of women’s football in Scotland. The limitations were formally evidenced by Macbeth (2004) in her PhD thesis and by Macmillan (2015) in his master’s dissertation on archives of women’s football. His conclusion was that the very small amount of archival material relating to women’s football in Scotland currently collected in accessible archives may be indicative of the value placed on women’s football by the wider football community (Macmillan, 2015). This sentiment is in line with the views of Goodwin (2006), who stated that archives retain the material sources from which the histories of people and place are constructed and are built reflecting the “sentiments and values of the societies which create them” (Goodwin, 2006: 265). The dearth of archival material, points to the centring of Scottish football culture as male and as a contributory reason for the lack of information on women’s football and women’s involvement in Scottish football being rendered invisible (Neely, 2015).

In 1996, Derrida’s *Archive Fever* was published contending that the contents of archives, rather than being passive objects, could influence the scope and character of the knowledge produced by those studying them. This work resulted in writing and theorising about archives, collectively known as the ‘archival turn’ (Moore et al., 2016), centring research on the archive, the contents of collections

and the omissions (Cooper, 2016). Central to this academic discourse was the contention that archives are far from neutral, being a reflection of the social values, cultural understandings and political context of those who both create and maintain them (Spongberg et al., 2017). As Cook notes, early documents and archives and the subsequent formation of social memory were shaped by systems that were remorselessly and intentionally patriarchal and this pattern, as with so much else, was repeated throughout history (Cook, 2007). It is, therefore, important before deciding where and how materials are to be stored and shared, to first determine what constitutes 'material' and what is to be included in any archive. This determination is of particular importance when considering women's history given the overall lack of material relating to women.

From the late 1960s, social historians began to observe and write about the absence of material relating to marginalised groups from archives, which was rendering the voices of those under-represented groups at best weak and potentially silent (Cooper, 2016). Those seeking to study the contribution of women to their particular area of interest, questioned the accounts of and assumptions about, women's past lives (Sachs, 2008) and challenged to the invisibility of women as actors in history (Goodwin, 2006). A lack of documentation and material relating to women, made it difficult to present their historical narrative and celebrate their involvement in history (Goodwin, 2006). This led to the questioning of methods of archival collection that appeared to exclude documentation and material about women who were deemed not to be legitimate subjects of history (Chaudhuri, et al. 2010). Academic work to ensure women's history was recorded, resulted in the gradual inclusion of material relating to women within archives. This, in turn, led to the emergence of feminist archival practice. As with other areas of feminist scholarship there is no one formula or understanding of this concept. Rather, it is encapsulated in practices relating to approach, attitude and reflexivity (Cooper, 2016) with a feminist archive facilitating not just storage but the sharing and production of feminist knowledge and activism (Eichhorn, 2013). Current critical discourses are shaped by post-colonial and queer feminist scholarship, which has a strong suspicion of 'traditional' archives. This distrust derives from work with topics that are marginalised or excluded from archives and cannot be recovered through conventional historical methods

(Cooper, 2016). This discourse has led to feminist archival projects situated in a context of absence and recovery being superseded by, “more tactical engagements with the role of archives in feminist knowledge making” (Dever, 2017: 92).

In addition to questioning the influence of archives on the production of knowledge, Derrida (1996) also encouraged the adoption of ambiguity around the term archive and its constituent elements of records, record keeping, provenance and original order (Cooper, 2016). Building on this, post-colonial and queer feminist theorists have sought to develop methodological alternatives to archival conventions, “radically redefining conventional understandings of what counts as historical evidence” (Morgan cited by Cooper, 2016:449). Emanating from this is work on oral histories, the critical and creative reviewing of official records, consideration of unconventional sources and the embracing of ephemera.<sup>41</sup> One aspect of feminist informed archiving concerns not limiting the definition of an item’s value to whether or not it has obvious historical or research potential (Cvetkovich, 2003). Many of the materials gathered that are outside the mainstream are described by archives, as ephemera, that is the elements that fall into the miscellaneous label when catalogued (Cvetkovich, 2003). This label effectively devalues the items, intimating that they have no place in the main scheme and are not worthy of their own category. A feminist approach to archiving (rejecting the values of white heteronormative patriarchy) would place a value on these ‘marginal’ items, photographs, diaries, poems, essays, memoirs, videos and letters, which are often evidence of women’s everyday lives (Cvetkovich, 2003). Further it is important to recognise alternative sources of material and evidence in the quest to create access to silenced voices (Goodwin, 2010) and build a more inclusive historical narrative with evidence that often remains uncollected in private homes or in the “greater privacy of individual memories” (Goodwin, 2010:181). Included in alternative sources is the intangible archive, whose items can include (but are not limited to) attributes, feelings or ‘emotional memory’ that may be attached to or described in an object or recording. For Cvetkovich (2003) emotional memory comprises those details of an experience or event that are moving, sensory and personal. Where there is an

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<sup>41</sup> The use of oral histories is discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

absence of 'official' documentation and the narrative is in opposition to sanctioned histories, alternative sources of material become an invaluable historical resource and, "ephemera and personal collections of objects stand alongside the documents of dominant culture in order to offer alternative modes of knowledge" (Cvetkovich, 2003:8).

Scholars considering subjects that have been marginalised within conventional archives have also conceived of the idea of the metaphorical archive, challenging the dominant discourse that privileges physical materiality (Cooper, 2016). This form of archive embraces digital technology and promotes wider access than a physical building may afford. Having a wider concept of the archive enables the inclusion of sources that may otherwise be considered unreliable, for example memories, fiction, film, dance, performance and private domestic experiences (Cooper, 2016). A discussion about the collection, storage and accessibility of materials from the research is contained in chapter three.

## **Conclusion**

The review undertaken in this chapter, focused on the body of literature which was examined in order to determine the approach to, and direction of the research, in relation to the identified themes and objectives. The themes discussed were gendered power relations; writing on women, sport and sport histories; writing on women and football and football histories; writing on women and football in Scotland; the exclusion of women from the Scottish narrative; women's lived experience and the creation of women centred archives. The purpose of the review was to establish what research and writing already exists in relation to the subject, to locate gaps in that writing and thereby identify the potential for the research to make an original contribution to knowledge (Murray, 2006).

The review illustrated that writing on women and sport and sport histories took time to be established but is now a growing area of academic research. In particular, in recent years, research about women who participate in sports that are seen as masculine has proved a rich source of information. This is certainly the case with regard to the study of women and football with the integrative review (Valenti et al. 2018) reporting that the number of articles written between 2010

and 2017 had nearly doubled in comparison to the output between 1999 and 2009. The actual number of articles, seventy-six, in the seven years to 2017 is still low compared to those written about men's football but the growth in interest and development of the subject is demonstrated. However, this growth in interest has not been replicated in academic writing about women's football in Scotland with the academic catalogue still standing at three articles, one PhD thesis and a book chapter, all written by one person (Macbeth, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2008).

The study of women's football is a growth area but accounts of historical developments remain in the minority and academic writing on the development in Scotland has been at a standstill since 2008. This research is, therefore, timely in its aspirations to seek to fill the gaps in knowledge either by building on existing work or making original contributions to the study of women's football. The original contributions will be made in regard to historiography as evidenced in chapters four and five. Chapter six will build on existing work to further explore lived experiences, centring women's voices in the construction of the narrative. There is further knowledge development in chapter seven regarding the growth of women's football in Scotland and the factors that enabled or constrained that development (Maguire, 2011). Finally, another contribution has been made through the initial work on archive creation and wider dissemination of the information collated, which is discussed in Appendix 4. Having established the rationale for the research, the purpose of the next chapter is to discuss the methodological approach taken to undertaking the research, initiating an archive and sharing outputs with a wider audience.

### 3. Research Strategy

The previous chapter discussed the body of literature which was examined in order to determine the approach to, and direction of the research, in relation to the identified themes and objectives.<sup>42</sup> The review identified a scarcity of material relating to women's football in Scotland, confirming a gap in knowledge that the research would seek to rectify. It also established that the lack of information in the literature, was mirrored in the scant archive material available (Macbeth, 2002, 2004; MacMillan, 2015). This meant that despite the importance of sport and in particular football, within the Scottish culture (Barnier, 1994; Jarvie, 1991; Reid 2005), there was very little known about the prevalence of women's football in Scotland and even less about the women who strove to play.

The review confirmed that in order to achieve the research objectives it would first be necessary to find ways in which to better reflect the full history of football in Scotland by revealing the account of women's football across the past sixty years. Additionally, it identified the importance of gathering archival material centred on the experiences of the women who played football. Much of the information available at the start of the research was connected to individual players or events that, retrospectively, were deemed of interest. What was missing, were details of the broader picture and the myriad of experiences that would together, counter the omission of women from the record. What I wanted to achieve was the retrieval of accounts from women at every level of women's football across the sixty years, to counter their exclusion from the narrative and amplify their voices, telling their stories. The intention was that these would provide insight into women's resistance to the dominant discourse within both football and the wider community and enable the exploration of subjects that have previously been denied value within the Scottish football community.

The first step was to produce a strategy that would enable me to address the research objectives in a systematic way while adhering to the feminist principles underpinning my approach to research (Hesse-Biber, 2012; Leavy and Harris,

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<sup>42</sup> The subjects discussed were gendered power relations; writing on women, sport and sport histories; writing on women and football and football histories; writing on women and football in Scotland; the exclusion of women from the Scottish narrative; women's lived experiences and the benefits of creating women centred archives.

2018; Ramazanoğlu and Holland, 2002). This is where the chapter starts, examining the factors which influenced the research design, including consideration of the potential effect of using a feminist lens through which to approach the research. It then moves to a detailed discussion of the design, completion and presentation of the research. This section, comprising the main body of the chapter, provides an audit trail for the work undertaken during the research. The chapter then considers the sharing of the research outcomes with both academic and general audiences. Within this archive activism is discussed in terms of its influence on both archive creation and the sharing of this research through outreach activities. The chapter closes with concluding comments and signposting to the upcoming chapters that present the findings and analysis from the research. I took the decision to write the chapter in the first person, in order to recount my own experiences as I undertook the research and document what I learnt in the process (Leavy, 2011).

## **The game plan**

My research strategy was based on current and suitable practice and was the plan of action I followed to enable me to meet my research objectives appropriately (Denscombe, 2014). The purpose of the research strategy was to take a more holistic approach than simply devising the methods to be used, by acknowledging and examining factors that informed and shaped the work of collecting and interpreting information and reporting the findings (Sprague, 2018). The factors informing the research strategy were focus, perspective and ethical considerations and these are discussed next, ahead of a discussion of the research design and outputs.

### **Focus**

The starting point for the strategy was to determine the focus of the research, as that enabled the identification of research objectives from which the rest of the process flowed (Priola, 2016). The overall aim of the research was to recover the narrative of women's football in Scotland and explore the ways in which women resisted constraints placed in their way. The lack of written records and archive material, confirmed through the review of literature, led to the decision to narrow the focus of the research to the sixty years period between 1960 and 2020. At the



same time the research objectives were refined and refocused to reflect the intended outcomes:

1. To further uncover the narrative of women's football in Scotland across the period 1960 to 2020
2. To explore the experiences of the women involved in women's football in Scotland across the past sixty years
3. To examine the extent to which the rate of development differed from other comparable European countries and to consider what factors may have shaped the development in Scotland
4. To initiate the expansion of the existing limited archive of women's football in Scotland, through both tangible and intangible heritage with due regard to increasing the representation of women. To seek ways to effectively and appropriately share the findings of the research with both academic and non-academic communities. <sup>43</sup>

The refinements focused the research on a period that could be explored through the gathering of testimonies from those who participated in women's football during that time. It also increased the possibility of uncovering archive research materials in the form of private collections, football ephemera, newspaper articles and information from other forms of media. The purpose of narrowing the focus in this way was to enable me to meet my objectives and thereby make a significant original contribution to knowledge.

### **Perspective**

Research perspective relates to both the way in which the topic under study is being approached and examined and the viewpoint of the researcher (Priola, 2016). Both influence the research questions and impact on the way in which the research is undertaken and so it is important to acknowledge and identify them.

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<sup>43</sup> Tangible heritage includes material items while the intangible includes oral history testimonies.

### *Exploratory*

The approach to the topic was determined by the desire to uncover the narrative of women's football in Scotland. As this was a group and activity that had received little study the emergent research perspective was deemed to be exploratory, that is the exploration of a little-known issue (Priola, 2016; Stebbins, 2001). The advice for using this approach includes the need to be flexible in looking for data and to be open about where it might be found (Stebbins, 2001), two elements that had already been identified in the early stages of the research. This exploration would be undertaken through subjective research based on data derived from archival materials and oral history interviews aimed at the collection of women's experiences told in their own voices (Hesse-Biber, 2012). This would build knowledge and bring the viewpoints, experiences, feelings and interpretations of those involved in women's football to the forefront (Priola, 2016). The other benefit of the exploratory approach was that it had potential to signpost other avenues for future research (Stebbins, 2001).

### *Feminist Lens*

My identified viewpoint was that of feminist researcher and the purpose of this section is to explore how using a feminist lens affected the research design. As feminist activism became institutionalised in universities and colleges, feminist scholars sought to undertake research in a way that supported their ethos and values. This approach looked to address the lack of information on women's experiences; bias due to lack of women researchers and to contribute to the 'noise' made by the women's movement (Cook, 1983; McRobbie, 1982).

Feminist methodologies emerged initially from the feminist critique of research and theory within disciplines such as history and social sciences (Cook, 1983). A concerted effort was made to rectify this position and place the women being researched at the centre of the work. Initially, this focused on research done for women, seeking to contribute to the improvement of women's lives rather than merely undertaking research on women (Cerwonka, 2012; Cook and Fornow, 2005; Leavy and Harris, 2018). However, as more women began to work in academia and undertook more and varied research in ways that was identified as feminist, the definition of what constitutes feminist research evolved. Researchers began to question whether research subjects would always want an active role in

the production of knowledge and be empowered by the process (Cook and Fornow, 2005). It was recognised that the requirement to link outcomes to empowerment could potentially limit areas of research. For example, by overlooking areas which may be of interest to women and change what is known about them, but not necessarily have direct influence on their daily lives. As a result, feminist research now encompasses work that is concerned with a myriad of topics, including the facilitation of social change; critiques of dominant forms of knowledge; making women visible and the identification of oppression so that it can be challenged. It also seeks to give a voice to those who may be part of an underrepresented group thereby exposing the ways in which hegemonic structures both historically and currently disempower certain groups (Brookes and Hesse-Biber, 2007; Cerwonka, 2012; Lykke, 2010). The outputs of this research align to this by giving voice to a previously ignored group, thereby highlighting the historic (and ongoing) disempowerment of women's football by hegemonic structures and male normative culture in the football community.

Research strategy informed by feminist theory, is distinctive because of the ethos and values underpinning the research activity. As a result, the term feminist methodology does not point to a specific method, research technique or tool but rather refers to a variety of strategies, methodological stances and conceptual approaches and research (Cook, 1983; Fornow and Cook, 2005; Letherby, 2003; Lykke, 2010; Ramazanoğlu and Holland, 2002; Stanley, 1997; Stanley and Wise 2008). Within the research strategy detailed in this chapter, the methodological approach has been framed by principles developed by Brookes and Hesse-Biber (2007); Cerwonka (2012); Forbes et al. (2015); Hesse-Biber (2012); Leavy and Harris (2018); Ramazanoğlu and Holland (2002) and Stanley and Wise (2008).

The approach as shaped by these principles seeks to:

- make the research process visible
- consider researcher reflexivity, positionality and standpoint
- centre ethical considerations
- work on the principle of informed consent to give narrators agency within the research process<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> The term participant is used to describe an individual prior to an interview being secured and narrator is used to describe the people interviewed to record their oral history testimony.

- highlight and centre women's experiences, making them visible
- validate their opinions
- take into account effect of the research on the women studied
- highlight the value of their contribution within the football community
- create a more interpersonal and reciprocal relationship between the researcher and those whose experiences are the focus of the research
- be aware of the contribution from others and that building and sharing knowledge will be undertaken together
- expose gender-based stereotypes
- expose structures and practices that oppress and suppress women
- connect with an audience in alternative ways
- consider the role of archives in the sharing and dissemination of women's knowledge

These principles are important because:

The point of doing feminist social research is not to score points for political correctness, or to attain methodological purity, but to give insights into gendered social existence that would otherwise not exist. (Ramazanoğlu and Holland, 2002: 147)

The research, through giving voice to the experiences of women, has brought together information about women's football in Scotland that was previously ignored, specifically because it related to women intruding into the world of men (Pfister and Pope, 2018). Ethical considerations were the third factor underpinning the design of the research, and are discussed next.

### **Ethical considerations**

Ethical matters are centred within feminist research and involve additional considerations over and above those generally required by the ethics approval regimes of academic institutions. The application of feminist ethics is a current and invigorating debate among feminist scholars but within the debate core principles remain, with ethics relating to care and relationship in the foreground (Kingston, 2020; Preissle, 2006).

It was important, therefore, that due regard be given to ethical matters relating to a number of areas of the work to be undertaken. The first consideration was

reflexivity regarding my personal and social locations (Kingston, 2020). The next widened the ethical approach to conducting the research. This included ensuring the appropriate research tools were used, and that with regard to the narrators that there was informed voluntary consent; confidentiality; integrity and that any relationships formed were respectful and mutually positive (Comstock, 2013). Additionally, any narrator property, such as private collections should be treated with care and respect including the gaining of permission to hold and use them, keeping logs of the property, using appropriate storage and returning them as and when agreed (Comstock, 2013; Israel, 2014). I also wanted to ensure that narrators had agency with regard to other elements of the interview process. To facilitate this, they decided when and where the interview took place to ensure they were as comfortable as possible. To facilitate fully informed consent, potential participants were sent a detailed information sheet which was discussed with them and points clarified as necessary. In particular, I made sure that we discussed how the data they provided was to be used, that they could limit the use of particular information and that they could withdraw completely from the research, should they wish to, without the need to provide an explanation(Comstock, 2013; Israel, 2014; Kingston, 2020).<sup>45</sup> Finally, in writing the thesis it was important to avoid plagiarism, attribute previous work appropriately, to have express permission to use the output from oral history testimonies and to treat this with care and respect.

In line with university procedures, an application was made to the General University Ethics Panel within which I detailed how I would attract narrators for the project, make the confines of the research clear, ensure informed consent and voluntary participation and that narrators understood what would happen to the data they provided. Within the process for ethics approval, I also committed to appropriate data gathering and storage in compliance with the University's guidance on data safety. Having established the parameters of the focus, perspective and ethical considerations with regard to the research, the research design could commence.

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<sup>45</sup> There is a responsibility to the wider research community to foster a climate of trust with narrators to promote the integrity of research (Kingston, 2020).

## **Research Design**

I wanted to design my research in a way that would enable me to collate information about the development of women's football and to then examine why that development took place at a different rate in Scotland (Denscombe, 2014). I determined that I would need to utilise a blend of research methods to ensure that the required information was obtained in an appropriate manner. A blended approach would also afford me flexibility to use a methodology which centred women's experiences, validated their opinions, exposed gender-based stereotypes and challenged structures and practices that oppress women (Brooks and Hesse-Biber, 2007; Forbes et al., 2015).

The research was designed with primary oral history interview sources at the centre with archive sources adding important material evidence, albeit potentially to a minimal extent (Abrams, 2016). While there was limited academic or archival material immediately available, there was potential for information to be contained in sources such as newspaper archives and the private collections of narrators. The approach I aimed to take and what I actually did in terms of data gathering and analysis are discussed in detail across the next two sections of the chapter.

### **Data gathering**

This section discusses my aspirations for the research element of the project and details the challenges and successes in undertaking the research.

#### *Archive Research*

For this element of the data gathering, the intention was to start with the Scottish Football Museum and to then consider newspaper sources and other archives such as those belonging to clubs or Scottish Women's football (SWF). It was possible that this might produce limited information but I was hopeful that it would be supplemented by private collections held by those I interviewed. Given the lack of academic information, I also intended to make use of less academic secondary sources such as Club websites, fan websites and books written by former women footballers in England which held a small amount of detail about women's football in Scotland. There was a requirement to treat these informal sources with some caution and to check accuracy by cross referencing where possible.

The archive research progressed more satisfactorily than I had anticipated. Initially I worked through the holdings on women's football at the Scottish Football Museum. I was then extremely fortunate to be shown collections by several narrators, loaned the contents of private collections by three narrators and to then have access to the collections of three further narrators that had been donated to the museum. The collections comprised scrapbooks, match programmes, match reports (written by narrators), records of league tables, records of season performances by teams, photographs, newspaper cuttings, booklets, newsletters, medals, trophies, tour souvenirs and correspondence. Together these provided a rich source of information and added further detail to the narrative. The uncovered archive of the SWF also contained a large amount of information that is discussed in detail in chapter five. Finally, I had mixed success with newspaper archives. The positive aspect came from digital archives for newspapers in Aberdeenshire in the 1960s and 1970s. This period is not often digitised with the focus tending to be on older newspaper records but I was able to use search terms to locate a number of reports of women's football as discussed in the next chapter. I did commence work in paper-based archives but with the location of reports on women's football usually in social sections, searches were very time consuming.<sup>46</sup> Unfortunately, this was a component of my research curtailed by the Covid-19 pandemic as the archives were either closed or travel was restricted and as a result, I could not access them. This, therefore, indicates an avenue for future exploration and research.

### *Interview based research*

It became clear, early in the process, that a large part of the research would take the form of an interview inquiry (Kvale, 2008), involving the gathering and collation of personal testimony from individuals involved in women's football in Scotland. Interviews can be structured in a number of ways and the choice of format is dependent on the overall goals of the project (Hesse-Biber, 2007). As my main aim was to collate information about the ignored history of women's football in Scotland, I wanted to take an oral history approach to the research. As the

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<sup>46</sup> For discussion of digital research methods and women's football, see Helena Byrne, 'Where are we now? A Review of Research on the History of Women's Soccer in Ireland, *Sport in History* 39, no.2 (2019): 166-186.

reliance on official written sources increased, oral testimonies were relegated to, “second-order’ evidence”, (Skillen and Osbourne, 2015: 1884) and thereby used less and less. However, as researchers sought to document the history of marginalised groups, they realised that for certain groups and organisations, written records were either deficit or non-existent and oral history testimony as a data collection tool regained popularity (Skillen and Osbourne, 2015). The practice of oral history provides a valuable resource for resolving this deficit coming, as it does, from the principle of respect for individual life experiences and the desire to preserve the details of ordinary people’s lives (Blee, 1993). Women’s involvement in sport is often outside the structures of clubs and affiliated organisations and therefore their involvement is rendered invisible if only formal aspects are explored, “reading organisational records and published sources convinced me of the hegemonic unassailable strength of the dominant culture’s view of sport as inherently masculine” (Cahn, 1994:599). It is therefore, important to speak to women about what they played, who they played with and what influenced those choices (Skillen and Osbourne, 2015). It is, however, equally important to take account of the ways in which information is remembered, the meanings attached to it and how it compares with other sources (Bornat and Harding, 2015). I hoped that by undertaking oral history interviews with individuals I could use their recollections to indicate areas in which I might seek new information. As a result, my engagement with archive and interview research occurred simultaneously with each leading to potential areas of research in the other.

### *Recruiting narrators*

If an interview inquiry (Kvale, 2008) forms a large part of the research, then due consideration needs to be given to how narrators were to be recruited. The sample was to be purposive, that is, selected on specific characteristics. In this instance, the attribute required was that the individual had been involved in women’s football in Scotland during the period 1960 to 2020. There were no further refinements applied, although I wanted to try and ensure that the majority of narrators were women who had played football during this period. A further aspiration was that a high proportion of the narrators would be from the period 1960 to about 1998, as not only is the information for this period limited but it



was important to capture contributions from the start of the period while individuals were able to participate.

The plan was to use several approaches to recruit narrators. The first utilised contacts from my previous research, from other researchers in this field and through those working at the SFM, the SWF and the SFA.<sup>47</sup> The second recruitment stream used appeals for narrators on social media and at events, talks and exhibitions. The third approach was to build on initial contacts, employing a snowball technique to build my pool of participants by asking narrators to suggest others who may be willing to take part in the research. This method can prove useful when social groups align with the boundaries of the study and the purposive sample (Liu and Dyer, 2014).

In early 2018, I undertook two interviews and as well as providing much information both narrators spoke of numerous contacts which suggested that recruiting participants would be more straightforward than anticipated. In March 2018, I gave a talk at an event for International Woman's Day at which I met two further potential participants who agreed to be interviewed.<sup>48</sup> However, I then discovered how challenging it can be to move from informal agreement to actually undertaking an interview. This experience started with the two women I met in March 2018 and continued with various potential participants who either had life issues that meant interviews were difficult to arrange or who may have changed their mind and just stopped replying to enquiries. After encountering this issue, I agreed with my supervisors that I should limit the number of times I followed up a non-response from an individual to three. Sometimes it was 'third time lucky' and other times I had to let the opportunity go. This led to a period of disillusionment as, in the first six months of fieldwork I had only undertaken two interviews.

Slowly the interview tally began to rise assisted by the staff at the SFM who put me in touch with several potential participants and by December 2018 I had undertaken a total of six interviews. Although social media appeals produced initial contacts, these only translated into one firm interview. In late 2018, I started work on the organisation of a conference for International Women's Day 2019.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Scottish Football Museum; Scottish Women's Football and Scottish Football Association.

<sup>48</sup> Details of the event are given in Appendix 4.

<sup>49</sup> Details of the conference are given in Appendix 4.

Working on the event brought me into contact with a number of women who had been involved in women's football and were interested in taking part in the research. I began to work more closely with the SWF, which resulted in both additional narrators and an archive of previously uncatalogued papers for me to investigate.<sup>50</sup> I also made contact with narrators through work colleagues and a university student at a lecture I gave. As I had anticipated, once I had made contact with a few key individuals the snowball effect increased my access to narrators, although somewhat further through the research timeline than planned.

Having been concerned that I may not be able to speak to a sufficient number of people, I was then in a position where I had too many potential participants to interview within timescales and Covid-19 restrictions. On reflection, I realised that as part of the remit of the project was to collate an archive, if oral history testimonies were collected too late for inclusion in the thesis, they would be valuable additions to the archive. For this reason, contact has been maintained with a number of potential future participants. In total, across the research period, I interviewed twenty-seven narrators, twenty-four women and three men, with the average length of time for an interview being ninety minutes.<sup>51</sup> In collating the experience of women in football I also used information about three women involved in football which was obtained from non-interview sources. The first woman was Rose Reilly who I met on a number of occasions including discussing football with her on a conference panel, making a radio programme with her and being part of a television documentary about her.<sup>52</sup> The other two women were Carol-Anne Stewart and Laura Montgomery who formed Glasgow City FC. I tried to arrange research interviews with them but, for a variety of reasons, this proved difficult. As an alternative I used information from informal conversations, a video about their time in football and a television documentary made about them.<sup>53</sup> This

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<sup>50</sup> The timeliness of this project was underlined by the fact that this archive was somewhat informally stored and had the potential to be destroyed as it was no longer of relevance to the current workings of the SWF.

<sup>51</sup> Despite what looks like a desperate attempt to insert a football reference, this was the average length of interviews.

<sup>52</sup> Further details of these events are given in Appendix 4.

<sup>53</sup> The You-tube video, The Story Continues was uploaded on December 17 2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c4elotYgj7E&t=679s>. The documentary is called The women who built Glasgow City and was produced by Purple TV, first being shown in April 2020. <https://www.purpletv.tv/programmes/TheWomenWhoBuiltGlasgowCity.aspx>

meant that, in total, information about twenty-seven women was used in the data analysis.

### *Working with narrators*

My research plan included the facilitation of both informed consent and a degree of agency within the interview process for narrators. Informed consent was to be obtained through the use of a detailed information sheet which gave potential narrators details of the research, a brief explanation of what their involvement would entail and proposals for the write up of the research. This was to ensure that they had sufficient information to give consent and they were fully aware of any potential reporting of their contributions. This would be checked as the interviews were arranged, at the start of the interview and again at the end of the interview, once narrators knew exactly what they had spoken about. Narrators were also given control over the time, date and location of the interview (Hesse-Biber, 2012).

I sent each potential participant an information sheet and asked them, having read it, to make contact with me to ask any questions and to confirm whether or not they wished to take part in the research. Potential participants were always given space and time to consider their involvement; this did lead to some withdrawing but it was important that none of them felt pushed into the process. Once they had agreed to take part, we arranged a time and place to undertake the interview. I was as flexible as possible with both date and location, so that the narrator had agency over this aspect of the process, enabling the interview to take place in a location where they would feel most comfortable. Having arranged the interview, I made contact a couple of days before to check arrangements and confirm that the narrator was happy to continue. Interviews took place in a variety of locations including homes, offices, hotel lounges, restaurants, cafes, club training grounds, sports centres, offices at a football stadium, Hampden Park stadium, Murrayfield stadium and via Zoom.

As a precaution, I always notified someone that I was undertaking an interview and left details of the name of the person and where I was meeting them. At no point did I encounter any problematic behaviour or feel unsafe, although I had planned ways in which to excuse myself, should I need to. In the event, the

interviews were a fantastic experience involving committed and enthusiastic people who wanted to share their stories.

### *Conducting the interviews*

The term oral history refers to a method or overall approach with variation in styles of interviewing within that. The purpose of the interview was not to gather or recover facts, although these were often forthcoming, but to explore the memory, experiences and inspirations of the narrators (Abrams, 2016). To facilitate this, I adopted a narrative approach to enable the narrators to tell their story in as much depth as they wanted, in the style they preferred and to concentrate on the parts they felt to be important, with minimal direction or guidance from me. This was achieved through an informal semi-structured interview style using open questions to enable the narrators to fully expand on their experience in their own words and add further information as they wanted without constraint. In order to optimise the output from the interview, Mason (2002) advises that the interviewer needs to take time to ask, listen and then interpret. In line with this, I intended to aim for a free flow guided 'conversation' with my narrator doing the majority of the talking and my role being to ask initial open questions with follow up prompts eliciting explanation or expansion (Hesse-Biber, 2007).

This style of in-depth interview gave me the opportunity to encourage the narrators to talk at length about the topic with a degree of complexity that other methods may have limited. It enabled me, and future researchers, to hear the voices of the (mainly) women involved talking about their experiences with their own words, emphasis and emotion (Byrnes, 2012, Cvetkovich, 2003 and Reinhartz, 1992). The questions that I used to open discussion on a topic were informed by the academic research discussed within the literature review. I produced a guide that I used during the interviews to ensure that, while encouraging the free flow of information, I would be able to cover the points that I was particularly interested in. The guide would not be used to steer the narrator in a particular direction but rather to ensure that a particular topic was referred to, even if only briefly. The broad topics that I wanted to cover related to how the narrator became involved in women's football; the story of their involvement; what it meant to them and whether they were still involved. To assist with the discussion, I prepared prompt questions to use, if required, to stimulate recollections.

I started interviews by making sure that the participant was comfortable and checking that they had understood the information sheet. In particular, I discussed the interview, analysis and write up. I also made clear that the narrator could change their mind about aspects of our agreement at any point, from changing the level of anonymity to withdrawing all together. Having explained this, I then asked them to sign the consent form before starting the interview. With the narrator's permission the interviews were recorded to enable comprehensive collection of information and the facilitation of free-flowing discussion without the need for many hand written notes.<sup>54</sup>

My perception was that the experience of the narrators was pleasant, with them at ease and given the opportunity to expand on their points of interest. This was confirmed both by immediate verbal feedback by the narrators and by them encouraging other women to take part in the research. Whilst not a complete outsider (I follow men's and women's football and have previously undertaken research about women's football), I am equally not an insider as I have not played football and until the start of the project did not regularly watch women's football matches. Being an insider may have assisted me initially in gaining narrators for the research but other than this I do not believe it has had a negative impact on the research (Wieder, 2004). Indeed, the fact that I could ask more basic questions meant that I could seek to elicit more detailed information from narrators. In particular, with questions dealing with their emotional responses, if I asked "how did that feel", they were less likely to just say "you know."

At the end of the interview, I asked two questions that related to the wider social context at the time the narrator was involved in women's football. Having explored attitudes they encountered whilst playing, I asked them whether they felt they were making any kind of statement about women's roles and rights by playing football. I also asked if they had a view about the development of women's football in Scotland and how this may have differed from other countries. The purpose of these questions was to gauge whether resisting dominant norms was a motivator; whether the wider state of women's football was of interest to them;

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<sup>54</sup> Interviews were recorded using a professional level recorder, the Zoom H4n Pro. All interview recordings were downloaded, held as Wav recordings for archive purposes but also transferred to MP3 format for transcription. All storage is in line with the University procedures.

whether they had, indeed, given the situation any consideration and whether their perspective could offer any particular insights. I endeavoured to word these questions in a way that was exploratory and did not have a right or wrong answer. This was particularly important in terms of my feminist standpoint as I wanted the participants to freely express their own opinions and views without any form of prompting from me. I located the questions at the end of the interview partly because this was a logical place as it moved from the individual experience to a wider view but also for pragmatic reasons so that if the response was short and without detail, it would not impact on the overall flow of the interview.

Finally, I asked narrators if there was anything that they wanted to add or anything that they had thought I would ask about but had not. The purpose of this was to give further opportunity for the narrators to talk about what was of importance to them and to be able to include it, even if I had not introduced it as a topic. At the conclusion of the interview, I explained the next stages with regard to analysis of the transcribed interview, the storage of the recording and the ability of them to withdraw from the research.

After each interview I took time to review and reflect on the way in which the interview had progressed and the information obtained. There were no immediate issues and each of the interviews covered the topics that I wished to.

Considerations of consistency started during the interview, using the guide to bring focus back to the issues that I wanted to cover. During the course of the research, I did not remove any questions nor did I revise any, as they elicited sufficient and appropriate information from the narrators. In taking time to review and reflect on the interview process I did slightly modify my interview technique across the research. Early transcriptions demonstrated the extent to which I interrupted or asked too many questions. My interruptions were to elicit more information but they could be hasty or unnecessary. While I do not believe this effected the information obtained, I endeavoured to learn from this and listen more and speak less in subsequent interviews.

Reviewing the recordings, I believe I achieved the objective of a free-flowing conversation that facilitated a full discussion exploring the thoughts, feelings and perspectives of the participants (Liu and Dyer, 2014). I covered in depth the topics

I wanted to explore whilst enabling the participants to expand on points they believed to be important. The resulting oral history testimonies provide a significant contribution to knowledge in their own right and together have exceeded the expectations at the start of the study.<sup>55</sup>

## **Data Analysis**

This section mirrors the previous one in that it discusses my plans for data analysis alongside the challenges and successes encountered.

### *Transcribing*

Within the design of the research, it was decided to have two stages of transcription. The first would involve the production of a 'longer form' summary as adopted by the British library and approved by the Scottish Oral History society.<sup>56</sup> This format was chosen because it provides the best balance of benefits by achieving depth of detail for analysis with reduction in the time taken to transcribe. The second stage would involve the production of verbatim transcriptions for deposit, along with the recordings, into an archive for use in future research, as discussed later in the chapter.<sup>57</sup>

The decision to use the summary form of transcription proved beneficial when there was a concentration of narrators towards the end of the research, as this enabled me to undertake timely transcription. This was particularly important as I chose to undertake the transcription manually rather than through software. I made this choice having undertaken the summary transcription of the initial interviews and found that the process enabled me to immerse myself in the data ahead of formal analysis.

### *Analysing*

Following summary transcription, the next step was to undertake coding and analysis of the data. This involved reading the material in depth identifying information and key themes that repeated themselves across the interviews and then collating and describing these findings (Patton (1990) cited by Amis 2005).

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<sup>55</sup> However, the limited diversity of the group of narrators means that the research findings should not be taken as being reflective of all women involved in football during this period.

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.strath.ac.uk/humanities/schoolofhumanities/history/scottishoralhistorycentre/>

<sup>57</sup> Placing oral history recordings in a publicly accessible archive is seen as an important objective by the British Oral History Society for those undertaking oral history-based research.

Just as there are many ways that interviews can be undertaken, many approaches to the development of analysis codes have been identified, each of which is dependent on both the content and context of the research. For less experienced researchers, Rivas (2012) encourages the use of thematic content analysis which uses both deductive and inductive coding schemes. Using this approach, I started the coding process with an overview of the information I was seeking, based on themes identified from the literature review. Having transcribed an interview, I read through the transcription and manually coded material using broad based codes related to the themes identified at the outset. The themes detected were then further scrutinised through re-reading of material to ascertain additional themes or nuances that emanated directly from the data that had been collected. I used this approach because I was familiar with it and it supported the style of analysis I wanted to use. It both built on previous research and provided space to take account of the lived experiences of narrators, which was particularly important given the paucity of available data (Kelly, 2014).

Although formal analysis was undertaken at the conclusion of the data gathering, interpretations of data started as soon as the first interview was underway. As discussed by Amis (2005), having undertaken a literature review and developed a frame of reference for the investigation, the responses to questions inevitably lead to connections to the ideas and themes identified. Once the majority of interviews were analysed, I drew together both the deducted and inducted themes and used these to inform the findings chapters.

## **Reporting, access and outreach**

This section discusses the communication, storage and sharing of the outputs from the research.

### **Reporting**

From the outset of the research, the plan was to produce two forms of communication that overlapped and combined to share the outcomes of the research in ways that are academic or widely accessible or potentially both. Within the academic presentation of the research there were four main elements:



*The thesis* – a documentary record of the journey through the research, providing insight to work that had gone before; the research undertaken and the main findings including the amplification of the women’s voices. As my work on the collection of oral histories will be about the creation of records as well as the basis for research, I want to work in a way that is seen as co-authoring memory with the participants that both enables voices to be heard by also makes the narrators participatory agents in the process (Cameron, 2014). To reflect this, narrators are cited throughout the thesis. In chapters four, five and seven this is by family name, in line with the other citations of previously created work. In chapter six, this is by given name to reflect the personal nature of the memories described there.

*Conference papers* – presentations at conferences concerned with relevant information that shared the findings of the research with other academics across a variety of disciplines.

*Journal articles* – in order to further share the outputs of the research with fellow academics

*Archive creation* – this is reference to the formal aspects of the archived materials, paperwork from organisational bodies such as the SWF, private collections donated by participants and recordings and transcripts of the oral history testimonies that could be used by other researchers.

These formal outputs are part of the on-going process to demonstrate that the subject is worthy of this examination and that the findings make a significant contribution to knowledge. They also highlight areas of potential future research and outreach work with the football and wider community. This thesis document is currently the largest academic output from the research and fulfils the aims stated above. In addition, I have presented papers based on the research outputs at a number of conferences, further details of which are given at Appendix 4. In December 2020, the first journal article based on the research was published, providing an overview of the history and development of women’s football in

Scotland across the past sixty years.<sup>58</sup> As will be discussed below, an archive is to be part created in partnership with the Scottish Football Museum and the materials there are openly available for any other researcher who may wish to view them. The digital archive of the interviews is in the planning stage and so whilst the material is not yet formally available and publicised; it is accessible by researchers if they contact me at the University of Stirling.

However, just as important as academic communication is the presentation of the outputs, derived from the joint production of knowledge, in an accessible way and this is discussed below.<sup>59</sup>

### **Creating an Archive**

This section speaks to the first element of the fourth research objective relating to the expansion of the existing limited archive of women's football in Scotland.<sup>60</sup>

Across the past fifteen years, archival science has produced extensive scholarly and professional literature in response to critiques arising from academic scrutiny (Dever, 2017). As part of the same archival turn, within the humanities researchers have become increasingly reflective with regard to their work in archival collections. From this reflection practices termed archival activism and archival intervention have emerged.

Archival activism calls on archivists to consider how archives can be used differently to counteract the unfair balance of power that has marginalised or excluded certain groups and to rectify injustice within the archives themselves (Mathews, 2016). In contrast to the traditional approach of seeking and collecting material by organisations and institutions that reflect mainstream interests, archival activists have been reaching out to community groups and campaigns to collect materials.

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<sup>58</sup>The article was 'Sisters doing it for themselves: the rich history of women's football in Scotland from the 1960s to 2020', *Sport in History*, 40:4, 456-481. The details of the conferences where I have presented talks based on the research are detailed in Appendix 4.

<sup>59</sup> Accessible by a general non- academic audience in ways and formats that open up the topic to them.

<sup>60</sup> Fourth research objective: To initiate the expansion of the existing limited archive of women's football in Scotland, through both tangible and intangible elements with due regard to increasing the representation of women. To seek ways to effectively and appropriately share the findings of the research study with both academic and non-academic communities.

Building on this, scholars such as Evans et al. (2015) suggest that the activism should not stop at supporting the social justice work of others but to become an integral part of social movements, “challenging the power structures governing memory management frameworks” (Evans et al., 2015: 348). The element of this call for archival autonomy that speaks to this research, is the concept of collaborative and co-creation work with members of the community, here the women’s football community in Scotland. As much of the material gathered during the research is contained in oral history interviews, taking a feminist approach would indicate not just giving voice to these women but giving them agency within the creation of the archive. This approach is reflected in the notion of a respectful partnership between researchers and the participants. The notion of partnership working can be further enhanced by challenging the archival paradigm of making those who have records in the archive appear to be mere donors of information that was taken by the researcher. The challenge is to have those donating the records shown as co-creators and sources of provenance situating them as participatory agents.

The second development, archive interventions, comes from research-based practice centred on creation and engagement, both of which align with the objectives of this women’s football community-based project. In terms of creation this relates to “the process of using research and documentation to create an archive where one does not already exist” (Sheffield, 2014:111). The intervention in respect of engagement is the attempt to initiate enlivened relations between archives or the output of research and the communities they serve (Sheffield, 2014). The fundamental aim of the intervention is to generate interest in a collection and can take the form of exhibits, workshops or events that are intended to encourage the community to engage with the collection. Engaging the women’s football community with the expanded archive material through workshops and events would provide an excellent opportunity to deliver the impact element of this research. It may also result in more women coming forward to share their story when they encounter the archive (Haynes and Magee, 2015). In addition, open events and exhibitions could introduce a wider audience to women’s football and thereby disrupt the dominant narrative that football is a game for men.

## Open Access

Building on the discussion above, to have an impact and benefit, archives or research collections emanating from this research need to be an accessible resource. In the early stages of this project, I sought advice on archive creation through discussions with individuals who have experience and expertise in the field at institutions connected to the project: University of Stirling; Glasgow Women's Library and the Scottish Football Museum.<sup>61</sup> I also read academic texts on the subject, along with those considering how archives can be made more accessible.<sup>62</sup>

As a result of the investigation, the intention is that information should be held in a variety of formats that can be accessed by researchers, academics and the general public alike to further their knowledge and understanding of the history of women's football in Scotland. An archive may function as a repository for papers and material collections but it should not be a terminus but rather a site where actions that spark future knowledge, illumination and discovery are initiated (Eichhorn, 2015). Having created an archive to give women their place in history it is equally important to ensure that they are not relegated to it and that their narrative is in the public space, otherwise they remain as hidden and silent as they were before (Barbara Goddard cited in Eichhorn, 2015). To achieve this, materials need to be stored, listed and given context and explanation in a way that gives open access to the inventory and encourages everyone to explore with the minimum of guidance.

### *Physical items*

The Scottish Football Museum at Hampden Park has long been interested in the history of women's football. However, they have not had the resources to seek out items to build their collection. The work on this research has brought forward a

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<sup>61</sup> Sarah Bromage and Karl Magee from University of Stirling; Richard McBrearty from Scottish Football Museum; Nicola Maksymuik from Glasgow Women's Library and Stuart Gibbs, artist and exhibitor.

<sup>62</sup> At the beginning of 2016 the Digital Women's Archive North (DWAN) ran a series of community focused workshops to consider how the mechanisms and content of the archive could be unraveled and re-presented for women. Themes included creating archives as a place for accessing women's heritage, culture and creativity to , "unlock the unknown narratives in archives" (DWAN, 2017:156) and exploring how women's activism and campaigns could be supported by the archive (Ashton, 2017: 127) From their perspective the best practice guidelines around material selection (appraisal), classification, storage and accessibility offer opportunities for feminist disruption to occur and identified five potential intervention points which could result in a different approach to feminist archiving.

number of people with private collections and in the short term these have mainly been housed at the Scottish Football Museum. The aim is to create an archive that is the result of joint working with the women's football community. It should reflect their lived experiences, memories and emotions, establishing an archive that has individuals and the community as participatory agents encouraging wide engagement with it. Whilst it is currently not practical to create a 'standalone' archive, I have worked collaboratively with the Scottish Football Museum to seek a way forward that combines their usual procedures and the aim of working with the women's football community.<sup>63</sup>

Cook (2007) contends that a major act of historical interpretation takes place at the point when an archivist decides what to actually retain and by default, what is omitted and even destroyed. This means that opportunities to explore particular issues or understand events are fundamentally shaped by the artefacts an archive deems appropriate and worthy of inclusion (Blouin and Rosenberg, 2007; Cook, 2007). Discourse on the concept of feminist archives has highlighted the importance of them in feminist knowledge making, thereby requiring selection protocols to be as open as possible (Dever, 2017). This has led to the rethinking of the process of selection with regard to which narratives are given prominence, what is deemed valuable and to challenge dominant histories through collaboration and listening to the community (Ashton, 2017). Following this practice, value should not be ascribed to items by those establishing the archive but rather, guidance should be taken from the contributors as to what they consider critical in their experience (Cvetkovich, 2003). Equally, this research has always been about inclusion of the narrative from a wide range of contributors not just those deemed notable or worthy and this should also apply to any material collected by narrators. The aim is to encourage celebration of the depth of history within women's football, rather than merely the headline information. The work on archiving the collections uncovered and material created during this research was suspended as a result of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, when

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<sup>63</sup> Examples of collaborative work include the use of the museum to record a radio programme about the 1972 international match between Scotland and England, including discussion of some exhibits. The museum also worked with me in running the first ever women's football conference held at Hampden Park. They created a picture exhibition from the entrance to the conference venue, gave delegates free entry to the museum and created a specific display for the event. There has been discussion about other joint work but this is currently on hold due to restrictions from the Covid-19 pandemic.

this is resumed, the practice of ensuring that selection protocols are as wide as possible will be maintained (Dever, 2017).

### *Oral History Archive*

Where there is limited existing material but an opportunity to gather information about lived experiences, then it is possible to use oral history interviews to create an archive. This can prove valuable when seeking the answers to questions about the experiences that may be outside mainstream culture (Goodwin, 2010) and are therefore less likely to appear in archives, as sources that would disrupt the male-centric narrative tend to be overlooked. Oral histories can give new and valuable perspectives on women and the challenges they faced and choices they made with their stories taking us beyond the account constructed by those with a vested interest (Abrams, 2016; Goodwin, 2010). The major advantage is that the oral histories offer up information that is not available elsewhere and afford the possibility of creating an archive rather than adapting an existing one (Sheffield, 2014).<sup>64</sup>

### *Digital archives*

Electronic archives provide exciting possibilities for enhancing research, sharing information and strengthening connections amongst scholars across the world (Alfano, 2012). Digital technologies offer possibilities for open archival access that moves archival work from its once elite status available to the few with time, money and credentials to a far more democratic space (Dever, 2017). Public access also has the potential to demystify the idea of an archive thereby opening up to a wider audience and at the same time gives academics the ability to engage with the public (Spongberg et al., 2017). This also provides an opportunity for non-academics who may hold information about women in history to participate in on-line dialogue about the creation of archives (Spongberg et al., 2017). One method for involving non-academic contributors in ensuring that online information is accurate and up to date are specific events such as the 'Wikipedia-edit-a-thons' that Spongberg et al. (2017) write about. They conclude that the expressions of interest and level of participation by non-academics, points to the need for more opportunities for interactions between academics and the public

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<sup>64</sup> As indicated above, it is intended to work on the creation of an archive based on the oral history testimonies and transcriptions.

(Spongberg et al., 2017). One way this could be utilised in this project is to have 'message boards' within a digital archive where there are discussions about particular teams and players or if there are photographs of people who have not been identified, asking the public for their input. It is necessary, however, to consider balancing the democratising potential of a digital archive environment with the potential for extensive use of free labour (volunteers) which may assist the budget but may limit opportunities for professionals (Dever, 2017). Achieving a digital archive to compliment any physical one takes considerable resources of time and funding which have not been available during the current period of research. However, it is an aspiration of mine that this work should continue after the initial research phase.

## **Outreach**

As well as ensuring that the archive is available and accessible to all there are other ways in which the outputs of the research can be more widely shared.

These include:

- Working with SWF to ensure clubs are aware of the material and how to access it
- Including historical material on the SWF website
- Giving presentations to clubs on the topic
- Working with clubs to explore their own history
- Consideration of mobile exhibitions at clubs
- Producing guidance for clubs to undertake work themselves
- Wider public talks
- Exhibitions at the Scottish Football Museum, the Women's Library and the University of Stirling
- Collaboration on further radio and television productions
- There is potential for a book to be produced on the topic

From early in the research, I embarked on outreach work to share knowledge with a wider community. Initially this was to explain what was known, what the aims of the research were and to seek to recruit participants. As more information became available so I began to attend or organise events to raise awareness of the

ignored history of women's football in Scotland. The details of this work are given in Appendix 4.

## **Conclusion**

Following the review of literature, I took a step back and considered what my research objectives should be in light of the minimal level of information available on the history of women's football in Scotland. The revised objectives were presented at the start of the chapter. On the basis of these, I drew up a design strategy in order to undertake research to meet these objectives. The strategy included the ways in which data would be gathered; what ethical issues should be taken into consideration; how the data should be analysed and how outputs from the research should be shared.

I then undertook the research and the outputs from this met the objectives that I set. That is not to say that it was all straightforward as there were challenges as detailed in this chapter. However, I believe that this experience has given me further insight into the role of researcher and assisted in developing the skills and abilities required to be a good one. I believe that my feminist lens added to the process making the narrators, nearly 90% of who were women, central partners in the work and the outcomes. This research was, and remains, about them and what they did to ensure that women's football in Scotland survived and then thrived no matter how much the dominant male football community ignored it. I believe that the ephemera that this project has uncovered and the oral history testimonies created will benefit future researchers into women's football. I also hope that my conduct, professionalism and commitment to women's football will result in future researchers being welcomed by those within the community of women's football.

Having considered what information was originally available and discussed how I sought to increase the data available; the chapters that follow will describe what has been revealed. The next three chapters examine: the development of women's football in Scotland; the governance of Scottish women's football across the period and the lived experience of women involved in football. Chapter seven discusses the factors that enabled and constrained the development of women's football in Scotland across the sixty years.



## 4. Resistance, Persistence and Progression

The central objective of the research was to build on the existing knowledge base to further uncover the narrative of women's football in Scotland across the past sixty years. The findings from the research are presented across the next three chapters, which together provide an historical overview of the development of women's football in Scotland from 1960 to 2020. This extended account begins the process of countering the lack of knowledge about women's football in Scotland resulting from the exclusion of women from the sports and historical narrative (Breitenbach, 1997; Reid, 2004). Further, the chapters contribute to academic writing on women's engagement with football, considering the ways in which they challenged and resisted hegemonic masculinity, thereby gaining agency over their own lives and actions (Holmes, 2009).

The research was enriched through the generosity of narrators who made available a cache of memorabilia from their private collections. This material has facilitated the construction of a more comprehensive narrative of women's football in Scotland than had originally been anticipated.<sup>65</sup> In turn, it allowed the oral history interviews to focus on personal experiences, memories and emotions rather than gathering factual details (Cvetkovich, 2003). However, the unexpected amount of tangible heritage materials brought the challenge of balancing the desire to share the previously untold story in as much detail as possible with the requirements of an academic thesis. In order to achieve an informative but not overly detailed account, the chapters discussing the research findings are presented as an academic précis of the information uncovered.

This chapter focuses on the history of the women's game in Scotland, charting the development of domestic leagues, cups and competitions and the progress of the Scottish women's national football team (SWNT). The body of the chapter is divided into three sections. The first provides an explanation of the way in which the development and growth of Scottish women's football from 1960 is to be

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<sup>65</sup> The nature of the discovered material, along with the potential for further material to be located through future research, will be discussed within the chapter.

presented, drawing on the discipline of historical sociology. The second and main section presents the development of women's football from 1960 to 2020, through reference to the three phases of development namely, resistance (1960 to about 1977), persistence (about 1974 to about 1998) and progression (about 1995 to 2020). Within each phase there is consideration of the domestic league structure, domestic cups and competitions and the progress of the national football team. Each phase ends with an exploration of the societal contexts and changes which prompted movement from one phase to the next. Having further uncovered the account of women's football in Scotland, the final section discusses Scottish developments in comparison to women's football in selected European countries. This demonstrates the comparatively slow pace of progress in Scotland and foreshadows the discussion of the factors which impeded the development of Scottish women's football in chapter seven.

## **Historical Sociology**

The account of women's football in Scotland from 1960 to 2020, in the next two chapters and the discussion at chapter seven, contains an analysis influenced by historical sociology. In essence, the purpose of this approach is to discern and explain the longer-term structural influences on the development of the subject under examination (Maguire, 2011). It is a discipline that has been employed by sports historians to investigate the structural processes through which sport development has been shaped by, "enabling and constraining structures or social transformations" (Maguire, 2011: 878). In particular it draws on the practice of using a historical sociological approach when considering sport development.<sup>66</sup> Using this approach facilitates consideration of the influences of the wider social context in which the sport grew, and the subtle and gradual ways this shaped the progression from one phase to the next (Tomlinson and Young, 2011).

In some instances, this work covers a whole sport or sporting event, across large historical periods such as Jarvie (1991) writing about the Highland games or Dunning and Sheard (2005) writing about rugby. For others it has been the shaping of a specific element or portion of that sport which has been examined in

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<sup>66</sup> Examples of such research and analysis can be found in Campbell, 2020; Campbell and Williams, 2014; Dunning and Sheard, 2005; Jarvie, 1991; Liston, 2006; Maguire, 2011; White, 2000.

terms of the wider social context. An example of this approach is research centred on an individual amateur football club, and the ways in which the developments within this club were connected to wider social, economic and political developments in the UK (Campbell and Williams, 2014; Campbell, 2015, 2020). The analysis in this thesis considers the historical development in Scotland of both women's football and, in the next chapter, the governing body, in reference to enabling and constraining structures within the wider social context (Maguire, 2011). Within this narrative, the game itself remains largely unchanged, rather it is the recognition, status of and support for the women's game that is constrained or enabled as a result of developments in the social context of Scotland across the past sixty years.<sup>67</sup>

The use of the term 'about' within the dates assigned to a phase, follows the work of Dunning and Sheard (2005), who utilised it when describing the stages in the development of rugby over a period from the fourteenth century to 2005. Using 'about', recognised that while there were changes in the format of playing rugby by around the dates specified, the change neither happened overnight nor resulted in the immediate and complete eradication of the earlier format (Dunning and Sheard, 2005).<sup>68</sup> In the case of Scottish women's football, there were specific dates on which the status of the women's game changed in reference to actions by the Scottish Football Association (SFA). However, this did not mean immediate transformation in the experience of those involved in playing or in the governance of the women's game. The phases provide a framework for the narrative but for the majority involved in women's football, the change was gradual and the movement from one phase to the next was not marked by definitive dates (Dunning and Sheard, 2005). The labels given to each of the stages, resistance, persistence and progression are used to convey the position of women's football in that phase. They are a form of shorthand for the condition of the game Dunning

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<sup>67</sup> There were changes to the length of matches and the season of play but fundamentally the football played in 1960 was the same as that played now.

<sup>68</sup> Jarvie (1991) had employed a similar technique in his work on the development of the Highland Games, which was influenced by earlier work by Dunning and Sheard (1991).

and Sheard, 2005; Jarvie, 1991) in relation to the dominant male football community and latterly, also in comparison to women's football elsewhere.<sup>69</sup>

## **The development of women's football in Scotland 1960 to 2020**

Throughout the research and production of the thesis the aim was to centre the women involved and amplify their voices (FiLia, 2018). Part of the centring involved endeavouring to move from traditional periodisation which inevitably reflects male interests, an on-going challenge for those writing narratives of women's sporting history (Osborne and Skillen, 2015). While it was possible to avoid 'malestream' periodisation, the punctuation points used to demarcate the periods within the narrative are actions associated with hegemonic masculinity (Allen et al., 2010). These are the lifting of restrictions on women's football, the recognition of the women's governing body and the SFA assuming responsibility for the SWNT. As will be discussed, these actions were not directly influenced by women involved in football but rather demonstrate how the actions of the dominant football community had direct and substantial effect on the women's game in Scotland. Additionally, it is acknowledged that the use of leagues and competitions as markers of development aligns with the narrative of male centric histories of football and produces a, "history of progress against male standards", (Hull, 1989: 282).<sup>70</sup> However, the women who are central to the project were enthusiastic about their engagement with leagues and competitions, formats which are used in many sports not just those associated with men. Adopting these enabled them to play more structured football and they believed that assisted in demonstrating their commitment and serious intentions to the dominant football community. It is therefore, appropriate to analyse their endeavours from their perspective in this first instance. Nevertheless, there is recognition of the need to challenge dominant ways of viewing and examining football experiences and the consideration of the lived experiences of the women involved in chapter six, seeks to do this. The summary account in this thesis, is intended as a point of departure

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<sup>69</sup> In the work of Dunning and Sheard (2005), Jarvie (1991) and White (2000) the time periods covered are extensive and therefore the phases they use have significant overlap. Here the time period considered is shorter and so while there is overlap between the periods it is only a couple of years.

<sup>70</sup> In information produced by Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) about women's football in the member states, the start date for women's football in that country is given as the date when women's football became associated to the men's association. This means the start date for women's football in Scotland is given as 1998.

and further work on aspects of the history such as the periodisation and categories of analysis will be required to question and challenge facets of, “the canvas upon which we all write our histories” (Abrams, 2006: 6).

Within the description of the phases, attention is paid to three aspects of women’s football. First, the formation and evolution of domestic leagues and their organisation provides a focused historical narrative of the challenges faced in establishing and maintaining the mechanisms for women to play competitive games in Scotland. It also highlights the ignored history of the women’s game during the previously under-researched and recorded period of domestic football from the 1960s to late 1990s. The second aspect considers the creation and development of cup competitions and tournaments in Scotland which were central to the survival of women’s football, providing additional matches, new opponents and motivation during times when the overall levels of participation stagnated. The final aspect involves charting the development of the SWNT, from a period of restrictions on the women’s game through changes in the governance of the sport, as the links between the SWFA and the SFA grew. Within the writing on each phase, consideration is given to the broader social context within which the sport was developing. Additionally, at the end of the phase, changes in the wider context which potentially shaped the transition to the next phase are examined (Campbell and Williams, 2014; Campbell, 2020; Dunning and Sheard, 2005; Jarvie, 1991; Liston, 2006 White, 2000).

## **Resistance**

The act of resisting, opposing, or withstanding; a phase which lasted from 1960 to about 1977.

### *Domestic football*

This first phase examines about seventeen years, with the first fourteen years covering a period when women’s football was officially restricted in Scotland. Restrictions were placed on women’s football across the world from 1921 onwards with references often made to the notion of a ‘ban’. While not an absolute ban, the restrictions were intended to limit women’s opportunities to play and restrict their ability to intrude into male territory (Birrell and Cole, 1994; Dunn, 2016; Stirling and Shulz, 2011; Williams, 2003a). It is not intended to explore the

origins of the restrictions here, the important point is that there were still in place in 1960.<sup>71</sup> In Scotland, these restrictions prevented women using the facilities (pitch, training ground) of a football club affiliated to the association, stopped affiliated clubs providing resources to women's teams and prevented the use of affiliated football officials at women's matches (Macbeth, 2002, 2004).

Previous writing on women's football in Scotland has included details about a small group of teams, mainly works based, which played in the first half of the 1960s. These works-based teams were identified as the Holyrood Bumbees, Glasgow Gay XI, Cambuslang Hooverettes, Fife Dynamites, Tayside Toppers and the Johnstone Red Rockets. (Lopez, 1997; Macbeth, 2004; Williams, 2003a).<sup>72</sup> The Glasgow Gay XI became Westthorn United when they became more community based. Three other teams, the Aberdeen Prima Donnas, Motherwell AEI and Stewarton Thistle have also been written about. Together these nine constitute the core women's teams described in previous academic writings (Lopez, 1997; Macbeth, 2002, 2004; Williams, 2002, 2003a). As with other women's narratives, it may be that the deficit of easily accessible material has resulted in the view that participation in women's football at this time was limited (Elliott, 2018). However, this research has identified numerous other teams, community and workplace based, producing an alternative version of a lively, if fragmented, football community. Workplace teams have been identified across the country from a team based at Alexander's Bus Company in Fife through to teams from the Baxter's food factory in Focabers, Moray.<sup>73</sup> In addition, in her oral history interview, Elsie Cook made reference to a further six teams, a number of which could be traced through notes in match programmes which became available during the research.<sup>74</sup> Through digging below the surface (Rowbotham, 1973) cross referencing oral history testimony, written records in private collections,

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<sup>71</sup> For further discussion of the restrictions placed on women's football, see Dunn (2016), Lopez (1997), Macbeth (2002, 2004), Newsham (1994) and Williams (2003a, 2007).

<sup>72</sup> Stewarton Thistle, formed to play a charity match against the Holyrood Bumbees to raise funds for the chosen charity of the Provost of Stewarton Walter Syme who was Managing Director of Holyrood Knitwear whose works team was the Holyrood Bumbees. Although brought together for this one match, Stewarton Thistle was very successful and is the oldest surviving women's football team in Scotland as it still plays today (under name of Kilmarnock Ladies) 59 years later.

<sup>73</sup> Although an in-depth study of these teams has not been possible within this project, it is a potentially productive area for future research.

<sup>74</sup> Elsie Cook was founder member of Stewarton Thistle and the SWFA. She was the first secretary of the SWFA and for a short period, manager of the Scotland Squad.

newspaper cuttings and the aforementioned previous writings, twenty-two teams playing between 1960 and 1974 were initially identified and are listed in Appendix 2.<sup>75</sup>

Due to the limitations of communications, women were often only aware of teams within their local area which meant that opportunities to play other women's teams were limited. Teams were not in leagues and up until the mid-1960s, may have only played five or six ad hoc matches a year against other women's teams, with additional matches played either as 5-a-side with other team members or against local boys or Junior teams (Cook, 2018; McAulay 2019; Stewart, 2019).<sup>76</sup>

Gradually information about other women's teams spread by word of mouth and fixtures slowly increased (Cook, 2018).<sup>77</sup> The information that has emerged from the research suggests that while there was little contact between teams across the nation, there were lively, geographically organised women's football communities. A prime example of this can be found in Aberdeenshire. Of the teams mentioned in previous writing, Aberdeen Prima Donnas was a clear outlier to the central belt who at the end of the 1960s were a successful team who went on to be in the final of the first Scottish Cup.<sup>78</sup> However, this raised the question of how they reached this standard if their main opponents were so geographically distant. The collections within the Scottish Football Museum (SFM) demonstrated that local newspapers could be a good source of information and so to 'dig deeper', a search was undertaken of the digitised archives of the main Aberdeenshire papers for this period (Liddington, 2001). This revealed that the Aberdeen Prima Donnas were part of an established group playing women's football in the area between 1963 and the end of the decade. The retrieved newspaper articles made reference to seventeen other teams which played in

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<sup>75</sup> There are twenty-three names on the list but one, Westthorn United is Glasgow Gay XI re-named. Unfortunately, the information currently available for many of these teams is limited to name and location.

<sup>76</sup> In Scotland the term Juniors refers to a level or standard football played rather than being a reference to the age of the players. It is similar to the non-league system in England, ([www.scottishjuniorfa.com](http://www.scottishjuniorfa.com), 2019). In this chapters and chapters five and seven, narrators are identified by their family name, to be consistent with other references. In chapter six, the narrators are referenced by their given name. Details of their full names are given at Appendix 1.

<sup>77</sup> Cook said that sometimes a team they were playing would mention a 'new' team they had found, contacts would be made and games arranged (Cook, 2018).

<sup>78</sup> The area referred to as the central belt, stretches from Glasgow in the west to Edinburgh in the east, and contains the majority of the population.

tournaments, friendlies and gala matches in this period, with some predating the formation of the Prima Donnas.<sup>79</sup> The names of many of the teams would suggest that they were workplace based although there were others, like the Prima Donnas, which appear to have been community based, such as the Kingussie Snowdrops or the Forres Flamingos. Some teams are mentioned only once and may therefore have been formed for a particular event but a number of teams are regularly mentioned within the newspapers, with follow up reports on previewed matches. For example, a team called Tarves Women appears in several reports from Aberdeenshire and also in an article about Westthorn United, listing them as Westthorn's next opponent in the Scottish leg of the Butlin's Cup in 1971.<sup>80</sup> These findings take the number of named teams so far identified, across the country in the 1960s, to forty-one as detailed at Appendix 2. It is unlikely that this level of interest in women's football was exclusive to the north east but lack of digitised records makes locating the information challenging (Byrne, 2019).<sup>81</sup> It is however, clearly an area for future research as more newspaper archives for the period are digitised.

The wide geographical spread of teams reported here suggests that involvement in women's football was more widespread than previously thought (James and Cooke, 2018) and the suggested research on other local newspapers will be likely to uncover more teams. In this period, women's football was not 'recognised' as a sport and matches were written about because they were played in connection with an event, gala or charity match.<sup>82</sup> This means that other matches may have been played but with no status, either as sport or a social event they were not

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<sup>79</sup> There remains a lack of detailed information about the Aberdeen Prima Donnas but a short piece, as part of a wedding notice explains that they were formed in 1964 by women who attended the Hayton Community centre, Aberdeen. Occasionally there would be a report of the football match taking place and the result a few days later, within the social pages.

<sup>80</sup> The newspaper article which mentions Tarves Women is in the Margaret McAulay private collection and has been cut out and so has no reference details. Dating is possible because it refers to Westthorn taking part in the previous Butlin's Cup.

<sup>81</sup> The digitisation of Aberdeenshire newspapers meant that they could be accessed remotely and it was possible to use search terms to locate information. For a discussion of digital research methods and women's football, see Helena Byrne, 'Where are we now? A Review of Research on the History of Women's Soccer in Ireland', *Sport in History* 39, no.2 (2019): 166-186.

<sup>82</sup> This was not the case only in Aberdeenshire. A newspaper report of the first match played by Dundee Strikers, focused on a pitch invasion after two players were sent off and the referee abandoned the game, rather than reporting on the match itself. 'Girls' football match ends in uproar', *The Courier and Advertiser*, 20<sup>th</sup> April 1970.



reported on. It is not unreasonable, therefore, to speculate that there were many more games taking place, across the country, than have been recorded to date (James and Cooke, 2018). Sport can perpetuate hegemonic ideals, including gendered bodies and associated gendered abilities (Kissane and Winslow, 2016; Wachs, 2005), but it can also provide women the opportunity to question cultural gender norms and resist the resultant restrictions (Hall, 1996). The identification of a minimum of forty-one teams in Scotland in the 1960s, suggests that the disruption of the cultural prescription of gender roles and activities by women playing football was more prevalent than previously described.

Given the limited awareness and communication described, how did women and girls become involved in football? According to the narrators, this depended on the age at which involvement started. For women the options were to talk to friends, follow up articles in the local paper or keep an eye out for a team playing. Playing in the street or park was a common way for young girls to develop their skills and potentially join a boys' team having displayed sufficient ability to override any socially constructed concerns the boys may have about girls playing football (Gorely et al., 2003; Hall, 1996; Vertinsky, 2006).<sup>83</sup> The freedom to play in the street or the park was important in view of the more formalised football that has developed since the 1990s. The availability of unregulated play gave girls the space to become involved and develop their skills in a way that may have been closed to them, had they been required to join a club in order to play. At the same time, playing informally or for a boys' team, the women or girls may then be scouted by a women's team.<sup>84</sup> In seeking to play football they resisted gendered forms of bodily expression that would deem football a sport aligned with masculine traits (Clark and Paechter, 2007; Scraton et al., 1999) and defied gendered norms of behaviour (Molner and Kelly, 2013). The second avenue to joining a women's team was being asked to play. When Betty Bennett was asked to set up a team for a charity match, she used her netball team as a foundation, co-opted relatives and then sent her daughter, Elsie Cook to find more

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<sup>83</sup> An example of looking for teams comes from Rose Reilly who saw Stewarton Thistle playing and asked to join but at age seven was deemed too young. Elsie Cook told her to come back in two years, which is exactly what she did, having cut off her hair and played with a boys' team in the meantime (Reilly, 2019).

<sup>84</sup> One aspect of football scouting involves individuals evaluating the talent and ability of football players with a view to signing for a team, <https://www.fourfourtwo.com/performance/skills/what-do-scouts-look-footballers> last accessed, 9 April 2021.

'volunteers'. Cook's recruitment plan, centred on approaching women she either saw playing or heard about including one of the best players of the era, Susan Ferries.<sup>85</sup>

As the decade progressed awareness of the number of teams playing grew and many players were motivated to both improve the standard of play and to have "something to play for" (McAulay, 2019). This led both Stewarton Thistle and Aberdeen Prima Donnas to accept an invitation to take part in the English League within the 'Section North'. However, the travel was difficult, time consuming and expensive (Cook, 2018) and many involved in Scottish women's football wanted to try to develop a structure, build a sense of community and promote the women's game. As part of this an informal league was founded in 1968. The existence of leagues within football do more than simply make organisation more straightforward. For both players and fans, they enable the construction of the record of a season and the teams; summarising the past and projecting the future thereby creating an identity that is more than a series of informal matches (Werron, 2015). The formation of a league, is therefore an important step on the development of Scottish women's football. The first league comprised six invited teams, the Cambuslang Hooverettes; Aberdeen Prima Donnas; Dundee Strikers; Edinburgh Dynamos; Stewarton Thistle and Westthorn United (Cook, 2018 and Begbie, 2019). In 1969 Motherwell AEI (based at the electrical engineering factory), joined the league structure (Cook, 2019).

As the 1970s dawned, demands for improved equalities were starting to be made of male football associations across Europe (Dunn and Welford, 2015). Following representations by a number of member states, the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) urged Football Associations to take control of women's participation in the game.<sup>86</sup> The SFA, however, were unconvinced leading

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<sup>85</sup> This was for the first Stewarton Thistle match against the Holyrood Bumbees to raise funds for charity. Having heard about an outstanding works team player called Susan Ferries, Elsie Cook made contact and asked her to play. Elsie never heard back from Susan but then five minutes before the start of the match she walked through the park gates (Cook, 2018). Susan turned out to be very good and the novice team won 7-0 against the relatively established Holyrood Bumbees, with Susan scoring all seven goals (O'Neill, 2016).

<sup>86</sup> Although as highlighted by Jean Williams this was less about encouragement and more about ensuring the national associations had influence and control over the development of the women's game rather than leaving it to business men who may affect the amateur status of the game. Jean Williams, *Women's Football, Europe and Professionalization 1971-2011* (2011) A Project Funded by the UEFA Research Grant

Scotland to be the lone vote against the UEFA motion to recognise women’s football which was passed by the other thirty-one member countries in 1971 (Lopez, 1997; Macbeth, 2002, 2004). Exasperation with the attitude of the SFA led those involved in the women’s game in Scotland to recognise the need for better central co-ordination of both the game and the lobbying of the SFA for recognition, (Cook, 2018).<sup>87</sup> This resulted in the formation of the Scottish Women’s Football Association (SWFA) by six teams on the 17<sup>th</sup> September 1972, as discussed in the next chapter.<sup>88</sup> As part of their campaign to show their serious intentions and to promote women’s football, the SWFA created the first official women’s football league. Shortly after its formation the teams participating had grown to twelve, as shown in the table below (Cook, 2019).

Official League Founder members	Joined by
Aberdeen Prima Donnas	Arbroath LFC
Dundee Strikers	Dunfermline LFC
Edinburgh Dynamos	East Fife,
Motherwell AEI	Harmony Row
Stewarton Thistle	Monklands LFC
Westthorn United	West End LFC

Table 1. Teams in first official league

For the teams involved in the league, the organisation and planning of the matches became more straightforward as regular home and away matches were played during the season. This enabled a degree of forward planning, for example regarding transportation and the covering of costs, such as fees for pitches and officials. However, there still remained a number of challenges, from acquiring

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Programme. [https://uefaacademy.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/05/20110622\\_Williams-Jean\\_Final-Report.pdf](https://uefaacademy.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/05/20110622_Williams-Jean_Final-Report.pdf)

<sup>87</sup> Inspiration came from formation of the Women’s Football Association in England as one of the reasons it was formed, was to lobby for recognition: Jean Williams, *The revival of women’s football in England from the 1960s to the present* (PhD Thesis, De Montfort University, 2002).

<sup>88</sup> The six teams were Aberdeen Prima Donnas, Cambuslang Hooverettes, Dundee Strikers, Edinburgh Dynamos, Westthorn Utd and Stewarton Thistle. Elsie Cook, email correspondence with the author, 30 August 2019. Further details are contained in the next chapter.

boots, kit and footballs, to finding a space to play while the SFA restrictions remained in place.<sup>89</sup> Cook (2018) spoke about the need to find pitches that no-one else wanted and that this involved clearing pitches of rubbish, marking the lines with sawdust and hanging fishing nets in the goals. Other teams were more fortunate with some having access to either pitches maintained by the local council or the resources of a junior club and so conditions were not as challenging and may even have included changing facilities (Begbie, 2019; McAulay, 2019).

Getting to the matches could be equally problematic with long bus journeys, including changes and infrequent Sunday services. Although these were experiences from the 1960s and early 1970s, these issues would be recognised by narrators who played in later years and will be discussed throughout the chapter. An issue that all narrators recalled, was the constant need to raise money to pay for equipment, rental and travel costs and to cover affiliation to the SWFA. There were fees paid each month and then additional fundraising throughout the season, including sponsored walks, discos, jumble sales and scratch card style ticket sales.<sup>90</sup> This is an example of the way involvement in a serious leisure activity, involved the women and girls in additional, off-pitch duties but they viewed this as short-term cost for long term gratification as will be discussed in chapter six (Bowness, 2020; Raisborough, 2007). However, at times the challenges proved too much and teams would disband and this could happen to even successful teams. For example, the Cambuslang Hooverettes were not part of the official league in 1972 and are not mentioned in records again, suggesting that they were no longer together, even though they had reached the final of the Deal International Tournament two years previously.<sup>91</sup> Despite these challenges, the narrators enjoyed playing football but all agreed that the experience was even better once there was a purpose behind the matches.

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<sup>89</sup> Women were not always able to spend money on equipment (if it could be found) and often borrowed boots and suitable kit and were grateful for old footballs being passed to them. This speaks to the support given to many of the women by members of their family and male friends, a topic which is returned to in chapter six.

<sup>90</sup> For the Dundee Strikers this amounted to approximately £300 a year, (*Dundee Free Press*, 1974). In 2020 that would be equivalent to £2,900,

<sup>91</sup> Little information has become available about the Hooverettes despite their being one of the first teams of this era and their success and this makes them a potential topic for future research.

### *Something to play for*

Participation in competitions or tournaments is a thread which runs through the history of Scottish women's football, although pre-1960s this references Scottish teams in competition with teams from other countries rather than nationally.<sup>92</sup> By the 1960s there is evidence of competitions for cups or rose bowls being played at galas or local tournaments in the Aberdeenshire newspapers and there may have been others across the country.<sup>93</sup> While gender norms have labelled women and girls as non-competitive (Niederle and Vesterlund, 2007), the evidence from across the sixty years, uncovered in the research refutes this position. Although nationwide competition may have had a slow start it soon gained momentum and remains a key element of women's football. At the end of the 1960s, although a league had commenced there were no national competitions in Scotland. In the absence of these, teams participated in the Butlin's Cup, the Deal International Tournament and the Mitre Cup which were organised from England.<sup>94</sup> Previously, reports of the involvement of Scottish teams in these tournaments was contained within accounts by authors writing from the perspective of English teams or the Women's Football Association (Lopez, 1997; Owen, 2005; Williams, 2003a) or recounting that information (Macbeth, 2002, 2004). However, the contribution of narrator's recollections and memorabilia to this research has produced further information about the involvement of Scottish teams in the Butlin's and Mitre Cups.

The Butlin's Cup was founded in 1969 by television personality Hughie Green, as a result of a comment made on his 'Opportunity Knocks' programme by Lillian Mitchell, a Scottish contestant from Falkirk, who said that she liked to play

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<sup>92</sup> Examples often centre on the Edinburgh Ladies and their exploits against English teams. In the 1930s there were against Dick, Kerr Ladies for the title of World champions (Newsham, 1994) and then there is mention in a tournament programme, them playing in the Estra Henry Trophy tournament held in England in the 1950s (Williams, 2003a). These are both examples of information about Scottish clubs coming from writing about English clubs.

<sup>93</sup> These include, the 'Inverurie Cup' or the 'North of Scotland Rose Bowl'.

<sup>94</sup> The Butlin's cup, started in 1969, had a Scotland section that was played at Ayr Butlin's Holiday camp with Westthorn United twice reaching the final of the national competition. The Cambuslang Hooverettes reached the final of the Deal International Tournament twice, in 1970. In the inaugural year of the Mitre Cup (1970/71), Stewarton Thistle reached the final but were beaten by Southampton. Stewarton (as Lees Ladies) again reached the final in 1972 and the following year Westthorn United maintained the Scottish involvement reaching the final.

football.<sup>95</sup> To maximise interest and potential revenue, the competition was structured to ensure that, in an echo of the rivalry in the men's game, Scottish and English teams met in the final, which was billed as the 'Home International Football Championship' (*Ayrshire Post*, 1969).<sup>96</sup> Having won the Scottish tournament at Ayr, Westthorn United travelled to Willesden Sports Stadium in London to play the English winners, Foden Ladies on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> October 1969. The aforementioned accounts of the tournament, state that Foden Ladies beat Westthorn by a goal to nil (Lopez, 1997; Owen, 2005; Williams, 2003a). Whilst this is the final tournament outcome, previous reports suggest that there was just one match. However, newspaper cuttings from Margaret McAulay's private collection show that the October match ended in a draw and a replay took place at Ravenscraig Park in Scotland three weeks later. A record five thousand spectators were, according to the press reports, treated to a fine match in which Westthorn United were 'robbed' as they were the dominant team but could not score (Unattributed article, McAulay, private collection).<sup>97</sup> This additional information is important because it illustrates firstly a level of public interest in women's football that has not been identified before. Secondly, the need for a replay and a narrow victory by Foden's Ladies suggests that the best Scottish teams were, at this time, of a similar standard of play to the best in England. Finally, while the overall outcome is no different the additional information adds a Scottish perspective to the story and provides a broader picture of the development of women's football in Scotland.<sup>98</sup> In 1970, Westthorn United again won the Scottish leg of the tournament and travelled to Belle Vue in Manchester

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<sup>95</sup> According to an article in the *Ayrshire Post* in July 1969, (McAulay, private collection), Green invited teams who wanted to play against the Falkirk side to get in touch and was inundated with responses and he decided to use the responses to create a football competition for women. He did this in conjunction with his friend Billy Butlin, using the Butlin's holiday camps as venues. As the Football Associations in Scotland and England still had restrictions on the use of facilities of member clubs by women footballers, Green needed venues outside of their jurisdiction which he found at the holiday camps.

<sup>96</sup> Scottish teams competed at the Butlin's in Ayr for the title of 'Scottish Champion' and they went on to meet the winners of the All-England finals (Owen, 2005). This was a competition sponsored by the Daily Mirror and ITV and hosted by Butlin's Holiday camps.

<sup>97</sup> In the collection there are several pieces about an International match at Ravenscraig park although this was too early to be the first official international. An undated and unreferenced cutting gives the explanation that Foden's of Chester and Westthorn United from Hamilton had played a goalless draw in London three weeks previously and this match was the replay (Margaret McAulay private collection). A reference to the match was made in a more recent article about the Fodens team but does not record it as a replay, and states it was held at Greenock holiday camp (Day and Roberts, 2019).

<sup>98</sup> There is a reference to the match in a recent article about the Fodens team although it only mentions one match, not a replay, and state it was held at Greenock holiday camp (Day and Roberts, 2019).

to meet Foden Ladies in the final. The result was a repeat of the previous year with Foden Ladies winning 1-0, on the day. However, by holding them to a single goal, Westthorn had the best result of all of Foden's opponents in the tournament (Owen, 2005).<sup>99</sup>

The Butlin's Cup ceased after two years when the Women's Football Association (WFA) banned any of their affiliated teams from taking part over concerns about commercialisation.<sup>100</sup> Meanwhile, the Deal International Tournament, created by WFA member, Arthur Hobbs was growing in popularity (Williams, 2003a). The Cambuslang Hooverettes participated in 1969 and 1970, when they reached the final although there are only limited details about this from Lopez (1997) writing about her experiences playing for Southampton, who won the final on penalties.<sup>101</sup> None of the narrators had played for Cambuslang and had no additional information, indicating the need for further research.

The first nationwide competition organised in Scotland started in 1970 with teams invited to play for a cup donated by the *Sunday People* newspaper after they published an article about the rise of women's football (Cook, 2019).<sup>102</sup> The final was played on the 18<sup>th</sup> April 1971 at the neutral venue of Riverside Park in Dundee with Stewarton Thistle, becoming the first ever winners of the Scottish Cup, beating the Aberdeen Prima Donnas by four goals to two (O'Neill, 2016).<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Foden's Ladies had played five rounds to reach the All -England final. They won the final 6 – 0.

<sup>100</sup> Although Hughie Green had expressed his desire to have the tournament build (Green, 1970), it only ran for two years following the dispute with the Woman's Football Association in England. Opponents of the Butlin's tournament felt that the tournament had the potential to commercialise women's football impacting on the clear 'amateur' status sought by the WFA and with a ban on their members participating, the tournament folded.

<sup>101</sup> The first Deal International tournament took place in 1967 when Arthur Hobbs set about organising the tournament which was to be played to raise money for charity and would be hosted by Deal Town FC. He signed up a number of local teams from youth organisations, workplaces and staff at the local hospital (Lopez, 1997). However, Kent County FA ruled that the FA's restrictions meant that the pitch at Deal FC could not be used even for a charity match. Despite a number of protests, Hobbs needed to find another location, which he managed and the tournament went ahead. Favourable publicity attracted more experienced teams the following year including the Manchester Corinthians who went on to win and who's participation, "heralded the beginning of a more serious competition" (Lopez, 1997:41). By its third year, the Deal International Tournament attracted fifty-two teams including the Cambuslang Hooverettes.

<sup>102</sup> Cook confirmed that in the first-year entry was by invitation, as they were the only teams playing on a regular basis that were known about at that point (as the unofficial league was still in operation).

<sup>103</sup> An article written about Susan Ferries recalls the route Stewarton Thistle took to the final of the competition: "Along with bright new star Rose Reilly, Susan would play a central role in Stewarton's golden era, taking part in the inaugural Scottish Cup competition. Big wins against Airdrie and Wishaw

In England, the WFA had taken control of cup competitions and launched a women's FA Cup, known in its early years, as the Mitre Cup.<sup>104</sup> Stewarton Thistle took part in the inaugural competition and reached the final, which was played on 8<sup>th</sup> May 1971, having convincingly beaten all their opponents (Cook, 2018).<sup>105</sup> Stewarton's performance may have led to attempts to ensure the cup stayed in England:

The night before we were due to travel from Stewarton, I had a phone call from Gladys Atkin to tell me that the Southampton side that were to play in the final were not the team that had played in the rest of the competition but a Southampton league select eleven. The FA were aware of this but in light of the short notice before the final was to be played, it was decided to allow the match to go ahead with the select team. I was told that other teams were boycotting and we should do the same but as we had annihilated all the previous teams, I felt we could win. We didn't as the select proved to be a better team on the day...I am not surprised the WFA allowed the match to go ahead and Southampton to win the trophy, they couldn't allow a Scottish club to lift their first FA Cup – no way (Cook, 2018).

In the 1971/72 season a group of six Scottish clubs entered the Mitre Cup competition as Group 1 with Lees Ladies (Stewarton) reaching the knock-out stages.<sup>106</sup> Lees reached the final and again faced Southampton. According to Lopez (1997), this final was much closer and, "a crowd of 1,500 at Burton Albion's ground watched a thrilling match which Southampton won 3-2" (Lopez, 1997:78).<sup>107</sup> There is limited information available about the Mitre Cup Final in 1973 which was a third appearance for Southampton and the third time their

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Jags would see the side progress to the final where they would meet Aberdeen Prima Donnas" (O'Neill, 2016).

<sup>104</sup> The women's FA cup has been renamed a number of times dependent on the sponsor of the cup, which is exactly the same in Scotland for both the women's and the men's game.

<sup>105</sup> Unlike the Butlin's Cup, the structure meant that Stewarton Thistle played several English teams on their way to the final. The aforementioned article about Susan Ferries, gives further detail of their matches in the early rounds of the Mitre competition: "Susan was the star of an early round 5-2 defeat of the Manchester Corinthians and a 9-2 thumping of Nuneaton Wanderers, being described in the press as the Bobby Lennox of the female football world" (O'Neill, 2016) Bobby Lennox MBE is a Scottish former professional footballer who played for Celtic and was a member of their 1967 European Cup-winning team, known as the Lisbon Lions. He earned ten International caps for Scotland. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-46253944>. Last accessed April 12 2021.

<sup>106</sup> Westthorn Utd; Aberdeen Prima Donnas; Fife Dynamites; Stewarton Thistle (though known as Lees Ladies for this season after a newly acquired sponsor) Dundee Strikers and the Cambuslang Hooverettes.

<sup>107</sup> Although they were again runners up, Stewarton had come second out of eighty-six teams that had entered from Scotland and England (Owen, 2005).



opponent was a Scottish club, this time Westthorn United. Southampton completed their hat-trick of victories, finally overcoming the strong Scottish defence and scoring twice in the last 10 minutes to win in front of a crowd of nearly 3,000 at Bedford Town's ground (Lopez, 1997). These results reinforce the contention that at this time, the best Scottish teams were keeping pace with the best in England. The lack of awareness of these events in Scotland, highlights the need to both recover and share information previously excluded from the narrative about women's involvement in football in Scotland (Reid, 2004).

Although the Scottish Cup has been played for every year since 1970, for some of the years, details are scarce. In 1972, the Cup became a nationwide competition run by the fledgling SWFA and in November of that year, Edinburgh Dynamos beat Cambuslang Hooverettes 5-3 at Reid Gear Park in Linwood. The Edinburgh Dynamos were again finalists when the cup ran in 1973 but were beaten by Westthorn United 7-3 at Cumnock Juniors ground on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1973. In 1974, the SWFA worked with Leven Town Council to organise an end-of-season tournament. The first Leven Tournament was held in June 1974, and whilst organised via the entertainment rather than sports department, the tournament was taken seriously by the Council who funded it for a further twenty-two years as discussed later in the chapter

#### *Pulling on the dark blue shirt*

Although there was clearly a significant amount of women's football being played across Scotland in the 1960s, there was no formal infrastructure to support the formation of a national team. In 1969, an unofficial Scotland Select team played the Manchester Corinthians as part of an effort to promote women's football and gauge the abilities of Scottish women footballers (Cook, 2018).<sup>108</sup> The formation of a national team was part of the SWFA's strategy to promote the women's game. In late 1972, the secretary Elsie Cook, organised Scotland's first official women's international against England with trials held to select the Scottish

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<sup>108</sup> Elsie Cook arranged for the Manchester Corinthians, a top English side, to come to play a match to showcase women's football in Scotland. To ensure suitable opponents, a Scotland Select team was formed with the squad picked through trials but it was always presented as a side picked from Scotland, rather than the Scotland team. Although Scotland Select were beaten 3-1 the match demonstrated the organisational abilities of the women's football community and that a Scottish team could play football at a standard similar to England (Cook, 2018).

squad.<sup>109</sup> On the 18<sup>th</sup> November, the match took place at Ravenscraig Park, in Greenock with England coming from behind to win by three goals to two. There was a return match against England in 1973 and then in March 1974 a match against Northern Ireland which the SWNT won in convincing style, 9-1. Later that year the team played two matches in Italy with the hosts covering their expenses to enable them to travel. The second match was played at the San Siro stadium and those narrators involved recalled being overwhelmed by the venue, their welcome and the positive attitude to women's football.<sup>110</sup> A link to further details of these matches and those played by the SWNT over the past sixty years is contained in Appendix 2.

### *Recognition of women's football in Scotland*

The period 1960 to 1977 was a time of significant social and cultural change in Britain, transforming social values and behaviour through challenges to the traditional role of women and demands for improvements to their position in society (Addison, 2010; Black, 2013). The challenges to traditional gender norms regarding how women should act, think and feel by women's organisations during this period, are well documented (Steinfeldt et al., 2011). As discussed in the literature review, sport was not viewed as a site of feminist struggle (Mertens, 2015), in practice though, as demonstrated in this section, there were plenty of women across Scotland, playing the predominantly male sport of football. These women were resisting the strictures of hegemonic masculinity and while they may not have aligned themselves to the feminist movement (Addison, 2010), their actions were in accordance with broad feminist values (Nicholson, 2015). By making space to play football and ignoring the restrictions and barriers placed on them, the women were able to, "resist and challenge dominant discourses of sport and gender roles" (Hill and Azzarito, 2009: 5).

For the three years after the UEFA decision, despite the efforts of the SWFA, the SFA had continued to refuse to formally acknowledge the women's game.

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<sup>109</sup> The venture had very little backing and even less funding and as a result just one week before the match, the jerseys were bought by Elsie Cook from a jumble sale in Stewarton, using money donated by Rose Reilly's father. She then sewed on the Scotland badge to each jersey with the shorts and socks being loaned by Rangers Football Club. (Elsie Cook, Oral History Interview, 2018).

<sup>110</sup> The stadium is home to AC Milan and Internazionale and is one of the largest stadia in Europe. The narrators who spoke about this were Elsie Cook, Sheila Begbie and Margaret McAulay. It was also mentioned by Rose Reilly in conversation with the author.

However, in August 1974 the SFA suddenly overturned their decision and recognised women's football in Scotland (SFA Minutes, 1974). The timing came as a surprise to narrators and the perfunctory SFA minute gives no background to the decision.<sup>111</sup> There is a possibility that influenced by changes in wider society, combined with the resistance of the women playing and the evolving infrastructure, the SFA simply changed their mind. This is, however, unlikely, given the strength of opposition to women's football expressed by the SFA. It is more likely that the drivers for change were external (Skinner, 1999) and there has been speculation that a threat of sanctions from UEFA that might have had a negative impact on the men's game was one.<sup>112</sup> Equally probable is the potential impact from the impending Sex Discrimination Act 1975. While the Act exempted sport's organisations from aspects of the equality legislation, the hand of the obstinate SFA was likely forced by section 29 which prohibited discrimination against women with regard to the provision of goods and services (*Sex Discrimination Act, 1975*).<sup>113</sup> This effectively ended the SFA's ability to demand that its member clubs forbade women the use of their facilities and for officials to refuse to officiate a women's match. Given the timing of the decision, it is likely that the combination of a potential UEFA fine and the introduction of anti-discrimination legislation brought about the recognition of women's football. It was then external pressures, emanating from changes in the wider societal context, rather than a change of position within the SFA, that heralded the gradual transition to the next phase of development.

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<sup>111</sup> 'Women's Football (Item 70. Executive and General Purposes Committee) It was agreed to give recognition to women's football.' Entry from the Scottish Football Association Meeting Minutes 29 August 1974.

<sup>112</sup> I am indebted to Richard McBrearty from the Scottish Football Museum for this suggestion which to date he has not been able to verify despite extensive research.

<sup>113</sup> 'It is unlawful for any person concerned with the provision (for payment or not) of goods, facilities or services to the public or a section of the public to discriminate against a woman who seeks to obtain or use those goods, facilities or services' (*Sex Discrimination Act 1975*: Section 29).  
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1975/65/enacted>

## Persistence

Continuing in a course of action in spite of difficulty or opposition, a phase which lasted from about late 1974 to about 1998.

### *Domestic football*

The 1974/75 season was the first played with restrictions removed but this had little tangible impact on the majority of women playing football and many of the narrators said they were unaware of the change at the time. This is reflected in the imprecise demarcations in the phases, as changes did not happen overnight and the challenges faced by women's football caused by a lack of respect or support continued unabated. As a result, whilst the SWFA and its members now had a degree of legitimacy, they remained outside the mainstream hegemonic football community and for most of the period, under discussion here continued to face difficulties and opposition (Welford and Dunn, 2015). However, they persisted in seeking to grow and develop the women's game in Scotland. While for most, the day-to-day realities of playing did not change, four teams experienced football from a different perspective when they participated in two matches played as 'curtain raisers' before men's European ties. At Celtic Park in Glasgow, Stewarton Thistle played Westthorn United and at Tannadice Park in Dundee, Dundee Strikers faced East Fife (Robertson, 2019). For the women on these teams, the matches afforded them a glimpse of playing within the dominant football infrastructure. Margaret McAulay recalled that she and Edna Neillis, who were both Glasgow Rangers fans, vowed not to celebrate if they scored for Westthorn as this would be in front of fans of a rival club. However, on the night, as Margaret passed the ball to Edna who scored, neither could resist wheeling away in celebration to the roars of the Celtic Park crowd (McAulay, 2019).<sup>114</sup> During the second half of the 1970s there was a small increase in teams affiliated to the SWFA with fourteen playing in the league for three seasons. However, as

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<sup>114</sup> In the interview McAulay was transported back to that moment forty-five years earlier and with arms raised, moved in her seat as she re-enacted the celebration with a huge smile on her face. She expressed her delight and pride at being involved in the goal with Edna Neillis (Interview, 2019). Cook also recalled the night and Jock Stein, the then manager of Celtic, clapping the women off the pitch after the match (Interview 2018).

the decade drew to a close the number of teams had returned to eleven, as shown in figure 1 below.<sup>115</sup>

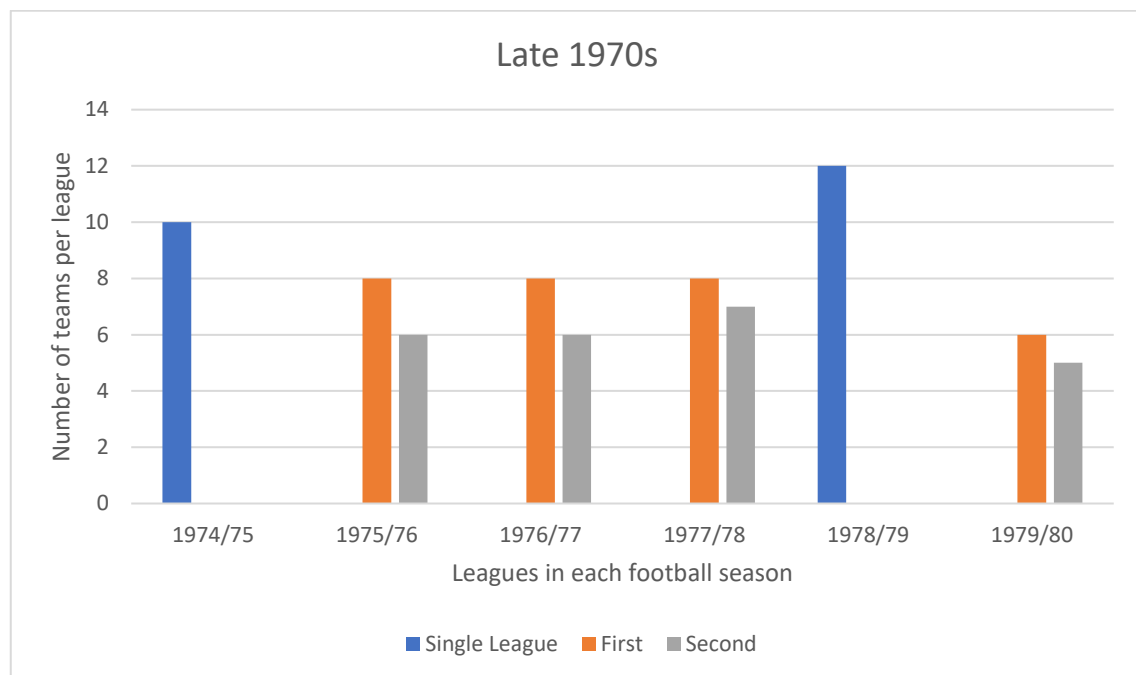


Figure 1. Women's football leagues in Scotland in the late 1970s

These figures relate to teams that were affiliated to the SWFA and between them had a total of two hundred and ninety players. However, the research has identified a number of unaffiliated teams playing outside the official structure and the reasons teams had for not affiliating, are discussed later in the section. It is, therefore, likely that the numbers of women actually playing football at this time is higher than official sources would suggest and this is an area for further research.<sup>116</sup> Although the overall number of teams in the official league remained fairly static the individual teams changed over the period. The domination of the league(s) by a handful of experienced teams meant that any newly formed teams faced a struggle to compete. Although, over time, the leagues expanded

<sup>115</sup> At the time of writing, it has not been possible to produce definitive league tables with accurate positions for each team for a number of reasons. The main one is that while the narrators, Margaret McAulay, Jane Legget and Diane Robertson, who provided material from their private collections, collated in depth information, they focused on their teams and their experiences and there is little peripheral information. Secondly, they played for teams that were in the same league, so in the times when there was more than one league information is scarce about the second. Finally, although the scrapbooks include newspaper cuttings about the teams, these reports only give details for the particular team and the remainder of the league, not any other leagues in operation.

<sup>116</sup> For example, none of the works teams mentioned in the previous section appear in the league and so, if these teams continued, then all the women involved in them would also be playing regular football.

sufficiently for more 'recreational' teams to participate, these early, smaller league(s) were highly competitive and no leniency was shown to less experienced teams. For example, Lochend Thistle joined the league in the 1975/76 season, when the teams were split geographically to ease travel issues. Unfortunately, it meant that the fledgling team found themselves in a division with Edinburgh Dynamos and Dundee Strikers, two of the strongest teams in the country at that time. These encounters ended in dramatic score lines to the extent that their match against Edinburgh Dynamos in the league Cup entered the Guinness Book of World records for that year as the biggest defeat at forty-two goals to nil. Despite these experiences, Lochend Thistle kept playing for a few more years (Dunn, 2019).<sup>117</sup>

As the 1980s started, the women's football community realised that while the SFA may have agreed to recognition, there was no intention to offer support or encouragement and the women's game was left to progress itself. Previous research has located few records about women's football in this period in formal archives. However, this research was given access to records for Carmunnock who played in the early part of the decade and, through their coach Tommy Malcolm, access to correspondence from the SWFA up until the mid-1980s.<sup>118</sup> The other information about the last season of the 1980s was located in the archive at the SFM.<sup>119</sup> The information available from these sources is detailed, providing information about the teams playing and league structures and provides a base for future research into the second half of the decade.<sup>120</sup> Across the decade there was very limited growth in terms of the number of participants in women's football with the number of affiliated teams declining. This caused a reduction to a single league for much of the decade, as shown in figure 2:

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<sup>117</sup> The team Lochend Thistle were formed by a local church as part of a community outreach project. The women and girls were very enthusiastic but had no trained or experienced coaches to start with and as a result suffered the record-breaking defeats by 42 goals to the Edinburgh Dynamos and by 47 goals to the Dundee Strikers (Heather Dunn, interview April 2019).

<sup>118</sup> Tommy Malcolm proved a very generous research interviewee who, as well as recording an oral history interview, lent his large private collection of memorabilia relating to the early 1980s and early 1990s to the research.

<sup>119</sup> In the Jane Legget collection held at the Scottish Football Museum.

<sup>120</sup> The collections also contained a large amount of detail about the SWFA which is presented in the next chapter.

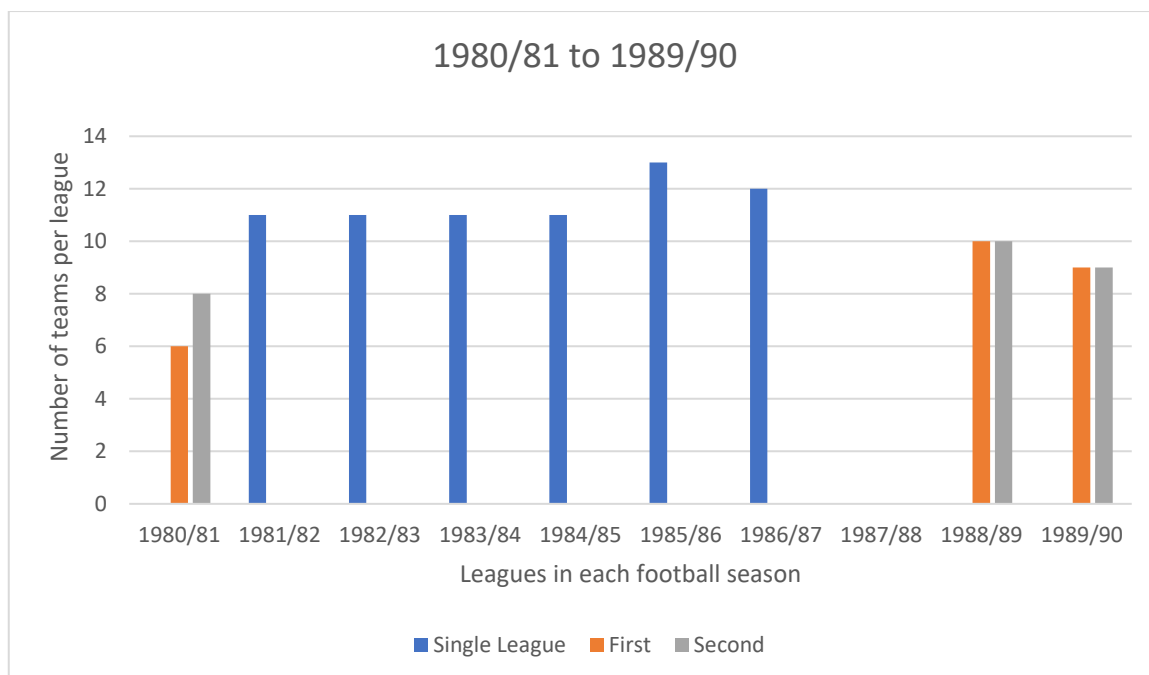


Figure 2. Women's football leagues in Scotland the 1980s (complete data currently unavailable)

There is then a break in the availability of detailed information as the four main contributors of memorabilia until this point became less involved in football in Scotland.<sup>121</sup> At the time of writing, therefore, it is not possible to draw conclusions about the reasons for the stagnation in team numbers for much of the decade. It may be linked to the lack of promotion of the game leading to few new teams and others preferring to stay in local unofficial, less competitive leagues. Equally, it is not possible to confirm why the team numbers increased at the end of the decade. Across the decade there were a total of twenty-three individual teams playing in the senior league with new teams from Aberdeen, Edinburgh and the central belt. The established and previously successful teams were starting to be eclipsed by newer teams such as Inveralmond Thistle, Whitehill and Cove Rangers who went on to win the domestic treble in the late 1980s.<sup>122</sup> While there

<sup>121</sup> The team Tommy Malcolm coached disbanded, Jane Legget moved to England with her job and Margaret McAulay retired from playing football at this time.

<sup>122</sup> An example of emerging teams and name changing is Widnell & Letts. The team first appears in the 1975/76 season with the programme for the 1977 Leven Tournament stating that they started at a works barbecue, giving the impression of a group of women discussing football over a burger and deciding to form a team. Subsequent information explains that the core of the team did well in a 5-a-side tournament organised by their workplace as part of a social event, so they decided to find eleven players and join the national league the following season. The team initially appears to disappear from the league in the 1977/78 season but it may be that they change their name to Whitehill, a team that first appears in that season. Whitehill become very successful in the 1980s and there is reference made

were discussions about a change to geographical divisions, the league(s) remained based on performance, which resulted in large travel distances and expenses for the teams. This meant that some found it too challenging to continue participating and either disbanded or withdrew to play in the unaffiliated leagues and competitions.<sup>123</sup>

Teams continued to play outside the official structure in the 1980s, just as they did in the 1970s. This suggests that the number of women playing football in Scotland at this time has again been underreported. Although limited, some information about why teams either withdrew from affiliation or never joined decade, was identified through memorabilia or narrator interviews. The reasons included the cost of affiliation, the logistical challenges and cost of nationwide travel; a less competitive team that wanted to play for recreation; not being able to consistently field enough players or the team was newly formed and needed to assess whether it was viable to affiliate.<sup>124</sup> There were a number of avenues for these teams to play football including local leagues, 5-a-side leagues, non-SWFA competitions and friendlies with other clubs, including those who are affiliated. The SWFA report in the matchday programme for a friendly against England, includes reference to an unaffiliated nationwide league, a league in the Rosedale region, a youth club league in the Strathclyde region and notes that a league in the Borders region was planned (SWFA programme notes, 1983). Information from narrator private collections included reference to a league in the Aberdeen area and the Lanarkshire 5-a-side championship which was open to U17 sides across the country (McAulay and Malcolm, private collections). Equally, affiliated and unaffiliated teams would play matches too boost the number of games played

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to them starting out at a firm's barbecue and although of course there may have been two teams who started in this way, it seems unlikely.

<sup>123</sup> Following the movement of teams is made more challenging by the number of changed names, a practice that happened across the period. The reasons for this can link to a new local sponsor, changing home base location, a new coach or a large change in personnel.

<sup>124</sup> For affiliated teams a number of the competitions that start in this period are compulsory and this could involve a fair amount of travel which could be difficult if public transport was used. The reduction in players could be due to changes in jobs, personal circumstances, not wanting to play competitive football or moving to another team. There are examples of a player changing teams and then all of her friends leaving to go with her rendering the original team unable to play.



in a season. For example, Carmunnock played unaffiliated teams from Rossdale in Glasgow and Ettrickdale in the Borders, (Malcolm, 1985).<sup>125</sup>

Even though women's football was now becoming more established, teams in the SWFA league(s) during the 1980s continued to be faced with the challenges experienced by those playing in the two previous decades. Narrators spoke about poor kit, sub-standard facilities and lack of officials:

Playing matches, we just booked the pitch if it was a home game and that was one of my responsibilities. It would just be a local pitch in East Kilbride, no changing facilities – it was just public parks, had to watch out for broken glass, dog shit, they weren't always in the best condition. (Edwards, 2018)

We had some good referees and some terrible ones and sometimes no referees at all. So, the teams would find people but that often ended up in a barny, a fight would start and then everyone would go back playing. (Hamilton, 2018)

Alongside poor facilities and lack of funding, teams regularly found themselves unable to field eleven players for a match. Even if the team had enough players signed to them, they would not have a large 'squad' and the absence of players due to work, illness or other engagements meant that teams often played with nine players and sometimes fewer. This became such a problem that the SWFA were forced to issue an edict that if a team had less than seven players, they could not play the match (SWFA letter, 1985). Another facet of women's football, up until the early 1990s, was the absence of youth teams which resulted in young girls seeking out senior teams to play for. This was often beneficial for the team, as the younger players were enthusiastic and regular attendees, assisting in reaching enough players on the team. However, the wide age range meant that the team members had to take responsibility for the safety of the younger players, which could be challenging at times, especially on trips to away matches (Cooper, 2019; McDonald, 2019; Robertson, 2019).

With the passage of time former players became involved in coaching and managing teams and volunteering with the SWFA. They were central to the campaign to further develop and promote women's football, including consistency

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<sup>125</sup> When Malcolm took on the coaching role with the team, they are playing in the Strathclyde league, having voluntarily left the national league as they felt they were not at the required standard although under Malcolm they returned to the national league the following season.

of rules, improved administration and seeking the introduction of training and qualifications for women coaches, an endeavour that took nearly ten years to resolve. Across the 1980s, attempts to raise the profile and develop the official women's game were severely limited by the refusal of the SFA to approve SWFA affiliation (Belcher, 1988), as discussed in the next chapter.<sup>126</sup>

As the new decade started, events in the wider social context prompted a series of events that ultimately led to transition to the next phase of development. In 1991, the Scottish Sports Council launched its Team Sport Scotland initiative, with an objective to increase the opportunities for players and coaches in pitch team sports across Scotland (Begbie, 1994). As part of this initiative a post of Girls' and Women's Football Co-ordinator was created to which Sheila Begbie, former Edinburgh Dynamos and Scotland captain, was appointed. From this role, situated between the SFA and Team Sport Scotland with close links to the SWFA, Begbie was able to devise a strategic approach to the development of women's and girls' football and to attract funding to make the plans reality.

The resultant growth across the first half of the 1990s was remarkable with Team Sport Scotland reporting in 1997 that registered membership had grown from 400 in 1991 to 2,900 in 1997. These figures included members of the junior and schoolgirl leagues which were accepted into the official structures in 1996, with 81 junior teams and 115 school teams affiliating to the SWFA. Membership numbers for senior players had risen to nearly a 1000. Two years later at the time of the 1999 SWFA Annual General Meeting, it was being reported that the growth in youth numbers had been exceptional and that there were nine categories of leagues: Senior, U16, U14, U13, U12, Western Isles, primary and secondary schools and Universities. From 1991 to 1999 the number of senior teams grew from sixteen to thirty-four, with a third division added in the 1991/2 season, as shown in figure 3 below. By the 1996/97 season there was a national premier division with three geographically split '2<sup>nd</sup>' divisions, although this reduced to two regional leagues by 1998/99.

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<sup>126</sup> This comes from, David Belcher, *Foul Play, women footballers accuse men of the SFA*, 1988, article from unidentified newspaper from the Jane Legget collection held at the Scottish Football Museum, which is also discussed further in the next chapter.

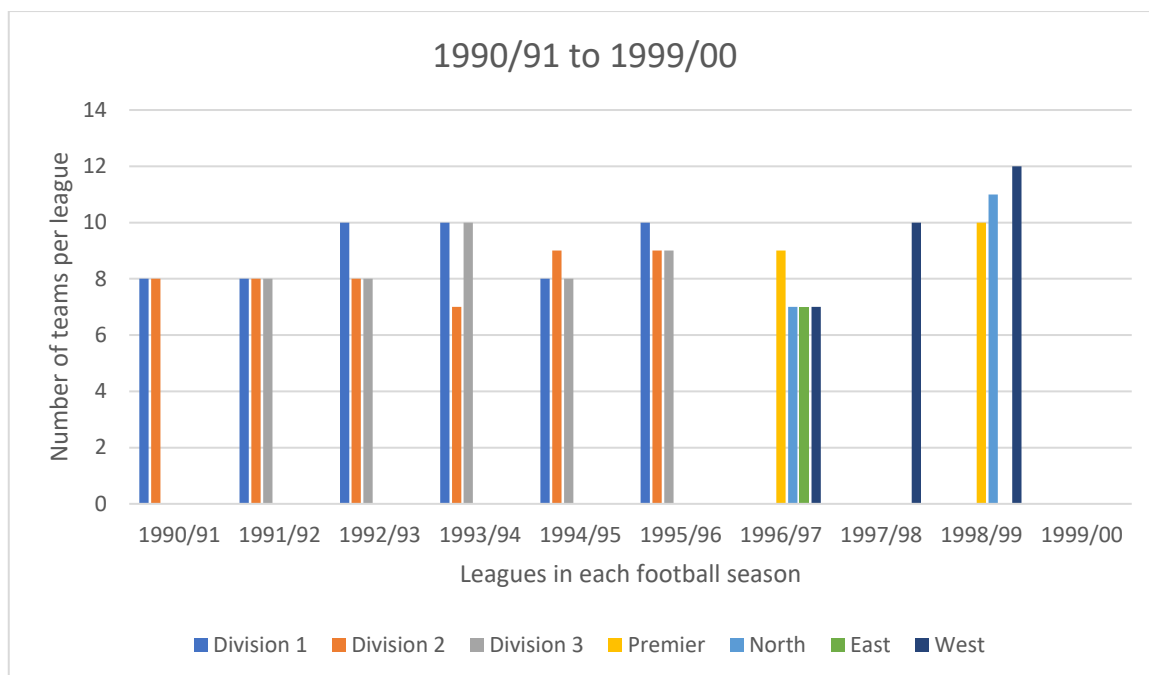


Figure 3. Women’s football leagues in Scotland in the 1990s (complete data currently unavailable)

There was also a growth in the number of women’s teams who established links with men’s teams which could bring benefits including access to facilities and coaching staff, kit, transport and a medical support team (Pauw and Begbie, 1998).<sup>127</sup> Despite this increase in numbers, it has not been possible to locate league information for certain of the years in this period. Other information has been collated from fragmented sources and this is the first time it has been gathered together in this format (Chaudhuri et al., 2010).

Across the 1990s, conditions for women playing slowly began to improve, although the most noticeable changes were in the higher divisions with the availability of local sponsorship, links with men’s teams and more stable ‘home’ grounds.<sup>128</sup> Narrators who played in the 1990s confirmed that while there were some improvements, there were still challenges with regard to facilities, transport and funding. Many of the women who played in the 1990s had exactly the same experiences of constant fundraising as those from the late 1960s and 1970s. While there were some new methods of raising money, there were others that persisted throughout with the majority of participants very familiar with sponsored

<sup>127</sup> Although there has been no research on the Scottish experience of this, Welford (2018) has written about the variants in experience of women’s clubs in England integrating with men’s clubs.

<sup>128</sup> Although, if this home ground was a local council facility, it still needed to be booked for every match.

walks, sponsored keepie-uppie competitions and the sale of football scratch cards to raise money. There also continued to be issues with the availability of suitable pitches and competent officials. There were, however, two changes that were of significance for narrators. The first was the growth of junior and schoolgirl games and teams which meant there were fewer under eighteens regularly playing for senior teams. This growth also led to the more regular use of the term club, especially where there were both junior and senior teams. However, the term was soon adopted even where the club only had a single senior side. The second, potentially more significant, change was the introduction of three divisions. Although initially still nationwide, the creation of lower leagues gave more scope for competent but slightly less competitive teams to remain within the official league structure.<sup>129</sup> The later introduction of geographical divisions would have the added bonus of less travel.

### *Something to play for*

The domestic cup landscape changed a great deal during this phase with the number of official competitions expanding at the outset but reducing significantly by the end of the period. The Scottish Cup continued throughout the period and the League Cup also ran throughout, although with slight variations in format dependent on the structure of the senior divisions. Archival material from the late 1970s and 1980s, makes reference to both a large number of SWFA sanctioned tournaments and cups as well as trophies or tournaments run independently across the country.<sup>130</sup>

As discussed above, the total number of teams remained fairly static for most of the 1980s and this meant that teams were looking for additional games to be

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<sup>129</sup> One of the narrators played for a team that really enjoyed playing football but also obtained equal benefit from the social aspects and so were very happy to be mid to bottom of their 2<sup>nd</sup> division table, where they maintained a certain standard of fitness and skill but were not constantly playing far better teams.

<sup>130</sup> Examples of these include the Jubilee Cup, Wallace Cup, Evening News trophy, Glasgow Rangers Cup, the Rose Bowl, the Glasgow area 5-a-side and the East Kilbride tournament. Details of the Puma Intersport 5-a-side tournament organised by Stirling District Sports Council and held at Stirling University in June 1987, come from a copy of the programme held in the Legget collection, (SFM) lists category 5 as 'females. There are 16 teams given with two from Edinburgh Dynamos; two from Cumbernauld LFC, a Cumbernauld Cosmos and a team from Glasgow University. There are teams that would appear to be from local companies with names such as Littlewood 'C'; McLaren Manics; Debenhams; M&S; and then several that do not appear to be aligned to an organisation such as Cornton Ladies.

organised to provide extra matches potentially against different opponents. Attempts were made by the SWFA to balance the desire of playing as many competitive games as possible with achievable formats. As a result, in addition to league games, teams could be involved in a pre-season tournament in Dundee, the league cup for their division, the Scottish Cup, a mid-season tournament in Paisley, the end of season Leven Cup and two national 5-a-side tournaments. Recognising the importance of competitions to teams and players, the SWFA worked hard to ensure that competitions arranged by them and other organisations, continued to run for as long as possible.<sup>131</sup>

Women's football in Scotland appears to have embraced the 5-a-side format with much enthusiasm. The format was popular because it required fewer players and was predominantly held indoors, which meant better playing conditions and less weather-related disruption. The distinctive style of play of 5-a-side football also enabled different teams to experience winning. The national 5-a-side competition, held in Perth, proved so popular that a compensation cup had to be introduced to placate the teams that were eliminated after the first round of the main tournament and were frustrated at having travelled so far for little playing time. Other competitions mentioned within the archive material are 5-a-side competitions in Arbroath, Meadowbank and the East of Scotland indoor 5s held at Leven Community Centre in Fife.<sup>132</sup> The 5-a-side format was often used by other organisations with, for example, the Association of Youth Clubs running a tournament across the UK with the Scottish leg a popular event for teams whether or not they were affiliated to the SWFA.<sup>133</sup>

This demonstrates that while there may have been a lack of awareness of it (Reid,2004), there was a great deal of competitive women's football taking place across the country and beyond throughout the period under discussion. This evidence continues to refute the notion of women and girls as uncompetitive (Niederle and Vesterlund, 2007). This aligns with recent research which

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<sup>131</sup> Even when the tuck shop for the cup final raised more money than the gate receipts.

<sup>132</sup> Meadowbank is on the outskirts of Edinburgh. The information about the East of Scotland 5s was contained in a newspaper article about the Edinburgh Dynamos, which reported that they were favourites to win the tournament which had twenty teams taking part (Legget collection, Scottish Football Museum)

<sup>133</sup> In 1976, a team from the Edinburgh Dynamos squad won the overall British Association of Youth Clubs Indoor 5s tournament held in Nottinghamshire.

concluded that either there is no gender difference in competitiveness or differing environments and tasks undertaken, rather than gender, impact on levels of competitiveness (Gindi et al., 2019). Additionally, women have demonstrated a desire to 'compete' against previous performance (Mollerstrom and Wrohlich, 2017) and this drive for improvement was confirmed by a number of narrators who said that competitions provided opportunity to improve by playing against new teams.

By the beginning of the 1990s, the lack of reported results within match day programmes and SWFA reports, suggests that the pre-season and mid-season tournaments had ceased, at least as SWFA tournaments.<sup>134</sup> However, there was still a national 5's competition and a separate competition for 2<sup>nd</sup> division teams. As the 1990s progressed, more teams joined the official leagues meaning that there were more games in a team's own league and the opportunity to face a variety of teams in competitions. It appears that this began to negate the need for large numbers of additional competitions and by the end of the 1995/96 season, official SWFA tournaments were listed as the League Cup, Scottish Cup and Leven Tournament. This 1996 Leven Tournament, won by Cove Rangers, was the last to be run as Fife Council were no longer able to resource it and the SWFA was unable to take over responsibility.<sup>135</sup> Those narrators who were involved in the tournament had fond memories of it, although across the twenty-two years it developed from an end of season relaxed tournament to a more serious competition reflecting the SWFA desire to promote a professional image for women's football (McDonald, 2019). Narrators also spoke about a number of tournaments that teams played in other areas of Great Britain or abroad including in America, France, the Netherlands and Spain.<sup>136</sup> These were generally positive

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<sup>134</sup> Cup final programmes would often list that season's tournaments winners and there were season 'round-up' reports in some SWFA AGM minutes.

<sup>135</sup> 1996 was a time of Local Government Reorganisation and so the lack of resources may have been financial or due to the effect of the removal of local Council areas with the introduction of unitary authorities. Although the archive holding relevant papers for Leven and Kirkcaldy Councils has been located, the author has been unable to access them due to COVID-19 restrictions.

<sup>136</sup> For example, in the 1970s, a Tayside select team from East Fife and Dundee played matches against English opposition in Northampton, Bedford, Milton Keynes, Northampton Town & County and Luton. In 1976, following their success in the Scottish Cup, Edinburgh Dynamos played matches in Birmingham and Ashington. In 1978, Westthorn United played in the 'British Ladies Football tournament' which was held in Benidorm in January and played across three days at the Benidorm Municipal stadium. Six teams took part, Westthorn United; Millwall (London); Rossendale (Lancashire); Kilnhurst (Yorkshire); Romford (Essex) and Wealdstone (Kent). In the 1980s Tommy Malcolm's team, Carmunnock, paid visits

and pleasant experiences which demonstrated the acceptance of women's football in other countries.

### *Pulling on the dark blue shirt*

At the start of this phase, the recognition of women's football by the SFA had made organising home international matches more straightforward but lack of tangible support meant that the SWFA continued to struggle to fund away trips. In the late 1970s, matches were mostly played against neighbouring home nations to limit costs, although the SWNT were able to participate in two tournaments in Italy, as the hosts covered the team's expenses. The SWNT record in this period was positive with wins against most opponents, including England in 1977. The SWNT reached the final of the first Italian tournament but the second, in 1979, attracted more experienced teams and they did not progress from the qualifying stage; an outcome that continued for nearly 30 years.

In 1980 and 1981, the SWNT played only three matches, two against Wales and one against the Republic of Ireland. The players for these games came mainly from the still dominant Edinburgh Dynamos and Dundee Strikers but the spread of teams represented slowly grew. Scottish women who played for English teams were also beginning to be included in the squads. John Pollatschek was the team manager and with his role as a PE lecturer at Jordanhill College, the squad were able to use the facilities there for training.<sup>137</sup> In 1981, the UEFA Executive committee ratified the launch of a women's football competition, to which sixteen sides signed up, including Scotland (Vieli, 2014).<sup>138</sup> In preparation for the competition, Scotland played three informal matches in Iceland and Italy.<sup>139</sup> The UEFA Women's Championship kicked off in 18 August 1982 and Scotland's

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to Somain to play in an international friendly tournament and Forfar Farmington had regular exchange visits with a team in Farmington, America. On an early exchange trip, the American party wanted to bring a girls' team and it was because of this that Forfar Farmington were formed (Brown, 2018).

<sup>137</sup> This was a large teacher training college in Glasgow.

<sup>138</sup> In early 1980 delegates at a conference discussing UEFA's approach to women's football, concluded that as well as devoting more resources to the game they should launch a European Competition for national teams (Vieli, 2014) In response, UEFA reinstated their Women's Football Committee. On the 24th April 1981 the UEFA Executive committee approved a proposal for a women's football competition, providing that at least twelve member associations were prepared to take part. In Germany, the DFB entered the competition first and then had to set about creating a national women's team afterwards. We even had to postpone our first match, against Belgium because we still didn't have a team." (Hannelore Ratzeburg, 2006 quoted in Vieli, 2014).

<sup>139</sup> Any reference to Scotland as a team, refers to the women's team throughout.

campaign started a month later against Northern Ireland. The SWFA saw this as the opportunity to bring credibility, status and publicity to the sport as discussed in the next chapter. The group stage was geographically positive with Scotland drawn with England, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland but it was still a financial challenge and caused tension through the disruption to domestic fixtures. Scotland played well in the qualifying matches held in 1982 and 1983 but came second in the group, having lost twice to England and did not progress.

In 1984, Peter Clarke took over as manager of the national team and the SWNT played just two friendly matches.<sup>140</sup> The first match of 1985 was Scotland's opening group qualifier for the second UEFA competition 1984/87, against England in March.<sup>141</sup> The composition and results of Scotland's group were identical to the previous competition, with Scotland exiting at the group stage again. Scotland's third UEFA competition campaign began in 1987 with a match against the Netherlands who, with Ireland and Sweden made up their group. Having lost their first match, Scotland then lost against Ireland in April 1988. At the same time as experiencing these losses, the SWFA was struggling financially and having failed to secure sponsorship to cover participation expenses, it made the decision to withdraw from the competition. This decision was to have future ramifications but the Association had little choice at the time (this is discussed in the next chapter). However, the decade ended on a more positive note when B&Q, sponsors of the men's national team agreed to sponsor the women's kit and a match between Scotland and England in April 1989. Across the decade the SWNT played eleven friendlies against Wales, Italy, Ireland, Iceland, Denmark and England.<sup>142</sup>

A constant theme in the narrative uncovered by the research has been the efforts made to encourage people to take the women's game seriously. It was thought that as more people watched serious teams and saw the standard of play, they would appreciate it more (McAulay, 2019). In pursuit of this, the SWFA arranged

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<sup>140</sup> These matches can now be labelled as 'friendlies' because official UEFA Women's Championship competition has commenced.

<sup>141</sup> UEFA stated that the competition would usually run over 2 years but to ensure future finals would be played in an odd numbered year, the initial competition lasted just over 3 years.

<sup>142</sup> There is limited information about these matches although it is known that the match against Denmark took place in May 1986 at Meadowbank stadium, directly after the game between Meadowbank Thistle and Stenhousemuir.



for the SWNT to play 'exhibition' matches to promote women's football. Examples of this include two games played at Hampden Park ahead of men's cup final matches and one played in England. With hindsight, this appears counterproductive, with women's football promoted as 'entertainment', thereby continuing the disassociation of women's football with 'sport' (Williams, 2006). This is exemplified by the framing of an 'exhibition' match between England and Scotland 5-a-side teams at a men's tournament in November 1986.<sup>143</sup> The match was scheduled just before the evening dance show and was introduced in the programme as an encounter between England and Scotland and:

as with all such confrontations, albeit tiddlywinks, ballroom dancing or football, national pride is at stake and both teams are determined to win. (Programme for the *Daily Express* championships, 1986)

It is probable that the SWFA and WFA felt that this high-profile event would provide a positive showcase for the women's game but the wording in the programme clearly locates it as an amusement. However, care should be taken in analysing actions in retrospect from a different standpoint, as participants enjoyed the experience and were not aware of negative repercussions (Legget, 2019). With the improvement in their financial situation, arising from funding from Team Sport Scotland, the SWFA was able to enter the SWNT into the 1993 UEFA Championships. Scotland failed to progress; a situation repeated in the qualifying games for the 1995 competition when Scotland again came bottom of their group.<sup>144</sup> The growing popularity of women's football in Europe resulted in thirty-three countries entering teams for the 1997 competition prompting changes to the organisation of the tournament (*Kick Off* magazine, 1994). This included dividing competition entrants into two divisions with Scotland, now managed by Miller Hay, placed in the 'B' division. Scotland was no longer playing to reach the finals but rather trying to secure promotion to the top 'A' division and the opportunity to reach future competition finals (Scrivener, 2005). They finished third in their group and therefore remained in the 'B' division for the following championship in 2001.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> As part of the National Daily Express 5-a-side tournament for men.

<sup>144</sup> Scotland played Italy, France and Portugal. The defeats led to the questioning of the competence of the manager, Peter Clarke (see *Kick Off* magazine, 1994).

<sup>145</sup> Scotland played against Belgium, Ireland, the Faroe Islands and Wales.

The Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) had been slower than UEFA in creating an international women's football tournament but in 1991 it held the inaugural FIFA Women's World Cup in China. Scotland did not enter and qualification for the competition in 1995 was via the UEFA championships and Scotland could not qualify.<sup>146</sup> Although UEFA held a separate qualification competition for entry to the 1999 Women's World Cup, Scotland's position in the B division meant they were again competing for promotion, rather than playing in the World Cup finals.<sup>147</sup>

Aside from the involvement in the UEFA Championship, the SWNT continued to play individual friendlies and in smaller tournaments.<sup>148</sup> Across the 1990s there were a total of twelve friendlies played with five played against Iceland, USA 'B', Australia, Wales and Northern Ireland. The remaining seven matches were played against England, including a short match played at Wembley Stadium. As always, finances influenced opponents with the majority of matches taking place in Scotland. However, the Scotland team was able to undertake a short tour in Brazil in December 1996 with the trip made possible by the support of the hosts who paid all squad expenses.<sup>149</sup>

#### *Affiliation finally approved*

As will be discussed in the next chapter, SWFA minutes indicate that from the mid-1990s it renewed efforts to join forces with the SFA. The need to be aligned with the SFA related to obtaining access to the funding, sponsorship and media attention required to develop the women's game. The recalcitrance of the SFA proved a source of frustration to all those involved who were aware of the

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<sup>146</sup> The winners of the quarter finals of the Euro championships were given the European places in the Women's World Cup.

<sup>147</sup> Scotland played away to Estonia and Lithuania, matches which they won convincingly.

<sup>148</sup> In March 1992, the team travelled to Bulgaria to take part in the Grand Hotel Varna tournament alongside eight other countries. Although they did not progress out of their group, they did win the title of most sporting team. This was the 5<sup>th</sup> time the competition had been held, although the first time Scotland took part. It had started at the Grand Hotel Varna and the first two competitions were held indoors. Those playing were both national and club teams. By the time Scotland took part matches were played in local stadiums. The tournament went on to be called the Albena Cup and ran until 2008. <http://www.rsssf.com/tables/w/wom-albena.html#92>

<sup>149</sup> According to a SWFA press release from December 1996, the Brazilian women's FA invited Scotland to tour and then when they were told that the team would not be able to afford that, they paid all expenses including visas for players and staff. The squad included four under sixteen players.

improvements to the performance of the England national team following the WFA merger with the FA.

The impetus for women's football to move to the next phase of development came in 1997, when the SFA agreed to approve affiliation of the SWFA and take on responsibility for the SWNT and the development of girls' and women's football in Scotland. As with the previous transition point, there is little information about the SFA perspective. It is possible that, in line with other male dominated sport, the SFA were seeking to retain football as a sanctuary for threatened masculinities (Stirling and Schulz, 2011; White, 2000). Reading across the material available (Chaudhuri et al., 2010), it appears that their resolve was tested by equalities conditions attached to funding opportunities from bodies such as the Sports Council in Scotland (Macbeth, 2008). This is discussed further in both the next chapter and chapter seven. While the situation did not fully resolve issues with funding for the women's game, it did break the impasse and allow the game to make the next step change in development.

### **Progression**

The process of developing or moving gradually towards a more advanced state, a phase that has so far lasted from about 1995 to 2020.

As will be discussed in chapter five, the move of the SWNT to management by the SFA afforded the SWFA/SWF the opportunity to concentrate on domestic football. In 1999 the Scottish women's football league (SWFL) was created as a separately constituted operation within the SWFA. The function of the SWFL was to concentrate on running the leagues with a view to improving administration, building communications with clubs (including developing a website) and seeking sponsorship. There were four leagues: Premier, 1st, 2<sup>nd</sup> and a 3<sup>rd</sup> division comprising the new clubs that had requested to join the SWFA that year. By the following season there were a total of forty-six women's teams playing affiliated football and a University League with six teams.<sup>150</sup> In June 2000 the members of the SWFA approved the proposal to turn the association into a limited company

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<sup>150</sup> The league numbers were - Premier, ten teams; 1<sup>st</sup> ten teams; 2<sup>nd</sup>, twelve teams and 3<sup>rd</sup>, fourteen teams.

and the transition into Scottish Women's Football (SWF) was finalised in 2001, as discussed in the next chapter.

Many of the women involved in management and administration at clubs and the SWF had both experience of playing women's football and professional management and strategic skills gained through their careers. These skills and experience were used to gradually improve standards, club organisation and the standing of the women's game. The desire to move women's football forward led, in 2002, to the establishment of the Scottish Women's Premier League (SWPL), taking the top flight teams to a second separately constituted operation. This was an attempt to foster a more professional attitude, garner more media interest and thereby hopefully lead to increased sponsorship, as the SWFL had not been able to achieve this.<sup>151</sup> While still part of the larger association, it was hoped that this superior league could attract media coverage through the standard of football played and the opportunity to showcase many of the national squad players. From the 2002/03 to 2005/06 the structure of the leagues remained static with a Premier league and two football leagues although from 2004/05 the 3<sup>rd</sup> division had an East and West league. Overall team numbers were around fifty in the official structure. This is shown in figure 4 on page 109.

Although the organisation of and participation in women's football was improving, there was a degree of stagnation and a feeling of frustration amongst some of those involved at the slow progress made by the SWPL towards its ambitions. Research on the professionalisation process and organisational change has identified that to move out of a state of equilibrium, organisations often require a 'force' to move them (Hoye et al., 2020). This may come internally or externally and as discussed in the next chapter, the SWF has been subject to both. In this instance, although there were internal forces seeking to move women's football onto the next level, there was insufficient force in terms of knowledge and resources to make the changes.

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<sup>151</sup> The twelve founder members of the SWPL were Ayr United, Cove Rangers, Dundee, Giulianos, Glasgow City, Hamilton Academical, Hibernian, Inver-Ross, F.C. Kilmarnock, Lossiemouth, Raith Rovers and Shettleston.

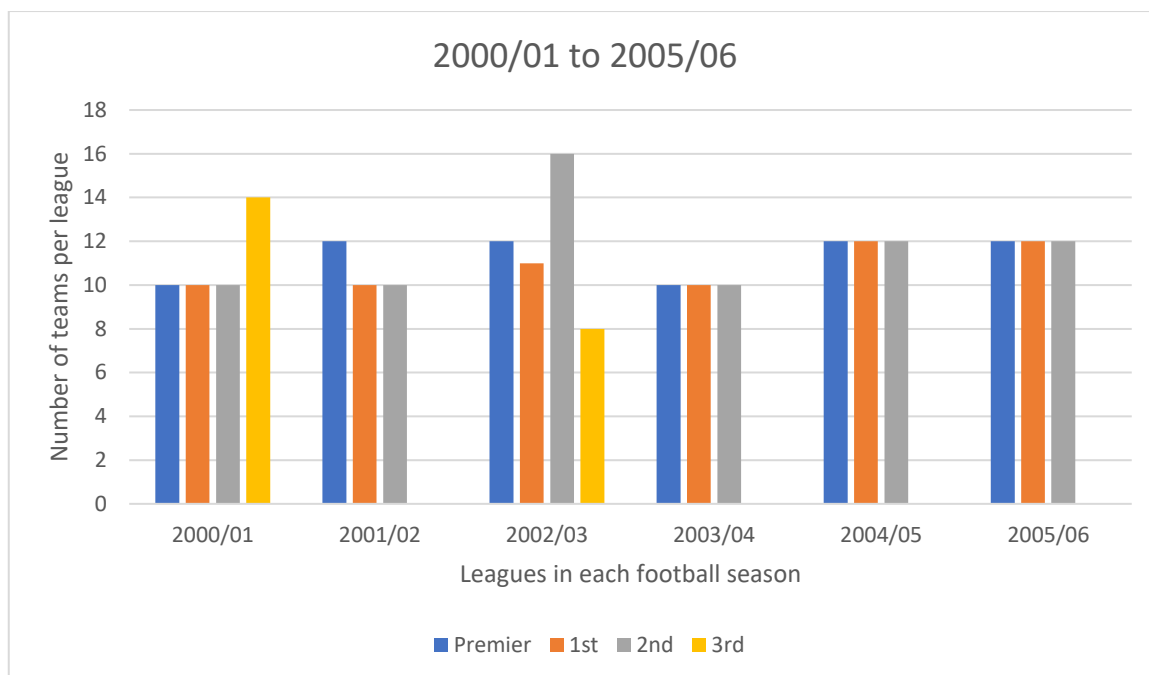


Figure 4. Women’s football leagues in Scotland from 2000 to 2005 (complete data currently unavailable)

However, the 2005 appointment of Anna Signeul by the SFA to the role of national coach and technical director for the SWNT provided the catalyst for change that Scottish women’s football needed. As Vera Pauw was leaving the role with the SWNT, she had suggested to Sheila Begbie that Anna Signeul would be a good fit for the role and after protracted negotiations (Lawther, 2021) Anna and her assistant from Sweden, Ann- Helen Gramh joined the SFA.<sup>152</sup> Pauw who had been appointed in 1998, was very focused on the players for the SWNT squad. This often put her at odds with the domestic clubs and the SWFA/SWF as she wanted training sessions and matches prioritised over domestic fixtures resulting in disruption to the leagues (Cooper, 2019).<sup>153</sup> Signeul, however, saw part of the work with the SWNT as supporting clubs in building a platform from which women’s football in Scotland could grow (Southwick, 2015).

She worked with the SWF and clubs to produce and deliver a development programme, focussing on best practice regarding coaching, player motivation, strength and conditioning and frequency of training believing that these were the

<sup>152</sup> Sheila Begbie had been appointed as Head of Girls’ and women’s football at the SFA in 1998.

<sup>153</sup> In fact, according to players like Julie Fleeting, Pauw’s focus was even narrower, concentrating on the eleven players to be on the pitch, not even the wider squad and while this could be seen negatively, she had the drive and vision to take the SWNT to a higher level of performance (Lawther, 2021).

keys to success. The work with clubs took place in workshops, training and a tour of Swedish clubs to learn how the proposed practices worked there. Several of the narrators went on the tour and all said that this was a significant moment of change for Scottish women’s football (Begbie,2019; Cooper; 2019; Kennedy, 2019).<sup>154</sup> Signeul also worked with the SWF to emphasise the importance of establishing youth teams and academies to create a development pathway. The intention was that these would benefit the clubs and identify talent that could be grown through the youth system and into the senior teams providing a solid base for continued growth and improvement. At the start of her tenure in 2005, the majority of clubs (65%) comprised just one senior team but by 2015, only 30% of clubs had just one team and the numbers participating in women’s football had grown to 8,000 (Southwick, 2015).<sup>155</sup>

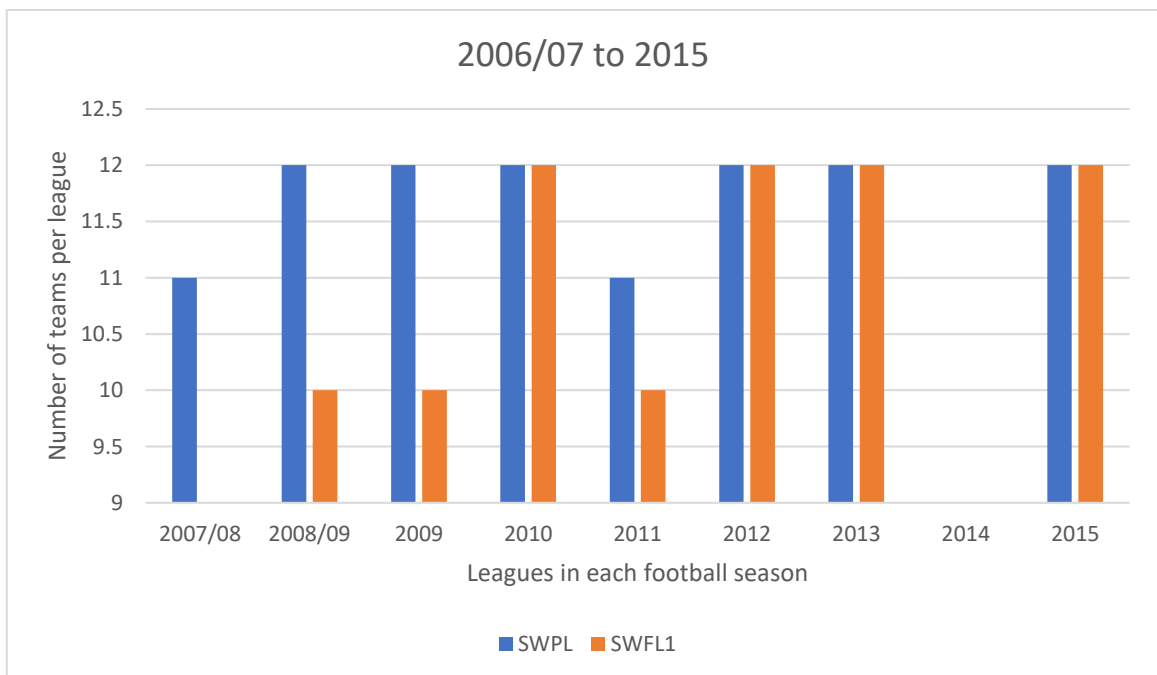


Figure 5. Women’s football leagues in Scotland from 2006/07 to 2015 (complete data currently unavailable including no SWFL2 information)

When Carol-Ann Stewart and Laura Montgomery had founded Glasgow City FC, they believed that women’s football in Scotland could be far better and they had fully embraced the new approach advocated by Signeul and Begbie and invested

<sup>154</sup> Carol-Anne Stewart’s contribution was obtained from Glasgow City videos and the Purple TV documentary.

<sup>155</sup> This would be at least 8,000 as the number would refer to those who were officially members of or connected to the SWF.

in new practices both on and off the pitch.<sup>156</sup> The club has been extremely successful in its endeavours, playing to a consistently high standard both domestically and within UEFA club competition. A further indication of the club's contribution to Scottish football is the fact that eleven players of the twenty-three strong squad that went to the FIFA Women's World Cup 2019, played at some point in their career for Glasgow City (Lawther, 2021).<sup>157</sup> The other dominant team within the SWPL has been Hibernian Ladies.

While conditions for those in the higher league clubs were improving all the time, those playing in the lower leagues could face the same issues as those who played twenty years earlier, from poor facilities to lack of resources, as is explored in chapter six. This was an issue also identified by Signeul who, on her arrival in 2005, claimed her brother's cows fed on better fields than women played football on in Scotland (Lawther, 2021). The variation in conditions amongst the different leagues is explored in chapter six. There continued to be a balance of new teams and existing teams, leaving the official leagues, although just as previously, what appear to be new teams are in fact an old team renamed, or renamed several times.<sup>158</sup> Although the introduction of geographical leagues assisted teams, there were still issues. For example, teams winning their league but then being unable to take promotion to the higher league because of the challenges brought by the prospect of nationwide travel to opponents (McIntyre, 2020).

Although there are small pieces of information about individual teams, information about all the leagues in each year remains fragmented, especially regarding the lower divisions. While the research has been able to bring together a large proportion of the data from 1975 onwards, there remain gaps within this last time period until the creation of the SWF website in 2016. There are other websites with information but this still does not cover all the divisions in each of the years.

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<sup>156</sup> Contributions of Carol-Anne Stewart and Laura Montgomery were obtained through individual conversations, Glasgow City F.C. videos and the Purple TV documentary, as discussed in chapter three.

<sup>157</sup> As demonstrated by the recent television documentary, this is one of the teams that warrant a study of their own.

<sup>158</sup> Across the leagues from 1985 the names, Hailes United, Edinburgh Star, Tynecastle, Bonnyrigg Rose and Whitehill Welfare appear but these are, in fact, all the same team under different guises. Whitehill Welfare was promoted to the SWPL in 2004 but then became Edinburgh Ladies for two seasons before linking with a men's club in 2008 and becoming Spartans FC as they are now known. <http://www.spartansfcwomen.com/history/> last accessed April 12 2021.

Equally, narrators who played within this time period did not have memorabilia that could be made available to the research.<sup>159</sup> From the information that is available it appears that team numbers remained fairly constant for the fifteen years up until 2016, with around thirty-five teams playing across three divisions. In 2009 the decision was been made to change to playing a summer season, running from March to November, with a season played across one calendar year.<sup>160</sup> Another change was instituted in 2012 which would appear to be the result of different rates of development for teams, who until 2012 played the usual format of playing everyone twice to determine league positions. However, from 2012 to 2015 the SWPL was split half way through the season with the top six playing each other to determine the champions and the bottom six seeking to avoid relegation. In 2016, this format was formalised by the introduction of a second premier league with initially eight teams in both and latterly, eight teams in SWPL1 and ten in SWPL2. In the same year, as a result of a growth in participation, the SWFL1 was split into north and south divisions each with twelve teams and the SWFL2 into four geographical leagues with a total of thirty-three teams. The new structure enabled many of the unaffiliated 'recreational' teams to join the SWF and team numbers more than doubled from thirty-three to seventy-three teams. This is illustrated in figure 6 below. This structure remained until 2020, with the only variation being the geographical divisions in SWFL2. In 2019 a Highlands & Islands league was introduced, although this remained outside the formal league pyramid structure.<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> Some of the women said they had not kept much and others said that their collections were held by parents.

<sup>160</sup> This system remained in place until 2020 when the impact of COVID-19 caused a reversion to a winter season.

<sup>161</sup> The timetabling of games in the league is made even more challenging by the need to factor in the times of ferry crossings.



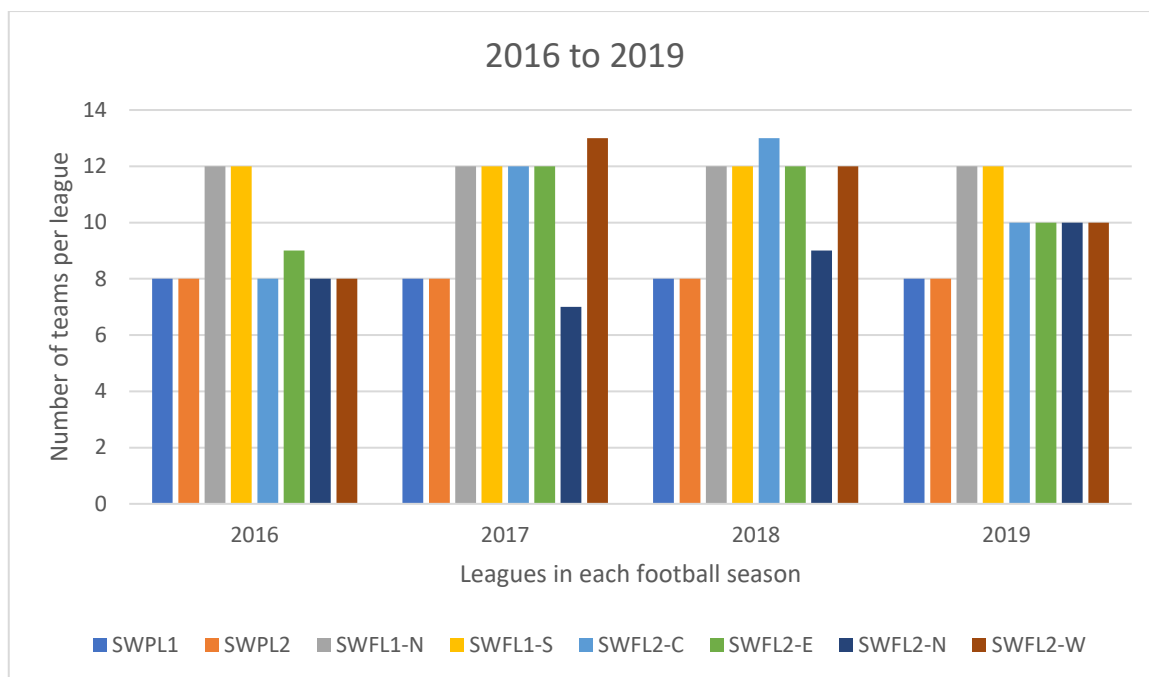


Figure 6. Women's football leagues in Scotland from 2016 to 2019

From 2018, sponsorship enabled league winners to be awarded prize money for the first time. A number of significant changes were implemented in the 2020/21 season with recognition of the need to provide both competitive elite leagues and recreational leagues. As a result, the leagues were re-structured with two Premier leagues and a championship league with twenty-four teams divided into north and south divisions comprising the elite element. The SWFL was revised as a recreational stream, with thirty-seven teams dived geographically including the Highlands and Islands league. The SWF press release said that the purpose of the revised SWFL was to provide teams with an opportunity to play competitive football with a recreational-centred philosophy (SWF,2019) This made a total of seventy-three women's football teams with forty-two playing elite football and thirty-seven playing recreational football.

The growth and professionalisation of women's football continued across the last decade. This process was helped by improved media coverage including regular television coverage on BBC Alba (Ramon and Haynes, 2018).and developments in the use of social media by both the SWF centrally and individual clubs which enabled connections to be made with established fans and the wider public. The plan had been for the current 2020/ 2021 to have eighty-one senior teams playing women's football, almost twice as many as at the start of the decade. However,

the effect of Covid-19 has been to curtail the majority of women's football in Scotland as discussed below.

*Something to play for*

By the 2000s, the number of SWFA Cups and tournaments was steadily reducing in proportion to the increase in league sizes, which provided plenty of playing opportunity. Additionally, for many of the teams increasing professionalisation means further training sessions which both provides sufficient playing time and limits the scope for more matches. Writing in 2021, the main domestic senior honours are:

- SSE Scottish Women's Cup
- Scottish Women's Premier League Cup
- Scottish Women's Championship Cup
- Scottish Women's Football League Cup

There are also cups for the youth performance and regional leagues and a Scottish youth cup.

Although not yet played for, due to Covid-19 restrictions, there has been a change proposed to the format of the premier league cup, which suggest that there is always demand for competition (Niederle and Vesterlund, 2007). These changes involve the introduction of a group stage and a further plate competition for those who are eliminated at the group stage. In a message reminiscent of previous eras, the SWF stated that this was to provide more games and silverware (SWF Press release, 2019) or as the players in the 1960s and 1970s might have said, 'something to play for'.

Outside the domestic game, UEFA started a women's champions league competition in the 2001/02 season with Ayr United the first Scottish representatives and Kilmarnock Ladies taking the slot the following two years. From 2004/05 until 2015/16, the Scottish place was shared between Hibernian Ladies and Glasgow City with the latter taking the slot on nine of the twelve occasions. Since 2016/17, there have been two places available and so far, these have been taken by Hibernian and Glasgow City. In total Hibernian has taken part six times with their best result being to reach the final 32. Glasgow City has taken part thirteen times and in 2011/12 were the first Scottish team to reach the last 16

in a champion's league tournament. In 2014 they bettered this by reaching the quarter finals, a feat they repeated in 2020.

### *Pulling on the dark blue shirt*

The new management arrangements under the SFA brought slow and steady progress.<sup>162</sup> SFA responsibility for the SWNT commenced with the second round of matches seeking promotion to the UEFA A division. Joint group leaders with the Czech Republic but with a lower goal difference, they needed to win their last match by seventeen goals to top the group.<sup>163</sup> In May 1998 the SWNT did just that to reach the play-offs although they lost to Spain and remained in the UEFA B Division. The SFA appointed Vera Pauw to the national lottery funded post of national coach and technical director, her first as a head coach, in summer 1998. She believed that the SWNT lack of success was in part due to their limited experience in either international competition or friendly matches. She produced a development plan with the objective of building skills and experience through increased group training and playing more matches. The six years of her tenure saw the SWNT play fifty-two matches with the increased resourcing enabling participation in more tournaments and friendly matches against a larger pool of experienced opponents, which while building skills and experience also highlighted the ability gap in comparison to world class teams.<sup>164</sup> They also played in a number of unofficial tournaments of varying standards.<sup>165</sup> At the start of the campaign for the 2001 Euros the SWNT's classification as a 'B' division team continued to restrict their participation and their performance did nothing to

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<sup>162</sup> The period from the start of the SFA direct involvement with the SWNT has been relatively well documented and, writing in 2021, a new book *Arrival* (Lawther, 2021) was released which covers this era in detail. This section is therefore, shorter to enable more information to be presented on the previous, less reported periods.

<sup>163</sup> Goal difference is a common method for separating teams who are level on points from matches. It refers to the difference between the goals scored and goals conceded by the team.

<sup>164</sup> These included France, Finland, the Netherlands, Iceland, Greece, Portugal, Italy, Australia and America. When the SWNT travelled to America they were able to experience larger crowds than at home but were also given a demonstration of top-quality football by players including Mia Hamm and Abby Wambach. They were beaten by eight goals to two, with a report on the match remarking that the fact that this was a friendly may have stopped a bigger rout (Dominguez, 2002).

<sup>165</sup> The Albena cup was previously known as the Varna tournament which the Scottish team had played in 1992. In the Algarve cup, Scotland (along with three other teams) were invited to participate to enable them to gain more experience rather than fully participate in the main tournament. This proved a fair assessment of their standing as they finished tenth out of the twelve teams participating. In contrast, they dominated the Celt Cup including beating the Isle of Man by twenty-seven goals to nil with Julie Fleeting scoring sixteen goals.

improve their standing. The SWNT did well in the group stage of the UEFA competition for qualification for the FIFA Womens' World Cup 2003, gaining automatic promotion to the expanded UEFA Class A division ahead of the campaign for the 2005 UEFA championship. Promotion meant playing against more experienced and skilled teams and Scotland finished third in their group leaving the tournament at this stage. After Scotland's departure from the campaign, Pauw left to manage the Netherlands national team. She had worked hard to develop a strong squad of players who were now in the top class of European women's football (Lawther, 2021).

In March 2005, Anna Signeul moved from her role with the U16/18 national squad at the Swedish FA to take up the position of national coach and technical director for the SWNT. During her tenure, the SWNT played sixty-one friendlies against twenty-four countries mainly from within Europe but also played Australia, Japan and the USA.<sup>166</sup> The team also participated in two smaller tournaments and the Cyprus Cup on nine occasions, including, in 2011, beating England for only the second time.<sup>167</sup> This steady improvement in performance began to be reflected in their participation in the UEFA and FIFA competitions with the team now making the group play-off stage.<sup>168</sup> In the preliminary rounds for the 2013 UEFA championship, the SWNT finished second as one of the six best group runners up and faced Spain in the play-offs.<sup>169</sup> At the end of the second leg the teams were drawn and the match went to added time. Spain made a last-minute break through taking them through to the finals on an aggregate score of four goals to three. To have missed qualification at the last moment was very difficult but it made the SWNT determined to come back stronger (Campbell, 2017). The next tournament was the 2017 Euros to be held in the Netherlands. Scotland finished second in their group and as one of the six best runners-up, qualified without the

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<sup>166</sup> The team travelled to America at the start of 2013 and whilst still losing, the scores showed more evenly matched teams and they had the experience of playing in front of large crowds with 18,565 spectators at their game in Jacksonville, Florida.

<sup>167</sup> The smaller tournaments were the Torneo Molise, held in Italy and consisting teams from Italy, Japan and Scotland. Scotland came last in the tournament, something they repeated in 2013 at the Brazilian invitational tournament when they played against Brazil, Canada and Chile.

<sup>168</sup> The SWNT lost to Russia in the group play-offs for the 2009 UEFA championship finals. At the time, Signeul reflected on the result and how far the team had come since her appointment, and whilst not yet a top team, the SWNT were worthy of a place in the finals.

<sup>169</sup> Scotland had been drawn in a group with France, Wales, Ireland and Israel.

need to participate in play-offs.<sup>170</sup> After all the frustration and the agony against Spain, they had, at last reached the finals and did so in style having won seven of their eight qualifying ties and scoring thirty goals (Lawther, 2021). The SWNT performed well among Europe's best teams at the tournament but with only one win, they did not progress from the group stage. Scotland failed to qualify for the FIFA Women's World Cup tournaments in 2007 and 2011. Qualification for the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup saw a record forty-six teams competing for just eight places. In 2013, £200,000 was made available to fund the players taking extra time away from their workplaces to train.<sup>171</sup> Scotland reached the qualification play-offs but lost to the Netherlands. This was Signeul's last World Cup campaign with Scotland as she left her role after the 2017 UEFA championships having been appointed Finland's coach.

Shelly Kerr, was appointed manager and was in post from September 2017 to December 2020.<sup>172</sup> The significant achievement of Kerr's tenure was qualification for the finals of the 2019 FIFA women's world cup, with the SWNT having won seven out of their eight group matches. Having reached the finals of the tournament, Scotland were not able to progress to the next stage.<sup>173</sup> Having reached their first tournament finals in 2017, the SWNT failed to qualify for the 2022 UEFA championships.<sup>174</sup> In the time that Kerr was in charge the team played eleven friendly matches, adding New Zealand and Jamaica to the list of opponents. They also took part in the Algarve Cup and in March 2020 they won the inaugural Pinatar cup against teams from Iceland, Northern Ireland and the Ukraine.

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<sup>170</sup> Drawn in a group with Iceland, Slovenia, Belarus and Macedonia

<sup>171</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/news/supporting-womens-football/> Last accessed April 12 2021.

<sup>172</sup> Writing in early 2021, it is not clear the reasons for Kerr's resignation although it came after the SWNT failed to qualify for the 2022 Euros and Kerr had been self-isolating due to the pandemic and had been unable to attend the qualifying matches.

<sup>173</sup> The SWNT were drawn with England, Japan and Argentina. Scotland lost two of the matches and drew the third against Argentina following a controversial decision over the taking, saving and re-taking of a penalty.

<sup>174</sup> These were to have been played in 2021 but were moved back a year so that the men's tournament, delayed by Covid-19, could be played in 2021.

## Current position of women's football in Scotland

Overall, the final phase under discussion here has seen significant progression in women's football in Scotland with growth, professionally run leagues, strong independent clubs, affiliation with men's clubs, increased sponsorship and better performance in international competition. The performance of SWNT has increased interest in women's football and this has been reflected in a recent BBC Alba deal with the SWPL.<sup>175</sup>

Many of the clubs from the start of the 2000s continue to play today and while a small group of teams have dominated the honours that position is slowly changing as more investment is made in a number of the clubs. In particular, are those clubs that have become an integral part of a men's club, although this is not of itself, sufficient to ensure long term viability.<sup>176</sup> However, the increasing links with larger men's clubs and the lack of resourcing for the whole football structure has meant that the gap between elite, semi-serious and grassroots divisions is expanding (McIntyre, 2020). The financial issues will be exacerbated by the Covid-19 restrictions that have seen clubs lose money due to lack of gate receipts and reduction in sponsorship (Falk, 2021). Towards the end of 2019 there had been a feeling of expectation within women's sport, a hope that the signs of progression could be translated into flourish (Osborne and Skillen, 2020; Skogvang, 2019). However, the forward momentum experienced at the start of the 2020/21 season was halted by Covid-19. Thanks to two sizeable donations the majority of women's clubs affiliated to the SWF have received small payments to assist them in covering costs (McIntyre, 2020). This is now a critical time for Scottish women's football and there is a need for secure substantial, sustained financing. At the elite level this would be to introduce professional league to raise standards and enhance the game. At other levels this is needed to ensure that there is continued growth to allow the SWF and Scottish football to support

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<sup>175</sup> <https://herfootballhub.com/bbc-alba-announce-a-record-breaking-tv-deal-with-the-swpl/> Last accessed April 12 2021.

<sup>176</sup> In Autumn 2020 it was announced that the Cove Rangers women's team based in Aberdeen had been disbanded. They were a successful team and had the potential to win the North Championship title and follow in the footsteps of Aberdeen FC Women in promotion to the SWPL 2. The loss of a team with the history of Cove Rangers was a disappointment for women's football, particularly in the north-east. In a move that was very reminiscent of the earlier phases of women's football, it was announced that the team would merge with a local youth club team. It is believed that the decision was made to enable concentration of funds for the men's team that had just been promoted from the Northern league.

provision to enable women and girls to play football at whatever level they want wherever they are in the country.<sup>177</sup> The need to address economic barriers to women's football will be discussed further in chapter seven.

## **In Comparison**

This chapter has expanded the narrative of women's football in Scotland by tracing its development across the past sixty years and in doing so meets, in part, the first research objective.<sup>178</sup> However, the expansion of the narrative in turn leads to the question of the extent to which that rate of development differed from other comparable European countries. This is the first element of the third research objective which this section seeks to begin to address, with the second element regarding influencing factors, addressed in chapter seven.<sup>179</sup>

The criteria used to select comparator countries were: that football was one of the top two sports men played or watched; that there were comparable cultural references and that literature about the history of women's football was accessible. These selection criteria identified six countries for the comparison exercise, Denmark, England, Germany, Ireland, Norway and Sweden. The academic writing on the history of women's football within these countries was predominantly undertaken in the period from 2003 to 2011 and so the available narrative data only facilitates comparison up until the early part of the century. The latter twenty years comparison has been achieved through the analysis of statistical data, taking into consideration relative differences in population size.

All of the countries, except Ireland, have some evidence of women playing football before 1960, although it was generally viewed as not suitable for women.<sup>180</sup>

Denmark saw a brief peak of activity in the very early 1960s following the organisation of a football tournament by the publishers of *Femina* magazine. This attracted twenty-nine teams including one, BK Femina, formed and supported by the magazine. However, interest in women's football was short-lived with the magazine withdrawing support for the team and coverage of women's football, in

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<sup>177</sup> <https://scotwomensfootball.com/vacancy-chief-executive-officer-ceo/>

<sup>178</sup> To further uncover the narrative of women's football in Scotland across the period 1960 to 2020.

<sup>179</sup> To examine the extent to which that rate of development differed from other comparable European countries and to consider what factors may have shaped the development in Scotland

<sup>180</sup> For example, a Danish article from the 1950s stated that, football was reserved for men and was a forbidden area for the beautiful gender (Brus and Trangbæk, 2003).

1962. This resulted in a decline in interest with only a small number of clubs continuing to play and by the start of the 1970s there were ten recorded teams, a similar number to Scotland (Brus and Trangbæk, 2003). Equally, in Norway, in 1971 a football club from Oslo partnered a newspaper to sponsor an 'unofficial' football championship with 16 teams (Skille, 2008).<sup>181</sup> In Sweden there would appear to have been a similar pattern of an ad hoc emergence of teams and local organisation of events, to that found in Scotland (Hjelm and Olofsson, 2003). In 1965 a tournament was held at a Swedish university and over the next three years there were similar events across the country but these were organised independently by women in different locations with no co-ordination or communication. Individual leagues were also formed but again with no consistent development and the lack of awareness, little was known about women's football outside those involved, which reflects the position in Scotland at this time (Hjelm and Olofsson, 2003). Recent writing has located evidence of an indoor women's football league in Drogheda in Ireland starting in 1966 (Byrne, 2017). Here there is a similar pattern of an ad hoc emergence of leagues in the 1970s, often associated with large workplaces, such as the Civil Service or banks (Bourke, 2003, Liston, 2006). In West Germany, women's football started to establish itself in 1968 and in 1970 a national team went to the Unofficial World Cup (Pfister, 2003). Women's football in England evolved at a similar pace to that in Scotland from 1960 to the early 1970s, although the number of teams evidenced in England was much larger as might be expected given the difference in population, and by 1970 there were seven leagues in operation (Williams, 2003a).<sup>182</sup> At this point, then, women's football was in a comparable situation in all the countries.

As discussed earlier, in 1971 UEFA urged its member nations to lift the restrictions imposed on women's football, recognise the game and take control of women's football. Scotland was the last of the comparison group to recognise women's football and lift restrictions in 1974. However, the fact that women's

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<sup>181</sup> Many Norwegians believe that a match that took place in the 1970s was the first woman's match in Norway but is in fact the match that rekindled interest in the game.

<sup>182</sup> Although population size may account for an element of the difference in number of teams, Scotland still had fewer teams as part of the SWFA than relative population size might suggest. This may be due to the lack of registration by many teams but there is also evidence of this in England. The reason for the variance in the numbers involved in the game would be a potential topic for further research, if data were available.



football was recognised does not mean that everything was positive. For example, when the West German FA recognised 'Ladies Football' they used both the term 'ladies' football' and specific rules (matches at sixty minutes, summer play only and no studs) to ensure that women's football was clearly identified as different from men's (Pfister,2003).<sup>183</sup> Although officially recognised earlier, women footballers in Denmark found themselves in a similar position to those in Scotland, with the worst training grounds and slots for matches. The men's football association set up a 'ladies committee' but this was not effective in achieving support, encouragement and development and one of its first actions was to disband the national team (Brus and Trangbæk, 2003). In Norway, women's football was also not encouraged and so in 1973 there were just a handful of teams playing in private leagues (Fasting, 2003). Although the FA in England recognised women's football in 1971, their level of support for the game was as muted as that in the other comparison countries, with women's football struggling to be accepted by and included in the dominant football community (Skogvang, 2019). The exception was Sweden where the early 1970s were a period of rapid growth with 4,901 licensed players in fifty-nine leagues by 1971(Hjelm and Olofsson,2003).<sup>184</sup> Scotland, at this time, had 290 registered players.

For four of the countries, amalgamation of the associations took place within the 1970s. For West Germany and Denmark this was relatively early although, as described above, it did not facilitate immediate development. In Norway and Sweden amalgamation took place in 1976, when both had already had a period of growth.<sup>185</sup> In Sweden, women's committees at club and district level started to tackle issues and feed through recommendation for change to a national level

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<sup>183</sup> Women's football was opposed by the centralised sport system in East Germany until the late 1960s. Women's football teams played a number of friendlies and formed a league throughout the 1970s to the extent that by 1980 there were approximately 6,000 women playing the game. However, for a sport to be taken seriously required it to achieve success on the international stage which women's football did not. As a result, the East German Football Association never took it seriously and it was viewed as recreational and leisure sport with little or no funding or support (Pfister, 2003).

<sup>184</sup> Many workplace teams as elsewhere which is area for further research There has been contention that the influence for the development of women's football came from Denmark but other sources contend that it was the newspaper reports of professional players in Italy and Czechoslovakia that promoted the renewed interest.

<sup>185</sup> In Sweden, at first there were no women on the board of the Swedish Football Federation or in central management although in 1978 it was agreed that a representative from the Premier League Association for Women's football could attend meetings but not vote (Hjelm, 2011).

(Hjelm, 2011). After a slow start it was then Norway that forged ahead in terms of women's football. There was a breakthrough in 1975 when several major newspapers began to support women's right to play led by respected sports editor Leif Isdal who wrote in *Dagbladet*, "the Norwegian Football Association should promote the sport for women and not work against its development" (Fasting, 2003: 151).<sup>186</sup> In 1975 the Norwegian Football Association (FAN) started the registration of women's and girl's teams with 91 teams in 17 football districts signing up. Following public declarations of support by FAN board members, a women's committee was established in 1976, and amongst other initiatives established leagues and consistent rules, developed a national team and introduced education for female managers, coaches and officials (Fasting, 2003).<sup>187</sup> This early amalgamation of football associations has, despite some initial lack of support, been credited with creating the foundation for the future successes of these nations (Skogvang, 2019).

In 1983, the English FA invited the Women's Football Association (WFA) to affiliate, declaring it to be the lead body for women's football in England, at that time (Woodhouse, 2002). This afforded it the opportunity to apply for grants and sponsorship while retaining overall control. The WFA favoured this approach which enabled it to continue working to develop the game which it was concerned the FA would not be interested in. For the next ten years the WFA continued as, "an amateur association with volunteer workers and limited funds" (Lopez, 1997: 60) but through a combination of international success and television coverage, England saw a rapid growth in interest in the late 1980s (Williams, 2007).<sup>188</sup> This was a better position than Scotland and Ireland where the SWFA and LFAI worked under the same conditions but without the legitimacy and credibility afforded by affiliation to the main association (Bourke, 2003).<sup>189</sup> In Denmark, even though the national team won the unofficial European championship in 1979,

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<sup>186</sup> Newspaper founded in 1869

<sup>187</sup> Although the first Chair of the committee was male, he was a known supporter of women's football who felt it should be taken more seriously and one of the committee members was Ellen Wille who became a leading figure in the development of women's football across Europe (Fasting, 2003).

<sup>188</sup> Channel 4 televised games from the Women's FA cup and the international team became more successful, thereby gaining national recognition.

<sup>189</sup> Although in 1985, the LFAI were given observer status at the FAI (Bourke, 2003). The LFAI was given observer status at the FAI in 1985 (Bourke, 2003).

interest in women's football in Denmark plateaued until the 1990s (Brus and Trangbæk, 2003). Meanwhile, in women's football in West Germany, regional leagues developed and women's committees were established, at both national and regional level. These committees initiated a number of schemes and projects which led to continuous growth and development (Bosley, 2007). This improved structure and investment in turn led to the National team beginning to be more successful. Continuing at the forefront, in 1985, Ellen Wille took up a place on the Norwegian FA executive committee and in the same year became the first woman to speak at a FIFA Congress, demanding much greater effort from the governing body in promoting the women's game (Skille, 2008).

For Scotland, in the 1990s, the position of being tolerated rather than encouraged continued. In 1991, the LFAI were given full member status of the FAI in Ireland and whilst a positive move, they still experienced funding issues (Bourke, 2003). In Denmark when the DBU wanted to become the first Danish sports association to reach three-hundred thousand members, it invested in women's football as the most realistic growth area. While this was ostensibly a positive for women's football, the long-awaited investment from the male centric football community was a by-product of a bigger objective (Brus and Trangbæk, 2003). In Sweden, while the number of players continued to grow across the 1990s and there was international success, this situation began to change with a reduction in numbers which led to questions being asked about the women's abilities and skill at football (Hjelm, 2011). In 1993 the WFA merged with the FA and whilst there were concerns, it became clear that the resources and organisational expertise would benefit the women's game and provide English women's football a sound base from which to grow. Norway continued to forge ahead and in 1992, the women's committee had been disbanded because the FAN felt that there was sufficient integration. Four years later Karen Espelund became the first female vice president and was then appointed General Secretary (of the whole FA) in 1999, a role she held for 10 years (Skille, 2008).<sup>190</sup> This is in sharp contrast to the situation

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<sup>190</sup> However, Fasting (2003) points out that the achievement in Norway should not be viewed through rose coloured glasses, there were still negative attitudes and people invented problems instead of discussing how real problems could be resolved.

in Scotland, where the SFA did not agree to the affiliation of the SWFA until 1998 when they also took over responsibility for the national team.

As indicated above, many of the historical narrative pieces only cover up until the late 1990s or early 2000s. In an effort to consider comparisons up until more recently, accessible statistical data has been used. The information came mainly from the UEFA website which for a period of four years produced comprehensive information about women's football in member nations. Unfortunately, the last data available was for 2017 and has yet to be updated. The points of comparison are number of registered players (with data back to 2009), the number of senior teams and competition honours. Not all the information is available for all countries but as much as possible has been compared. Here comparison has been with the countries of similar population size as this factor influences the figures.

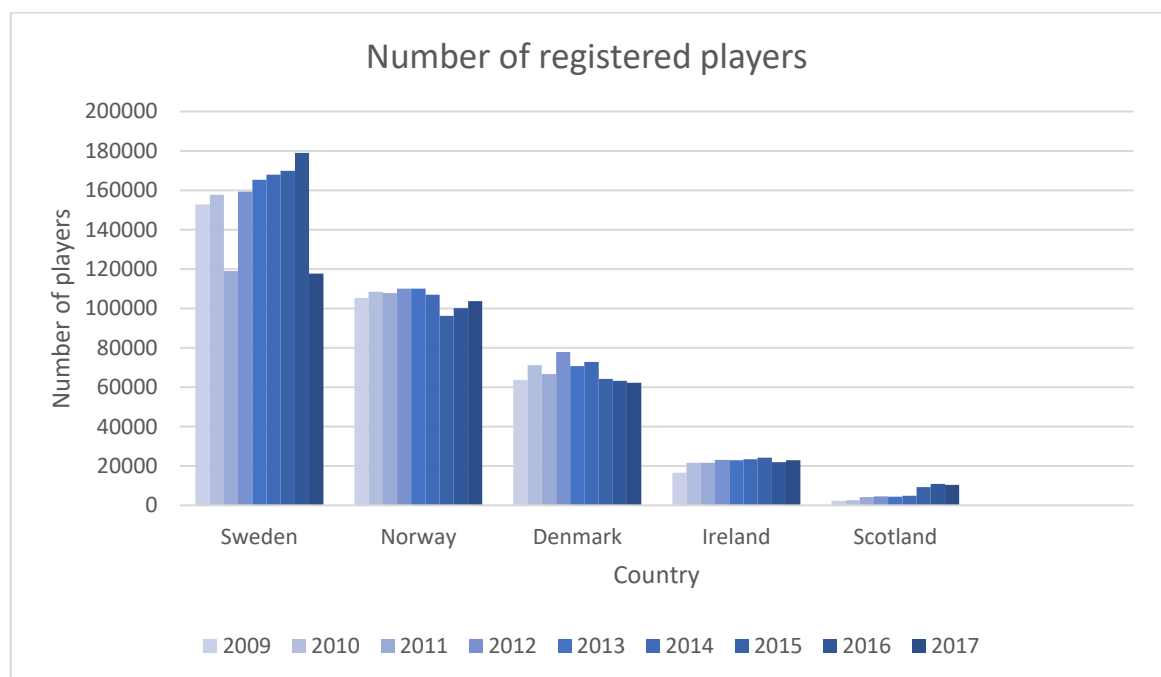


Figure 7. Registered Players by country

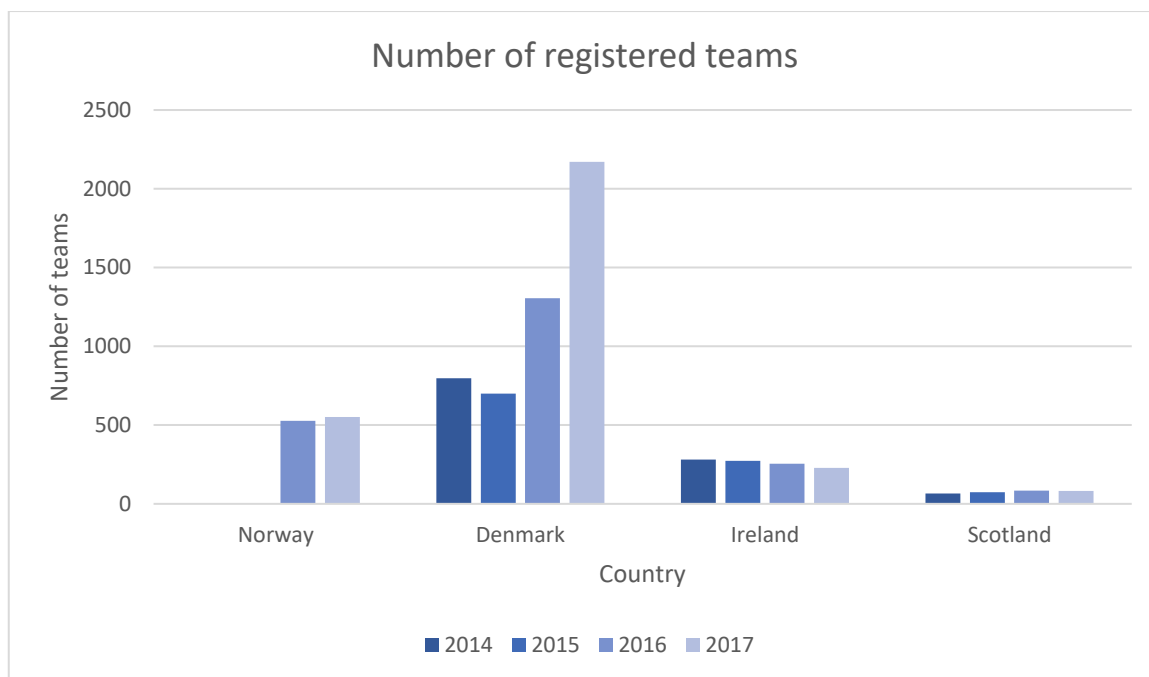


Figure 8. Registered Teams by country

The charts above clearly illustrate the comparative position of Scottish women’s football. While women’s football in Scotland began its development journey at a similar time and appears to have initially kept pace, it has now fallen far behind the comparator countries on these measures.

The final point of comparison is success in international competition, taken to be reaching the final stages of a tournament. With regard to the UEFA championships, most comparator countries reached the finals from the first or second tournament. Scotland finally did so in 2017 and Ireland are yet to achieve this. The table below shows the number of times countries have reached finals and the highest position achieved. The table also shows comparable information for the World Cup and again highlights the gap in performance of the SWNT.

The reasons for this gap will be discussed in more depth in chapter seven but the lack of affiliation to the SFA and the resultant lack of resources are central to understanding why women’s football in Scotland is so underdeveloped in terms of the number of players and teams involved and success in international competitions.

Country	Reached UEFA Euro finals <sup>191</sup>	Highest Placing	Reached FIFA World Cup finals	Highest Placing
Norway	12/13	Winner (1987, 1993)	8/8	Winner 1995
Germany	11/13	Winner (1989, 1991, 1995, 1997, 2001, 2005, 2009 and 2013)	8/8	Winner 2003, 2007
Sweden	11/13	Winner (1984)	8/8	Runner up 2003
Denmark	10/13	Runner Up (2017)	4/8	Quarter- finals 1991, 1995
England	9/13	Runner -up (1984, 2009)	5/8	Third place, 2015
Scotland	1/13	Group Stage	1/8	Group Stage
Ireland	-/13	-	-/8	-

Table 2 Performance in UEFA and FIFA competitions

## Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to present an account of the development of women's football in Scotland across the past sixty years and to examine that development in relation to several comparator countries. The development was described in three phases, Resistance, covering the period from 1960 to about 1977; Persistence, covering the period from about 1974 to 1998 and finally, Progression, covering from about 1995 to 2020. From the available evidence, it described developments through reference to the domestic league structure, cups and competitions and the progression of the Scotland women's football team. The chapter has charted the journey from ad hoc matches with inadequate facilities to record participation levels following qualification for the FIFA Women's World Cup France 2019<sup>TM</sup>. Within the description of the phases was an examination of the way in which the growth of women's football was influenced by the wider social

<sup>191</sup> This information includes qualification for the 2022 UEFA Championship but the results column only covers the twelve tournaments that have taken place.

context it operated in. That context included the introduction of equality legislation, funding provision linked to wider sports initiatives and the equalities focused requirements of funders, forcing the SFA to work with women's football, if only for the sake of its budget (Macbeth, 2008).

The chapter has shown that there was far more football being played than has been written about before, both competitive and recreational. Starting with forty-one clubs identified in the 1960s, through the first league of twelve teams to the current structure with eighty teams playing in eight leagues. These leagues are elite, semi-serious and recreational (McIntyre, 2020) and embody the range of footballing opportunities across the country envisaged by the early SWFA. However, the women's football community in Scotland continue to face challenges which will be further discussed in chapter seven.

Having established the rich history of women's football in Scotland across the past sixty-years, the chapter then discussed developments in Scotland in comparison to women's football in selected European countries. This demonstrated the comparatively slow pace of progress in Scotland and this theme will be taken up in chapter seven, which discusses the factors which impeded the development of women's football in Scotland.

This chapter has begun to expand knowledge and understanding of the progression of women's football in Scotland presenting significant new information, gathered together to tell a previously ignored aspect of women's history. This work is further developed in the next chapter which considers the history of Scottish Women's Football and their role and place within the growth of the infrastructure supporting women's football. This chapter has begun the process of rendering women's football visible and thereby reclaiming its place within the overall football narrative.

## 5. Sisters doing it for themselves

The review of literature, earlier in the thesis, demonstrated the lack of information about the development of women's football in Scotland. Chapter four presented the findings of the research with regard to the growth of domestic leagues, cups and competitions and the progress of the Scottish women's national team (SWNT). In doing so it began the process of further uncovering the previously ignored history of the women's game in Scotland during the period from 1960 to 2020. This chapter focuses on the organisation that has directed the game for almost fifty years, the Scottish Women's Football Association (SWFA), now known as Scottish Women's Football (SWF). In light of the lack of collated historical information about the organisation, this chapter makes a significant contribution to the on-going creation of knowledge about women's football in Scotland.

At the outset of the research, information about the SWFA/SWF was especially scarce. Fortunately, the SWF expressed a desire to be involved in and support the research and consequently gave access to administrative papers held at its office. This led to the revelation of a previously uncatalogued archive of documentary material which, in combination with additional physical and verbal material from narrators and established archives, enabled the production of an outline history of the SWFA and its development into the SWF. It demonstrated that across the past fifty years, when women's football has predominantly been, "treated as lesser, as abnormal and as unworthy of attention" (Dunn, 2016), the SWFA/SWF encouraged, supported and facilitated advancement in Scotland.

The central theme of this chapter is that of governance. The term is used here to refer to the means by which the SWFA/SFA sought to act in the best interests of its membership. It did this by ensuring efficient and effective management through the steering, regulation and control of women's football in Scotland (Dowling et al., 2014; Ferkins et al., 2005). The information used in this chapter came predominantly from three main sources. The first was material within the private collection of Tommy Malcolm, including correspondence and meeting minutes from the SWFA and copies of the newsletter he produced for it. Second was information from narrators who had roles within the SWFA/SWF which provided



valuable information and insight.<sup>192</sup> The final source was the archive of the SWF revealed during the research, containing material from the 1990s onwards.<sup>193</sup> Although there still remain gaps in the historical narrative, through cross referencing, reading against the grain and “working outward in concentric circles of related sources” (Chaudhuri et al. 2010: xviii), a base has been created that can be used as a point of departure for further research.<sup>194</sup>

The chapter begins with an overview of the analytical framework used to examine the research findings. The development of the SWFA/SWF is then traced through three phases as, in common with sports organisations throughout the world, it transitioned from an amateur, volunteer driven association to a professional organisation (Shilbury and Ferkins, 2011). The first phase lasts from 1972 to about 1993, the second from about 1994 to about 2014, with the move to the final phase taking place in about 2015. The transitions between the phases have approximate demarcations, as the change processes evolved over a number of years, with internal and/or external pressures and social contexts, including structural inequalities, effecting transition through and between phases (Campbell and Williams, 2014; Campbell, 2020; Dunning and Sheard, 2005; Liston, 2006; Jarvie, 1991; White, 2000). The account encompasses the challenges faced and progress made across the past fifty years, as the organisation strove to govern, organise, promote and advance women’s football in Scotland.

## **Analytical Framework**

Writing and discussion about sport governance by sport management academics has increased significantly in the past decade. Within this literature, while the themes of football and gender have featured significantly as individual topics of analysis, there has been minimal intersection between these major themes

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<sup>192</sup> These narrators included the first SWFA Secretary, a former chair of the SWFA, a former treasurer of the SWFA, a committee member, the first paid administrator, the current chair of the SWF and the current Executive Officer of the SWF.

<sup>193</sup> The process of creating a formal SWF archive to preserve the material from the SWFA / SWF for future research has been initiated.

<sup>194</sup> A facet of the post-colonial and queer feminist discourse on archives was the development of techniques around the critical and creative re-reading of existing documents. This includes instances where the subject is mentioned tangentially or when it is necessary to consider a number of general sources to build a picture of women’s lives that are lost to the record. This type of analysis can be traced back to the 1970s and the emerging field of social history and practitioners who were creatively engaging with primary documents to make visible previously unseen women’s history (Mayhall, 2005).

(Dowling et al., 2018).<sup>195</sup> Neither the changing nature of governance within European professional football (Dowling et al., 2018) nor the examination of gender ratios within governing bodies and the resulting effect on governance and leadership (Adriaanse, 2017; Adriaanse and Claringbould, 2014; Dowling et al., 2018, O'Boyle, 2017; Piggott and Pike, 2020) proved relevant to the themes originating from the analysis of the available archive material and narrator testimonies.

Rather, the emergent themes related to changes in working practices, decision making processes, increasing involvement of those with business experience and the move from being volunteer based to the employment of paid staff. Together these suggested that research concerning the transition of sporting bodies from amateur to more formalised business-like organisations would provide a more fitting framework for analysis (Nagel et al., 2015). The study of professionalism in occupations and organisations has a long academic history but it was not until the 1980s that attention was paid to the concept within the field of sports management (Dowling et al., 2014). Organisations are likely to face pressures from the wider environment and the more complex the challenge, the more the organisation will be required to develop strategic capability in order to manage the situation(s) (Nagel et al., 2015; Peachy and Bruening, 2011). Over time the challenges can force an organisation to adopt an increasingly formal approach and this has been aligned to a form of professionalisation (Nagel et al., 2015). Exactly what is meant by professionalisation is not clearly defined but a summary might be:

The process by which sports organisations, systems and the occupation of sport, transforms from a volunteer driven to an increasingly business-like phenomenon. (Dowling et al., 2014: 527).

A central tenet in literature examining organisational change and development within sports organisations has been the concept of design archetypes (Hoye et al., 2020). The identification of patterns amongst organisational configurations led to the development of archetypes, or organisational models, which, “assist our

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<sup>195</sup> The article Dowling, Leopkey and Smith, L (2018) *Governance in Sport: A Scoping Review* Journal of Sport Management, 32, provides, as the title suggests, a comprehensive overview of recent writing on sport governance and the themes addressed.

understanding of the variety of organizational design types and the nature of change between these design types” (Kikulis et al., 1992: 345; Hoye et al., 2020). The three archetypes or models, labelled as kitchen-table, boardroom and executive office can be used to examine growth within a model and also transition between models (Hoye et al., 2020) as a sports organisation travels along the amateur-professional continuum. The archetypes and associated characteristics used in this analysis are shown at table 3 below.<sup>196</sup>

<b>Archetype</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>	
<b>Kitchen-Table</b> (Amateur)	Individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Decision making by volunteer committee</li> <li>➤ Roles based on interest and loyalty</li> </ul>
	Structures and Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Council of representative</li> <li>➤ Minimal co-ordination</li> <li>➤ Ad-hoc approach to planning</li> <li>➤ Few organisational regulations<sup>197</sup></li> </ul>
	Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Member fees</li> <li>➤ irregular gate receipts (cup matches)</li> <li>➤ ad hoc small-scale grants or sponsorship</li> </ul>
<b>Boardroom</b> (business-like)	Individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Formalised but volunteer driven</li> <li>➤ Formal roles</li> <li>➤ Specialised roles using volunteers with particular skill sets and professional expertise (on committees and in operation of the sport)</li> <li>➤ Increasing formalisation of role of the board</li> <li>➤ Employment of paid staff – administration</li> </ul>
	Structures and Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Executive committee</li> <li>➤ Emerging vision, direction and planning strategy</li> <li>➤ Written administrative rules with templates to formalise operations</li> <li>➤ Administration efficiency and effectiveness through increased bureaucracy</li> <li>➤ Increased use of business and management tools</li> <li>➤ Use of project management</li> <li>➤ Marketing and promotion</li> </ul>

<sup>196</sup> The archetypes and characteristics have been adapted from Dowling (2014), Ferkins et al. (2005), Hoye et al. (2020), Kikulis et al. (1992), Kikulis, (2000), O’Boyle (2017), and Nagel et al. (2015). As discussed in the literature review, much of the research has involved national sports organisations predominantly based in Canada and Australia with additional studies in the U.K. and New Zealand and therefore the characteristics used here are those that apply to small to medium sized organisations.

<sup>197</sup> This applies to the running of the SWFA not to the playing of football that had many rules and regulations.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Organisation of national sports competitions</li> </ul>
	Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Formalised grants applied over longer time-scales which leads to enhanced sponsorship</li> <li>➤ Membership fees, gate receipts</li> </ul>
<b>Executive Office</b> (Professional)	Individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Professionally led and volunteer assisted</li> <li>➤ Professional, technical and administrative competence and expertise</li> <li>➤ Professional culture across the organisation</li> </ul>
	Structures and Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Board of volunteer directors</li> <li>➤ Decisions by board, informed by professionals – with day-to-day decisions made by professionals</li> <li>➤ Adoption of a vision and strategic planning to achieve this</li> <li>➤ Formalisation of values</li> <li>➤ Formal roles and rules to deal with increasingly complex work</li> <li>➤ Formal longer-term planning</li> <li>➤ Building a coherent brand</li> <li>➤ Stakeholder involvement and engagement – especially around social media</li> </ul>
	Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sustained Grants;</li> <li>➤ Substantial commercial sponsorship</li> <li>➤ Membership fees, gate receipts</li> </ul>

Table 3: Characteristics of the three design archetypes

Within this paradigm, organisational change results from responses to internal or external pressures with the extent of change depending on the nature of the pressure exerted. Smaller pressures may lead to changes within the archetype with increasing pressure moving the organisation towards archetype transition. Ultimately, large-scale transformational change leads to a movement to the next archetype (Jick and Peiperl, 2011; Peachy and Bruening, 2011). The changes occur within the activities, structures, processes and decision making of the organisation (Nagel et al., 2015). The use of this framework provided the opportunity to consider developments in the SWFA/SWF in terms of both internal influences and the wider environment and social context, as professionalisation is neither spontaneous nor inevitable (Nagel et al., 2015; Skinner et al., 1999).

## **The development of the SWFA/SWF**

The development is presented in three phases, which differ from those examined in the last chapter, since the governing body developed at a different pace to the game it was championing. The kitchen-table phase runs from 1972 to about 1993; the boardroom phase lasts from about 1994 to 2015, with the transition to executive office taking place from about 2015. Transition is triggered by change within the model characteristics given in table 3, which may not occur simultaneously nor uniformly. This means that transition can take several years to complete, with the rate of transition dependent on both internal and external social contexts (Campbell and Williams, 2014; Campbell, 2020; Dunning and Sheard, 2005; Hoye et al., 2020; Jarvie, 1991).

### **Phase 1: Kitchen-table 1972 to about 1993**

#### *Starting out*

While a lot of women's football was played during the 1960s, the evidence suggests that organisation was informal and ad hoc, with little structure and co-ordination of women's football on a national basis. As the decade progressed more connections were made and a women's football community in Scotland emerged. The evolving community also established links with the women's football community in England. It watched with interest, the establishment of the Women's Football Association (WFA), on the 1st November 1969 at a meeting of forty-four English clubs (Cook, 2018; Lopez, 1997). Driving the formation was the need for an overarching body to provide structure and lobby the football authorities to rescind the restrictions placed on women's football (Williams, 2003a). In 1971, the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) proposed a motion that called for member countries to recognise women's football and take over the running of the women's game (Macbeth, 2004; Williams, 2003a; Woodhouse, 2002).

The Scottish Football Association (SFA) was the only association that refused to accept the UEFA motion, deeming it advisory and maintaining the restrictions placed on the women's game (Macbeth, 2004).<sup>198</sup> The SFA's stance became a

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<sup>198</sup> However, for many of the countries who had agreed to recognise women's football this was not necessarily an entirely positive move, "It was not a particularly warm welcome on behalf of the family

triggering event, motivating the Scottish women's football community to come together in collective action through a shared desire to bring about change and improve opportunities (Adriaanse and Claringbould, 2016). Cook (2019) explained that twelve clubs playing on a regular basis were invited to attend an inaugural meeting to be held in Edinburgh.<sup>199</sup> On the 17<sup>th</sup> September 1972, the six teams that attended the meeting, Aberdeen Prima Donnas, Dundee Strikers, Edinburgh Dynamos, Motherwell AEI, Stewarton Thistle and Westthorn Utd formed the Scottish Women's Football Association. At the time of writing, no original paperwork from the SWFA has been located, although it has been possible to piece together information from individual recollections, in particular those of Cook, who was the first Secretary of the organisation.<sup>200</sup> The SWFA was initially low key, made up of volunteers from within women's football. The first committee comprised Chairman, Mr. J. Scott; Vice Chairman, Mr. C. Legget; Secretary, Mrs E. Cook and members, Mr. D. Morgan, Mrs M. McAulay, Mr. R. Hall and Mrs M. O'Neill (Cook, 2019). The Chair and Vice were from Edinburgh Dynamos; the Secretary from Stewarton Thistle and the rest of the committee was made up of representatives from each of the remaining teams present. At this point, those involved in organising the sport were also parents of players or players themselves and their focus was improving the game for existing teams.<sup>201</sup> This initial formation showed a slightly higher proportion of men on the committee, reflecting the usual gender ratio of such committees (Adriaanse, 2017; Adriaanse and Claringbould, 2016; Dowling et al., 2018, Piggott and Pike, 2020). The initial gender ratio was short lived and although men have consistently been involved in the SWFA/SWF, as will be discussed, women have predominated on the committees.

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of football and the examples of intolerance, exclusion and prejudice would be too extensive to number here" (Williams, 2011: 22).

<sup>199</sup> The invitations were issued by Charlie Legget, the Chairman of Edinburgh Dynamos or their manager, Jimmy Scott. The twelve were Aberdeen Prima Donnas, Arbroath LFC, Cambuslang Hooverettes, Dundee Strikers, Dunfermline LFC, East Fife, Harmony Row, Monklands LFC, Motherwell AEI, Stewarton Thistle, West End LFC and Westthorn Utd. From email correspondence with the author.

<sup>200</sup> Everything was paper based; held privately as there was no central office and it is known that there was destruction of some papers by a disgruntled relative.

<sup>201</sup> Elsie Cook was then a player and Mrs M. McAulay and Mr Legget were parents of two of the narrators who played for successful teams and the Scottish international side.

In an attempt to bring about change, the SWFA sought to demonstrate to the SFA, the commitment to and level of interest in, women's football (Adriaanse and Claringbould, 2016). It established the inaugural official women's football league and then organised the first official international between Scotland and England in November 1972.<sup>202</sup> According to the SWFA entry in the match programme, ten teams were now members of the association, although there is no record of the identities of the additional four. There is currently no information about the work of the SWFA during the next eighteen months. This includes the period leading up to the SFA decision in August 1974, to reverse its stance and recognise women's football and so there is no evidence of a causal link between the work of the SWFA and the decision. The short SFA minute gives no indication of the rationale behind it, although the wording preserves the subordinate position of women's football (Buisse and Embser-Herbert, 2004; White and Brackenridge, 1985):

Women's Football (Item 70. Executive and General Purposes Committee):  
It was agreed to give recognition to women's football. (SFA Minutes, 29 August 1974).

It was likely that this decision was the result of outside influences from UEFA and the introduction of the Equal Opportunities Act 1975, as discussed in chapter four. While this was a pivotal moment for the playing of women's football, it did not change the funding for or support of, women's football. The lack of change to the status of the SWFA meant there was no impetus for its operational model to adapt (Peachy and Bruening, 2011; Skinner et al., 1999). It continued within the kitchen-table archetype, with decisions made by a volunteer committee, and roles appearing to be based on personal interest and loyalty (Hoye et al., 2020). Having had its reliance on legislative restrictions removed, the male-centric football community, led by the SFA, sought alternative ways in which to limit women's encroachment into the male space of football (Fisher, 2018; Stirling and Schulz, 2011).<sup>203</sup> One alternative source of regulation is provided by socio-cultural constraints including the hegemonic masculinity of the sports sector where, "the gendered structure of sport is an operating principle" (Sotiriadou, 2019:369). An outcome of the gendering of sport across the past sixty years, has been the

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<sup>202</sup> Further details of both the league and the international are contained in chapter four.

<sup>203</sup> The transition between alternative restrictions on women's football is examined in chapter seven.

reinforcement of the notion that women have little interest or ability in sport in general and football in particular. This led to limited coverage in the media creating a lack of awareness in the women's game and by extension the misogynistic treatment of the wider male-centric football community. This might, in part, explain why the increased activism fuelled by a, "great burst of feminist energy" (Bruley and Foster, 2016:698), in the 1970s appears to have largely ignored the inequalities faced by women footballers.

As indicated earlier, there are currently no available SWFA records for the late 1970s. The exclusion of women from both historical and football narratives resulted in little incentive to retain the material, with papers kept in homes and potentially stored inappropriately or discarded across the years.<sup>204</sup> This underlines the requirement to seek information across different sources (Chaudhuri et al. 2010), including articles and match programmes though these are equally scarce. During the first twenty years of the SWFA, reports of women's football appeared mainly in the local press of particular teams, with few making Scottish national newspaper coverage. Of those that did, the majority were patronising, dismissive or used to reinforce gender stereotypes.<sup>205</sup> These attitudes are displayed in the two linked articles discussed below, which are the only examples of reporting on the governance of women's football found within current archival sources for this period.

At the end of 1974, Elsie Cook resigned from the role of manager of the Scottish women's national team (SWNT), (Cook, 2018). She felt that in-fighting, a focus on personal interests and a lack of vision on the part of the SWFA were holding back the development of the game (Cook, 2018).<sup>206</sup> Believing that Cook had made detrimental public comments about the association, the SWFA banned her from being involved in women's football, for life. There is no formal record of this incident from the SWFA although Cook has spoken about it on several

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<sup>204</sup> In their oral history testimonies, Tommy Malcolm said that some of his papers had been discarded in a house move and Elise Cook said that some of her early SWFA papers had been burnt.

<sup>205</sup> This is discussed further in chapters four and seven.

<sup>206</sup> Part of the concern was with the appointment of a "poorly qualified amateur male" (Lawther, 2021:25) to the role of manager of the women's team but it was also linked to the inward-looking committee members who were focused on outcomes related to their family members. This of itself is not a problem, without such concern there would have been no SWFA, but Cook felt there was a need to balance this with outward focus to consider how best to take the whole game forward (Cook, 2019).



occasions.<sup>207</sup> The disagreement between Cook and the SWFA caused disquiet amongst the membership and it was this dispute that received media attention at the time. Entitled “The trouble with Women”, the first article to be examined was written by the editor of the *Scottish Weekly Football* magazine and appeared in March 1975. Both the headline and the opening paragraph were in a tone that appeared to reflect the perceived view of its predominantly male readership, that women playing football was a step too far:

Any girl then [*when editor was young*] who considered asking the lads for a game would have been considered a biological disaster area. A grade one bampot. But alas football is no longer the sole domain of the male species. Yet another bastion of masculinity has become a female outpost of progress. (Editor, *Scottish Weekly Football*, 1975).

In a few words, the editor confirmed the gendered nature of football and articulated the frustrations felt by men at the ‘advances’ made by women towards equality and the gradual demise of male only spaces (Stirling and Schulz, 2011). This view is underlined by the use of the term ‘trouble’ in connection with women, which infers that they are the problem (Vitores and Gil-Juárez, 2016).<sup>208</sup> Despite the opening tone, the article did contain some positive details about women’s football along with Cook’s account of the issues between her and the SWFA.<sup>209</sup> A month later the editor wrote a follow up piece entitled “Oh girls! Get on with the Game...” in which he said that whilst there had been much support for Cook’s position, he had received communication from the SWFA which wanted the matter concluded and forgotten. The editor called for the dispute to end soon as there, “are a few of us who would like to see what the dame game is all about” (Editor, *Scottish Weekly Football*, 1975). At this point roles such as the secretary and chair of the SWFA were held by men and therefore, it would appear that the editor

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<sup>207</sup> Reference to the incident has been made on a number of occasions including newspaper articles, Cook’s oral history testimony for this research and the television documentary made about Rose Reilly.

<sup>208</sup> The article referenced here is just one example of gender research that illustrates that in considering inequalities issues, the ‘problem’ is situated with the under-represented group (in this case women) rather than the dominant group and the gendered practices they condone. To use the phrase from Jean Williams writing about examples of intolerance in women’s football, the full list of articles exploring the issue of placing responsibility on women, “would be too extensive to number here” (Williams, 2011: 22). See footnote 179

<sup>209</sup> There was also a statement from the then SWFA chair, David Morgan, alluding to being able to reveal the real reasons for the ban and to resolve the matter. However, to date, no paperwork or articles have been found that provide that detail.

wanted to go with the views of the men involved in this situation. Additionally, the wording is indicative of the attitude to women's football. The use of the term 'girls' to infantilise athletes is a tried and tested technique (Fink, 2015) while the 'dame game' has connotations of the pantomime and allusions to women's football as entertainment rather than authentic sport (Williams, 2003a). While it is of note that the articles appeared in the magazine, *Scottish Weekly Football*, which was a national mouthpiece for football, the content is not actually about the women's game but women causing 'trouble' for the men in charge. Minimal press coverage would suggest that the actual playing of women's football was not something editors believed their readers were interested in.

Collated archive material shows eight different people undertaking the roles of Chair and secretary of the SWFA across the period 1975 to 1979.<sup>210</sup> A short piece on the SWFA in the programme for the international against Wales in 1979, reiterates its purpose as the promotion and development of women's football in Scotland (Legget collection, Scottish Football Museum (SFM)). Without detailed information about the composition and work of the SWFA at this time, it is difficult to undertake an exact analysis of its position on the amateur-professional spectrum (Shilbury and Ferkins, 2011). However, the available evidence both for this time period and the start of the next decade, would suggest that as the 1970s came to a close, the SWFA largely retained the characteristics of a kitchen-table organisation (Hoye et al., 2020; Kikulis et al., 1992). One area where the work was closer to the boardroom archetype, was its schedule of competitive sports opportunities (Hoye et al., 2020), including two domestic divisions, national cup competitions and the organisation of seventeen international matches. This is an example of 'internal' forces pushing for change and growth as the membership of the SWFA consistently pushed for the opportunity to play as many matches as possible.

### *Playing the long game*

At the start of the 1980s, the SWFA was, available information suggests, endeavouring to balance meeting the needs of its members with promoting and

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<sup>210</sup> Those named were David Morgan, Jean Watt, Brian Melville, George Morrison, Angus Williamson, Lorraine Duncan, Ann Hogg and Carol Legget.

developing women's football. With limited resources in terms of time, experience and funds it proved challenging for them to achieve their objectives. The organisation was still without a formal office base, resulting in archival material from the SWFA remaining limited within this decade. However, it was possible to piece together information from a variety of sources including newspaper reports, match day programmes and oral history testimony. The collections of McAulay and Legget, held at the SFM, provided some material but by far the biggest contribution about this period came from Tommy Malcolm.<sup>211</sup> Malcolm was the coach of Carmunnock in the early part of the decade and was also undertaking volunteer work for the SWFA.<sup>212</sup> His collection of letters, reports and newsletters from the period provided invaluable insights to the operation of the SWFA, as it worked to establish itself as a recognised, respected and business-like governing body (Hill et al., 2021).

Match day programmes and SWFA correspondence from the early 1980s show both a formalisation of more roles within the Executive Committee and a longer tenure of people in those roles.<sup>213</sup> This may imply more stability than in the previous period as, although people change roles, they remain on the committee which retains their experience and knowledge. The records show the formation of a League council which oversaw the domestic leagues. Formal roles and committees covering a number of administrative areas was another indicator of the SWFA's slow progression towards professionalisation and the boardroom archetype (Dowling, 2014; Hoyer et al., 2020). The match programme for the international in June 1985, contains a list of the SWFA office bearers. All of the five main roles of Chair, secretary, treasurer, match secretary and minute secretary are held by women. The extensive sports governance scholarship pertaining to the degree of inequality in the make-up of sports governing bodies would suggest that this was an exceptional circumstance (Adriaanse, 2017).

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<sup>211</sup> McAulay and Legget were both players and were interested in details of matches, opponents and competitions rather than the SWFA.

<sup>212</sup> Carmunnock was a relatively successful team that was a member of the SWFA from 1982 to 1985.

<sup>213</sup> In April 1980, the programme for a match against Wales gives Ian O'Neil as the Chair and Charlotte Jones as the secretary. Matches in 1981 has the same office bearers and Kathleen McGinley and Margaret Wilson as match and minute secretaries respectively which may indicate a formalisation of other roles. By early 1983, McGinley is secretary and Charlotte Jones is the Chair although by late 1983, Carol Legget has returned to the committee as the secretary to the association.

Three of the office bearers were well known players, with Fiona Winchester the then SWFA Chair, in the squad for the match. This means that the committees were no longer dominated by parents of players but largely comprised former or current players or those who had non-parental involvement in the women's football community. Whilst the SWFA may have felt isolated, unsupported and underfunded by the wider sexist football culture (Goldblatt, 2020b), it was able to organise and operate women's football away from direct patriarchal control. However, the narrators who were involved in the SWFA at this point, whilst aware that they were able to run women's football as they deemed appropriate, also reported that they would have appreciated support and funding in doing so.<sup>214</sup>

A characteristic of the boardroom archetype is the formation of clear rules and regulations that are administered and enforced by the central executive through specialised committees (Hoye et al., 2020). It is possible to identify examples of the SWFA beginning to formalise the production and reinforcement of procedures, rules and regulations within the material available. The first came in 1982 when Malcolm is sent details of the prescribed procedure to be followed in order to affiliate Carmunnock to the SWFA, including the issuing of details of affiliation rules, fees and information about the role of the SWFA. A copy of the minutes from a league council meeting held in August 1982, detailed a formalised structure for meetings with agendas, minutes and follow up work. The minutes also included reminders to members of association rules which covered compulsory attendance at meetings or coaching sessions, the conduct of players during matches, match paperwork and a requirement to gain permission from the committee to attend tournaments abroad. Within the minutes are details of fines that were issued to teams if they had not followed the rules. The administration of action on non-adherence to rules and regulations was undertaken by the disciplinary committee, which indicated further separation of duties and responsibilities. The minutes demonstrated the work by the association to encourage consistent standards and a 'professional' approach to team administration and the playing of football. This was done through the development and management of rules and regulations as part of a governance framework. The records also allude to a period of disquiet in the early 1980s and attempts the

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<sup>214</sup> This would make an interesting case study if further documentation became available.

committee made to engage the wider membership in addressing the issues.<sup>215</sup> While these examples demonstrate the emergence of a more business-like approach, the minutes also contained reminders that the committee still operated at a kitchen-table level in some areas. For example, the committee were still informed about the cancellation of individual matches and it became involved in chasing clubs for the return of trophies.<sup>216</sup> Equally, while there was a procedure for the organisation of meetings, the style remained informal with minutes written in casual, expansive and conversational style which contained details of discussions which routinely ignored the agenda.

From its inception, the SWFA had identified that the promotion of the game was intrinsically linked to the need to grow participation and membership. This growth would demonstrate the popularity of the women's game, assisting in the lobbying of the SFA for affiliation. However, the tactics used by the Executive Committee brought it into conflict with the membership and this came to a head over the SWFA's drive to use the UEFA Women's Championship, which started in 1982, to promote women's football in Scotland.<sup>217</sup>

In the match programme for Scotland's first official UEFA Championship qualifier, the SWFA stated that:

Scotland consider participation in this competition to be a very essential step forward to guarantee further growth and development of the sport in Scotland. Hopefully, ladies' football will now receive the credibility, status and publicity our sport undoubtedly deserves. (SWFA, 1982).

Clearly the SWFA hoped that participation would provide a platform for positive publicity but not all members were happy with the compromises required. The focus on the SWNT, caused the membership to question the distribution of resources both in terms of the access to national training days and funding for matches.<sup>218</sup> The conflict was played out within SWFA minutes and

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<sup>215</sup> Although there is reference to issues, the paperwork detailing the problems is not available.

<sup>216</sup> While the committee of a boardroom organisation may need to be informed about this, they would not be involved in the detail of the work.

<sup>217</sup> The competition is officially called UEFA Women's Championship but will be referred to within this chapter as the UEFA Championship as the chapter only writes about the competition for women.

<sup>218</sup> The position the SWFA found themselves in was similar to that of the Women's Rowing Association who had long wanted to participate in international competition but when the opportunity arose it brought challenges and tension (Taylor, 2020).

communications across the decade. At the Annual general meeting (AGM) in 1982, the Chair, Ian O'Neil tendered his resignation. He had been unaware of a decision to play preparation matches for the UEFA Championship in Italy, and felt strongly that the national coaching sessions should not be limited to the national squad. This complaint appears regularly within available minutes coming from team representatives who argue that all players should be offered the opportunity to be coached by experienced coaches. In addition, teams often felt that they were viewed as less important than the international squad by the SWFA and at times, their own players (Wilson, *Miss Kick*, nd).

The cost of competing in the UEFA Championship was also a source of conflict. In 1982, the SWFA was operating on limited finances, with the bank balance for the end of the 1981/82 season £3.60 in deficit. There were rental and flight costs still due which, it was hoped, would be met by fundraising donations. The pressure placed on teams by the financial burden of international matches led to questioning of the committee policy to prioritise participation. In a letter sent to team secretaries in February 1983, the SWFA complained about the lack of commitment to fundraising to support participation in the UEFA Championship.<sup>219</sup> As discussed in chapters four and six, a consistent recollection of narrators was the constant fundraising required to cover the cost of running a team. With no clear evidence of benefits arising from the international campaigns either for teams or women's football generally, requiring teams to undertake additional fundraising for the SWNT was unlikely to have been well received.<sup>220</sup>

Linked to the desire to promote the women's game, was the aim to improve standards, both on and off the pitch. Alongside on-going efforts to enforce rules, develop administration and encourage professional behaviour were single issue campaigns. One example was the struggle to introduce a certificated coaching qualification. In May 1984, Fiona Winchester wrote to teams explaining that the SWFA committee had decided that women involved with teams should have to access a coaching qualification. In order to progress coach training, the SFA had

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<sup>219</sup> The SFA provided no direct financial support for entry to the Euro competition although they did offer to assist looking for sponsors and provided 24 training balls and 20 kit bags.

<sup>220</sup> As well as the constant need for raising funds, narrators spoke about having to come up with new ways to fundraise given the limited pool of those who could donate. Indeed, some paid 'donations' themselves to avoid asking others for yet more money.

to be consulted as it organised all football coaching certification courses. The SFA response was that the SWFA should run its own (uncertificated) courses otherwise the women would need to compete with men in the practical assessment. This suggestion displays both benevolent sexism (Glick and Fiske, 1997 and 2001) and gendered practices based on stereotypes which together, maintain the status quo of gendered inequality (Buysse and Embser-Herbert, 2004). However, eventually, agreement was reached for the SFA to run a course for the women and details were issued by the SWFA in early 1985. The objective of the course was for, “participants to learn basic coaching techniques and there will be practical and theoretical assessment with a certificate and award” (SWFA, 1985). The crucial aspect here is certification, which would verify the standard reached and enable the women coaches to move between teams as a recognised coach rather than an experienced assistant and to receive remuneration (Hamilton, 2018).<sup>221</sup>

However, a month later potential participants were informed that there was now to be no formal assessment (McAulay, 2019). Magi Hamilton, a SWFA committee member, recalled in her oral history interview, that the SFA was extremely reluctant to offer a specific course to women and stated that they could join the existing courses. The problem was that participants needed to be a professional footballer to meet the entry requirements (Hamilton, 2018). Assumptions about roles are influenced by dominant socially constructed discourse; football coaching was (and continues to be) identified with discourses of masculinity, which in turn, become aligned to perceptions of competence (Acker, 1992; Burton et al., 2009; Piggott and Pike, 2020; Shaw and Hoerber, 2003). These gendered operational standards are then reflected in policies and practices that foster the stereotypes and beliefs on which they based and can go unchallenged as men hold the positions of power (Acker, 1998, 2006; Martin, 2006, 2020). The exclusion of women and protection of specific male centred roles was justified through gendered rationales and institutional sexism (Capodilupo, 2017; Martin, 2006;

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<sup>221</sup> A number of the narrators chose their jobs to facilitate continued involvement in women’s football, playing, coaching or administration. Jobs with the degree of routine and flexibility required were often on lower salaries and so while accreditation was very important, being able to earn from coaching was also welcomed. Additionally, there were a number of women who wanted to try to establish work connected with women’s football and a coaching qualification would enable them to do this.

Stirling and Schulz, 2011). The SWFA decided that the uncertificated course should go ahead as it would allow women to start their coaching journey, while the battle for parity continued (Hamilton, 2018). In July 1985, fifteen women participated in a foundation level coaching course run at the SFA national training centre in Largs and became the first women in Scotland to embark on the coaching qualification pathway. This was a significant indication of the commitment of the SWFA to develop women's football and to push back against the gendered rationales of the SFA (Martin, 2006).

From this point until the end of the decade, the research uncovered limited data concerning the work of the SWFA.<sup>222</sup> However, a newspaper article from 1988 and a press release (Legget collection, SFM) provided some insights to the challenges faced by the SWFA.<sup>223</sup> The article examines the SWFA's limited funding, lack of development and the refusal of the SFA to allow it to affiliate. The issue was summarised by the article's headline, "*Foul Play: women footballers accuse men of the SFA*" (Belcher, 1988).<sup>224</sup> The article states that the SWFA has twenty teams in two leagues, a small number of player members and small budget which is equivalent to, "the Glasgow East End Sunday League say or the Evangelical Churches League" (Belcher, 1988).<sup>225</sup> This comparison would appear to be based on membership numbers rather than consideration of the nationwide 'community' served by the organisation and reinforces the message that women's football was recreational (Bryson, 1987; Dunn 2016). The article cites the SFA's confirmation that membership numbers are the most important factor for considering affiliation. The article, summarised the difficult situation the SWFA was in, stating:

the SWFA does not have the numbers; its lack of numbers mitigates against it attracting money; the lack of money means it is difficult to raise numbers, to attract attention, to be taken seriously, to gain credibility (Belcher, 1988).

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<sup>222</sup> Tommy Malcolm's involvement with Carmunnock and therefore the SWFA, ended in 1985 and no official paperwork for this period has, so far, been located in the SWFA archive.

<sup>223</sup> The Legget collection is held at the Scottish Football Museum and contains papers, scrapbooks and memorabilia donated by Jane Legget.

<sup>224</sup> The article was contained in a scrapbook within the Legget collection. It did not have full reference details as it was cut out; the dating was made from adjacent materials in the scrapbook.

<sup>225</sup> Twenty teams in two leagues would equate to a growth of nine clubs in ten years.



It needed to gain credibility to improve its access to grants from bodies such as the Football Trust.<sup>226</sup> The SWFA also wanted to attract sustained commercial sponsorship that could be used to fund planned development and growth, as opposed to the very ad hoc arrangements for short-term sponsorship that it historically relied on.<sup>227</sup> However, the likelihood of being of interest to larger commercial sponsors was small without consistent media coverage, which remained elusive.<sup>228</sup> A SWFA press release from 1989 to announce the sponsorship by B&Q of the SWNT strip and a friendly match against England (Legget collection, SFM) provides an insight into the importance of being able to raise more funds. For most of the 1980s the SWFA had two main sources of income, money raised from member subscriptions and, based on subscription levels, a grant from the Scottish Sports Council. In 1988, that amounted to £7,000 (£17,272 today), which was barely enough to cover domestic arrangements and resulted in the withdrawal from the UEFA women's competition and a reduction in the number of friendly matches played.<sup>229</sup> The kit and match sponsorship was a positive development but short term as the sponsorship ended after a year.<sup>230</sup>

The SWFA was very aware of the ostensibly more favourable position the WFA appeared to be in (Hamilton, 1993). In 1983, the WFA in England had affiliated to the FA and was given a similar status as the county football associations (Williams, 2017). This afforded the association credibility and the WFA's position was further strengthened when the FA pronounced them to be the sole governing body for women's football at that time (Woodhouse, 2002). This gave the WFA legitimacy, providing leverage to access grants and to seek commercial

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<sup>226</sup> The Football Trust had supported the WFA in its work in England and this was made possible by the FA stating that they were the lead for women's football. From the mid-1990s the Football Trust became a regular supporter of the SWFA.

<sup>227</sup> The article explains that the SWFA secretary had written 600 letters over the preceding three years seeking sponsorship but with no result.

<sup>228</sup> The international match against the Republic of Ireland being held in Dublin, obtained just three lines of coverage in a local Edinburgh paper with nothing reported nationally.

<sup>229</sup> The SWFA had tried to attract sponsorship and raise further funds from its membership but these attempts were unsuccessful and it was necessary to withdraw from the tournament part way through. This, in turn, led to sanctions from UEFA, barring entry to the following tournaments.

<sup>230</sup> The release also mentioned the potential for a full five nations home international tournament but sadly this never took place.

sponsorship, putting them in a more favourable position, financially, than the SWFA.<sup>231</sup>

By the end of the 1980s, the SWFA had brought consistency to the game through the introduction and application of rules and regulations; developed team administration; provided introductory coaching for women and entered a Scottish national team in the UEFA Championship. However, despite its achievements, it remained an unaffiliated national association; a voluntary body trying to organise and promote women's football with limited resources and support. The evidence available suggests that during the decade the SWFA exhibited momentum, that is, organisational change which is an extension of its current archetype, particularly with regard to decision making (Greenwood and Hinings, 1988, cited in Hoye et al., 2020). However, the combined external influences of the SFA and the socio-cultural context which placed men's football as the norm and othered any attempts by women to enter this space, kept the organisation in equilibrium (Hoye et al., 2020; Skinner et al., 1999). As the 1980s came to an end, the SWFA remained within the kitchen-table archetype (Hoye et al., 2020; Kikulis et al., 1992).

### *Building the Brand*

Although archive materials regarding the SWFA, increase significantly from 1992, information about the SWFA at the start of the decade is again provided by a newspaper article. *An Unequal Opportunity* (Davidson, 1990), is based on an interview with the new SWFA secretary, Carol Legget.<sup>232</sup> The article confirms that the position of both the SWFA specifically and women's football in general remained largely unchanged. In particular it highlighted the continued struggle for women's football to obtain media attention, as illustrated by the need of the SWFA to purchase advertising space in newspapers in order to publicise the 1990 Scottish Cup Final. Legget also spoke about the lack of routine reporting of

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<sup>231</sup> Although the position of the WFA appeared favourable at this point (Magi Hamilton writing as SWFA chair in mock-up of a newsletter, SWF archive), subsequent analysis has demonstrated a less positive view. until 1991 the levels of participation in England stagnated and it is posited that the FA's stance of keeping the WFA separate from the male-focused development programmes contributed to this situation (Williams, 2017). Thus, although appearing to be in a more positive situation, the reality was that the WFA too was experiencing constraint in its endeavours.

<sup>232</sup> Carol is daughter of the first SWFA chair and sister of the Edinburgh Dynamos and Scotland player Jane Legget. She held various roles within the SWFA.

matches and that often, those that appear are framed by what she saw as the patronising attitude of journalists. The article referred to both the lack of funds for the SWFA and individual teams within the two national divisions and the requirement for affiliation. Legget said that affiliation, “implies Park gardens is taking you seriously as a properly run part of the Scottish football scene” (Davidson, 1990).<sup>233</sup> In part, the debate still centred on membership numbers, with Bill Richardson, SFA Deputy Secretary, stating that the SWFA would be affiliated once it had sufficient membership. There were still no target numbers offered and this lack of clarity was increased by his statement that any affiliate needed to be, “sufficiently well organised, strong and professional” (Richardson in Davidson, 1990), criteria likely to be based on the gendered rationales of the SFA (Martin, 2006).

For nearly twenty years the SWFA had exhibited the characteristics of the kitchen-table archetype and whilst it had demonstrated change in some areas, such as more structured decision making, it had remained within that archetype (Hoye et al., 2020). Transition between archetypes occurs as the result of changes instigated by internal and/or external forces which result in a disturbance to the equilibrium of the organisation (Skinner et al. ,1999). At the beginning of the 1990s the SWFA was subject to both internal and external forces with the latter being the ultimate catalyst for change to a more formalised boardroom model organisation. Internal attempts to formalise SWFA procedures, which would have further moved it towards the boardroom archetype, were met by membership resistance (Nichols, 2015) as evidenced by the minutes of the 1992 and 1993 AGMs. The 1992 AGM opened with a heated debate about league relegation and promotion protocols that could not be resolved and had to be remitted to the Executive Committee for further consideration.<sup>234</sup> This operational item was followed with the presentation of a previously circulated strategic restructuring proposal which was introduced as, the only route forward for women’s football (SWFA AGM Minutes, 1992). The minutes record that there were no questions or items for discussion about the proposals and when put to the vote, they were

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<sup>233</sup> Park Gardens was the headquarters of the Scottish Football Association.

<sup>234</sup> The change of name from Committee to Executive Committee may be indicative of the endeavour to move to a more formal operational and decision-making style with more than one committee involved in governance.

overwhelmingly accepted by those present. Although the restructuring document itself was not in the archive, the minutes later record appointments to four new committees covering Competition, Development, Internationals and Marketing and Promotion. It was agreed that these committees would undertake work in addition to the existing Executive Committee and League Council. Available material and narrator testimony indicate that this was an attempt to strengthen the structure of the SWFA, spread workload, involve more teams in the management infrastructure, ensure that there was more transparency and bring expertise onto the board.<sup>235</sup>

While the new structure may indicate an attempt to move towards the more formalised boardroom archetype, it appeared that the wider membership of the SWFA were still operating in kitchen-table mode. This was evidenced by intense discussions provoked by the consideration of operational matters including transfer fees, notifications of fixtures, bank signatories and spending on international matches.<sup>236</sup> This suggests both that the SWFA as a governing body did not have satisfactory procedures for resolving operational issues (the aforementioned committees may have been an attempt to resolve this) and that with decisions resting largely on team representatives, operational rather than strategic matters were deemed most important. The chair of the SWFA was Magi Hamilton, one of the narrators, a former player and long serving committee member who also had experience from employment that informed her attitude to the running of the SWFA.<sup>237</sup> In addition to Hamilton, several other women, who had also gained managerial and organisational experience from work began to be involved in the work of the SWFA. The strategic approach proposed by these women aligned with a move to professional management of the organisation (Ferkins et al., 2005); however, the AGM the following year demonstrated that the organisation was resistant to transition.

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<sup>235</sup> This information comes from reading across minutes of committees and testimonies of narrators Edwards (2018), Hamilton (2018) and McGonigle (2018).

<sup>236</sup> At this time the minutes were still informal in style and would record large parts of discussions in depth. From this it was possible to discern the lack of discussion about the proposed new structure and the contrasting debates about operational issues.

<sup>237</sup> Information from oral history interview, Hamilton (2018).

Hamilton opened the 1993 meeting with her chair's report which highlighted many positive and important matters that had been dealt with during the year. These included: the continued financial support of the Scottish Sports Council; appointment of a part-time administrator; formation of an under 16 youth league; organisation of certificated coaching courses; re-entry to the UEFA Championship and closer working with the SFA with the offer of office space at their headquarters.<sup>238</sup> Hamilton then went on to report that the restructuring agreed the previous year, had not been implemented due to a great deal of challenge and criticism across the year. Hamilton said that she believed that the restructuring was necessary for the SWFA to fully realise their aims and objectives but there had been an orchestrated campaign to discredit her and the restructuring. She stated that the club members, rightly, have power within the association but she felt they were not using it in a proactive way where, "common sense prevails over their own personal grievances, it is time to take the blinkers off and see the wider picture of women's football in Scotland" (Hamilton, 1993) and duly resigned. Additionally, new women appointees to the committees established in 1992, gave the report of the work they had tried to undertake and then also resigned.<sup>239</sup> The minutes suggest that the remainder of the AGM, as in the previous year, involved lengthy discussions about operational issues interspersed with attempts to bring order to the proceedings. The extent of the dysfunction at the meeting was summed up by the representative of the Scottish Universities Women's Football league who, having witnessed the proceedings, withdrew the league's application to join the SWFA until it could get its house in order (SWFA AGM, 1993).

The SWFA membership appeared resistant to change, and the evidence would suggest that the focus of resistance was the proposed changes within the decision-making processes. Although it is not clear whether the disquiet was over the remits of the committees or the appointed chairs, a rule change proposed later in the 1993 AGM would suggest the latter. Two of the women appointed to chair new committees had skills and knowledge appropriate to the committee gained

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<sup>238</sup> Carol Legget had identified most of these as priority objectives for the SWFA in 1989, and they had been achieved in a relatively short space of time. This information was contained in a draft of a newsletter from Magi Hamilton written in March 1993 contained within the SWF archive.

<sup>239</sup> Although Hamilton alluded to this in her oral history interview, it was clearly a difficult time and was not something that she wanted to discuss further.

from work experience and while they had an interest in women's football, they were not directly involved with a team in the SWFA. This appears to have been problematic to some of the membership as the proposed rule change sought to prevent people not directly involved in a club, becoming committee members. The change was approved which suggests a concern among the wider membership about the introduction of those with expertise and potential exclusion of 'authentic' members of the football community (Sotiriadou and Pavlidis, 2019). Research has demonstrated that while there is broad agreement that effective boards require capable people, many still consider that the best people to undertake board or management roles are likeminded individuals with experience in the sport (Adriaanse and Schofield, 2014; Anderson, 2009; Ferkins and Shilbury, 2012). On male centric boards this can perpetuate the masculinised hegemony; for the SWFA this resulted in barriers to the professionalisation of the organisation by deeply embedded values and views (Adriaanse and Schofield, 2014; Anderson, 2009; Kikulis, 2000; Sotiriadou and Pavlidis, 2019).

Although the internal forces for change were resisted, an external force brought about positive change within the SWFA. Across the UK, spearheaded by the Sports Council, work was being undertaken to increase the opportunities for wider involvement in sport. In 1991, the Scottish Sports Council launched its Team Sport Scotland initiative, aiming to increase the opportunities for players and coaches in team sports across Scotland (Begbie, 1994).<sup>240</sup> Within the initiative the post of Girls' and Women's Football Co-ordinator was created, to which Sheila Begbie was appointed. In her role with Team Sport Scotland, Begbie worked with the SWFA and the SFA promoting women's football and encouraging more women and girls to participate. One of the first outcomes was securing funding for a part-time administrative post supporting the work of the SWFA, which was taken up by Maureen McGonigle.<sup>241</sup> This support increased to full time from April 1993 and then an office was provided by the SFA at Park Gardens, where Begbie was also based.<sup>242</sup> The effect of the creation of the co-ordinator role and the funding

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<sup>240</sup> Team Sport Scotland was an initiative of Scottish Sports Council ([sportsotland](http://sportsotland.com)), aimed at getting women and girls more active through team sports (Begbie, 2019). This was also part of a UK wide initiative to reduce social inequalities in opportunities to play sport.

<sup>241</sup> Maureen McGonigle provided oral history testimony for the research (2018).

<sup>242</sup> Park Gardens was the SFA headquarters prior to the move to Hampden Park stadium.

that Begbie had access to, was key in initiating developments that were to facilitate both the growth and development of women's football and the transition of the SWFA to the boardroom archetype, as it became able to develop effective strategic planning. The provision of an office base meant that records were held and retained centrally from the early 1990s onwards.<sup>243</sup> The material available for analysis included notes of AGMs from 1992 to date and the minutes of quarterly management and league council meetings from mid-1993, planning documents, press releases and correspondence. The archive material shows that across a number of years the Executive Committee had been working towards efficiency and effectiveness through increased bureaucracy and the introduction of systems and processes to increase administrative formalisation. The addition of a full-time administrator, implementation of formalised strategic planning and long-term funding secured through Team Sport Scotland, resulted in the completion of the SWFA transition to the boardroom archetype.

## **Phase 2 Boardroom archetype – about 1994 to 2014**

### *A new era*

In addition to undertaking administrative work, McGonigle co-ordinated efforts to apply for grants and sponsorship, deal with correspondence from teams and provide a consistent point of contact for the SWFA (McGonigle, 2018).<sup>244</sup> The location of the SWFA at Park gardens both facilitated the close working with Begbie and enabled those involved with the SFA to see the work that the SWFA were engaged in, at first hand.

In the long debate about affiliation, available material would suggest that while the SFA said it wanted the SWFA to be more professional, it never clearly articulated what that meant. Within the male dominated SFA, it is likely that views about professional organisations would be based on its own organisational gendered practices (Acker, 1990), and those of other predominantly male sports and business organisations. Additionally, gendered hierarchies within organisations result in inequality regimes that place men in management roles and women as

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<sup>243</sup> As indicated earlier, part of the impact work of the research project, discussions have been held with the SWF to form an archive.

<sup>244</sup> There was some success with grant applications, including receipt of £15,000 each from the Football trust and the SFA towards the cost of competing in the UEFA Championship.

administrative and secretarial staff (Acker, 2006). It is possible that, this rendered the male-centric SFA unable to envisage the women-centric SWFA as professional, given that women were often not viewed as competent business leaders (Acker, 2006; Bryson, 1987; Martin, 2006, 2020). The SFA may have feared becoming involved in “managing monsters” (Mangan, 2004: prologue), that is women advocating women’s football and thereby challenging accepted gender boundaries (Clarkson et al.,2019). However, the information available suggests that being in the regular company of members of the SWFA executive, McGonigle and Begbie, the members of the SFA perceived that these were women who would not overtly disrupt their gendering practices (Martin, 2006; Piggott and Pike, 2020). For example, McGonigle said she believed that she was accepted because there was an understanding that, “she is ok – she’s not difficult to work with” (McGonigle, 2018). The narrators involved at this time certainly wanted to bring about change for the position of women’s football but wanted to do so through evolution rather than revolution.<sup>245</sup>

In building working relationships, the women found strategies to manage the inherent conflict between women’s football and the values and beliefs of the male football community (Welford, 2011). For example, there was a concerted effort to encourage the men to find out more about women’s football by inviting them to events, coaching sessions and accompanying them at women’s tournaments that they reluctantly attended. A theme that emerged from interviews with narrators involved with the SFA at this time, was the change in attitude of some men, once they became familiar with women’s football. This ranged from coaches staying on at development events past their allocated time to SFA board members becoming advocates of women’s football after attending a women’s tournament (McGonigle, 2018; Hamilton, 2018).<sup>246</sup> However, despite the improving work relations, some gendering practices and stereotyping remained strongly embedded in the SFA.

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<sup>245</sup> The narrators were Hamilton, Edwards, Begbie and McGonigle.

<sup>246</sup> Magi Hamilton recalled a trip to a tournament where the SFA official attending thought they were sent as a punishment. However, Magi spent time with him, going to games and introducing players and the official returned an advocate and supporter of women’s football. The ‘charm offensive’ had been assisted by the fact that Magi who played for a team coached by Tommy Malcolm had been coached by Harry Haddock who was a friend of Tommy’s. Harry was a very well-known footballer who had played for Scotland and the official appeared to think that Harry’s involvement gave the seal of approval to women’s football (Hamilton, 2018).



McGonigle recalled instances of what she latterly recognised as sexist attitudes, comments and language although at the time she accepted these as normal in the sports-based workplaces she was used to. An illustration of this was occurred at the formal dinner to celebrate the opening of the North Stand at Hampden Park. Invited as the SWFA representative, McGonigle found herself seated at the table with the wives of SFA members. She said that she believed this was unconscious sexism from the SFA Chief Executive who, rather than actively barring her from the men's table, assumed she would not want to talk football with men and would rather sit with the women (McGonigle, 2018). Any disruption caused to the male normative football discourse through the presence of women, was countered by gendered practices (Acker, 2006), a reluctance towards affiliation and lack of commitment to women's football. This suggests that the growing positivity in the relationship with the SWFA, was driven more by relief at a lack of overt disruption than a recognition of professionalism.

The introduction of a paid professional administrator and the increasing presence of women volunteers on the SWFA with professional work skills, began to accelerate the professionalisation process of the organisation (Dowling, 2014).<sup>247</sup> Begbie's role was to develop the women's and girls' game in Scotland and working with both the SWFA and SFA she led the production of a series of development and performance plans which were used to secure both commitment to the work and unprecedented funding to implement it.<sup>248</sup> In 1994, a five-year plan was drawn up to act as grant aid submission and in subsequent years development plans were created, reviewed and revised. This approach fits with the strategic aims of the SWFA, which had previously been thwarted by lack of resources, which were now available. The plan worked as shown by the growth across five years from 1991 illustrated in the table below

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<sup>247</sup> Although Begbie was not directly employed by the SWFA, her close involvement with them and their work impacted the professionalisation process.

<sup>248</sup> In her interview, Sheila Begbie emphasised the importance of the long-term funding given by **sportscotland**, who provided an exceptional twelve-year funding programme. This enabled the SWFA to firstly undertake long term planning and to then implement the actions (Begbie, 2019).

	1991	1996
Affiliated Teams	27	230
Players	400	2706
Coaches	23	2074

Table 4. Five-year growth in membership

Meeting minutes from across the 1990s demonstrate that both the Executive Committee and League Council continued to try and ensure consistent and equitable observance of rules and regulations, reinforcing administrative efficiency and effectiveness (Hoye et al., 2020).<sup>249</sup> A consistent thread relates to expected standards of player behaviour with reminders about no swearing or violent conduct especially at matches where the SFA or Sports council may be in attendance. The rationale for requiring this behaviour is not specified but read in combination with other documents (Chaudhuri et al., 2010), it would appear to be a combination of wishing to demonstrate professionalism while reinforcing behaviour deemed appropriate for women. The latter is an illustration of women, through constant exposure, accepting the male hegemonic discourse regarding gendered behaviour and seeking to reinforce it for approval (Bryson, 1987, Martin 2006; Piggott and Pile, 2020).

The move to more formal work practices meant that the meeting minutes gradually became more reserved in style, and as a result, provided less information for analysis. However, the increased retention of a range of meeting minutes and other related documentation has enabled an overview of development to be charted. Increased administrative support also enabled a newsletter to be produced to keep membership informed and to reinforce the idea of a women's football community. While the main growth area was increased participation of junior players, there continued to be development undertaken with regard to the senior players and teams. One example was the on-going campaign

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<sup>249</sup> There are ad hoc reminders about rules relating to kit, cones, the need to tell the office about cancelled matches and on-going attempts at consistency. Frequently mentioned was the lack of consistency in the completion of the team-line document, with comment or guidance about the topic given in almost all the sets of minutes in the archive.

to enable women to qualify as coaches. By 1992, women were able to commence the coaching qualification pathway and by 1995 Sheila Begbie and Maggi Wilson became the first women in Scotland to pass their A licence.<sup>250</sup> With more coaches, senior teams could be encouraged and supported to establish junior sections which would both increase participation rates and make clubs responsible for their own development and future.<sup>251</sup> This indicates a move by the SWFA to encourage clubs to be more responsible for operational issues, so that it could concentrate on wider strategic work.

The expansion of activities undertaken by the SWFA included the implementation of more planned marketing and promotion of the women's game. There had been on-going attempts to alert the press to upcoming fixtures and match day results from the early days of the SWFA.<sup>252</sup> However, the lack of evidence of nation-wide regular reporting on women's football would suggest that the take up of this information continued to be sporadic. Material in the SWFA archive indicates that from at least 1994 onwards, the production of press releases became routine. A textual analysis of the press releases shows endeavours to spark interest in women's football alongside an underlying message that men's football is the norm and women's football the other. The SWFA needed media attention to raise the profile of women's football but to garner coverage they reflected dominant cultural values through the centring of men's football. This reflects the role of the mass media in the reinforcement of gender difference and inequality that is perpetuated in sport and contributes to male hegemony in the wider social context (Buysse and Embser-Herbert, 2004). An example of these points can be found in the press release announcing the one-year sponsorship of the 1995/6 Scottish Cup by Scottish Blend tea.<sup>253</sup> The press release promises two women players and a 'top Celtic Player' will be present at the photo opportunity and the statement from the

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<sup>250</sup> In 1992, sixteen women passed the C license, the first B Licence holders in 1993 were Sheila Begbie, Maggi Wilson, Trish McCarthy, Fiona Winchester and Violet McCallum.

<sup>251</sup> Information about this initiative comes from a presentation on Women's Football that Sheila Begbie gave to a meeting at Hampden Park in October 1997. It also signals the increased move to clubs, with more than one team as opposed to the single teams.

<sup>252</sup> There were regular reminders, at meetings and in letters, to teams regarding who they should inform about results and the deadline for doing this. It would appear that the task of collating match day results was one of the more challenging, as the person responsible changes frequently and in his interview, Tommy Malcolm spoke about the frustration of trying to co-ordinate this work each week.

<sup>253</sup> That year the cup was known as the Scottish Blend Scottish Cup.

SWFA celebrates the partnership between Scottish Blend and the most prestigious domestic competition. It also centres men's football while 'othering' the women's game, stating that:

With Scotland's qualification for the European Championships there is a great deal of excitement about football in Scotland – this buzz is also true about women's football which has had an enormous growth in popularity in recent years" (SWFA Press release, 1996).

The othering of women's sport is well documented in the gendered sport literature and features repeatedly in relation to football, where it is represented as lesser, abnormal and separate from the 'malestream' (Dunn, 2016; Williams 2017). Language is used to support the hegemonic discourse with the term 'football' referring to the male and therefore universal version of the sport and the term 'women's football' indicating an alternative, deviant by-product which is, by implication, inferior (Griggs and Biscomb, 2010; McArdle, 1996; Messner et al., 1993). Equally, opening the statement with a comment about men's football and adding women as a second point is indicative of the gender hierarchy in football (Buisse and Embser-Herbert, 2004). The textual analysis also highlights another example of the unconscious accommodation and collusion in the reinforcement of the male hegemonic system and discourse (Bryson, 1987; Martin 2006; Piggott and Pile, 2020). This is equally illustrated by the approaches used to secure media interest in women's football by the SWFA, such as including a male footballer at photo calls or the launch of a new strip which offered not just Craig Brown, men's national squad manager but also a fashion show by the players. McGonigle (2018) explained that the objective was to get the media to pay attention to women's football and so tactics were used to garner interest. Indeed, it is a method that is still occasionally used in the promotion of women's football, as evidenced by the centring of a men's team player in 2019 media posts promoting the new sponsor of Celtic Women football club.<sup>254</sup>

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<sup>254</sup> In February 2019, Oliver Burke a male player for Celtic FC was pictured with two women players in the social media post announcing the new women's club sponsor. There were comments made about the sexism inherent in the picture but these comments were met with many more that could see no problem and felt commentators should remain quiet, as indicated by the wording of the link to the article: <https://www.thescottishsun.co.uk/news/3839547/celtic-oliver-burke-instagram-sexist-comments-snowflake/> Undoubtedly this created publicity but those newspapers that took up the story gave more column space to the negative comments than to talking about the women's team.

Through this research a more extensive women's football community than previously acknowledged has been uncovered, including a variety of competitions and tournaments played across the country.<sup>255</sup> The SWF archive material provided another example from the early 1990s, of a little reported international indoor football tournament that the SWFA organised with Glasgow City Council at Kelvin Hall. This was a 5-a-side tournament with club sides representing their country and across the time it was run, attracted teams from across the world.<sup>256</sup> It was popular with audiences but stopped when the Council was no longer able to support it financially.<sup>257</sup>

### *Moving the goalposts*

By 1994, discussion about affiliation of the SWFA to the SFA had moved from magazine articles to formal applications. Within the SWF archive, the first reference to communications with the SFA is recorded in the League Council meeting minutes for August 1994, which note that the SWFA had made an application to affiliate with the SFA. Although there was now dialogue, available SWFA documents suggest a continued lack of detail about required improvements to enable affiliation. The above minutes offer a small insight, reporting that Jim Farry, SFA Chief Executive, had stated that the SWFA needed to, "raise some money off of its own back and not rely so heavily on handouts from various supportive bodies" (League Council minutes, 1994). The framing of this is interesting, using terminology such as 'handout' and 'supportive bodies', appearing to position women's football as less worthy of obtaining financial assistance and needing to prove its value through the raising of funds (Dunn, 2016).

Jim Farry attended the meeting of the Council in November 1994.<sup>258</sup> He reported that while the administration and organisation of both the SWFA and Scottish

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<sup>255</sup> Examples of this include the many teams playing in the 1960s, the myriad of tournaments and competitions that took place across Scotland in the 1980s (as discussed in chapter four) and the football festivals for younger players organised across the country for many years from the early 1990s.

<sup>256</sup> It attracted teams from China, Denmark, England, Norway, Holland, Iceland, Portugal, Russia and Wales.

<sup>257</sup> The tournament also gives an insight to the thoughts of the SFA at the time, as McGonigle (2018) recalled that the SFA insisted that futsal be played to ensure that there were no links to SFA approved football.

<sup>258</sup> Twenty years after its formation, this was the first time anyone from the SFA had attended a SWFA meeting.

women's football had improved since the early 1980s, the SFA believed that there remained a lot of hard work to be done to achieve affiliation. While no information concerning this change in SFA attitude has been recovered, information relating to the FA may provide an insight. In 1992, the Sports Council in England had insisted on a closer relationship between the FA and the WFA as a prerequisite for future funding (Williams, 2003a). It is possible that the Sports Council in Scotland placed the same requirement on the SFA, especially as it was later involved in discussions about integration.<sup>259</sup> Having steadfastly ignored the calls of UEFA and FIFA for football associations to take control of women's football, financial pressure may have been the key to the modification of the SFA's opinion.

The AGM in July 1995 was informed that affiliation had been postponed as the SFA wanted the SWFA to raise more finance and develop further. The lack of clarity about requirements for affiliation continued to frustrate the efforts of the SWFA, suggesting that while the SFA wanted to be seen to be open to closer working, it was not assisting the process. In November, that year, it was reported that discussions were now centred on integration and that McGonigle was to go to visit the English FA to discuss how it managed the process with the WFA (McGonigle, 2018). By May 1996, member clubs had been sent a form to complete and return to give the Executive Committee a mandate to formalise integration with the SFA. There was no update at the AGM but in August the League Council was told that a working party had been formed to investigate integration between the associations.

There is little further detail in available paperwork but a later reference to 'Ernie Walker's group' appears to be a reference to the Scottish Football Independent Review Commission. The review, chaired by Ernie Walker, had been convened by the SFA to produce recommendations for the future health of Scottish football.<sup>260</sup> McGonigle and Begbie were the SWFA representatives on the working party but as the review covered all football it is not clear how much tangible influence, they had on the amalgamation/ affiliation debate. This is another example of the SWFA being subject to external forces disrupting and shaping its development and points to an underscoring of both the existing power structure and gender hierarchy in

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<sup>259</sup> This is mentioned later in the section in a report from the 1997 AGM.

<sup>260</sup> Retired SFA secretary and UEFA committee member

football (Buysse and Embser-Herbert, 2004; White and Brackenridge, 1985; Skinner et al., 1999). In February 1997 it was reported at the League Council that the commission had proposed that the SWFA become an SFA affiliated association.<sup>261</sup>

The 1997 AGM received a brief update when the chair, Lesley Mcauley ended her report with the statement that:

Negotiations between the SFA and Scottish Sports Council to achieve integration of the SWFA are progressing slowly and the future is unclear.... the SFA have agreed to take on the international squad (Mcauley, Chair's report SWFA AGM 1997).

This was the first time this latter point had been mentioned with the move confirmed at the Council meeting in August when it was reported that the SFA had agreed to take over full control of the SWNT from the 1997/98 season, along with responsibilities for the strategic development of the game for women and girls, including the management of the two development officers.<sup>262</sup> A lack of connected archived paperwork makes the background to this move difficult to definitively assess. However, with further reading across wider material it is possible to produce a potential context. Firstly, management of the SWNT could have been a move towards demonstrating increased gender equality in the SFA operation, to satisfy the requirements of funders (Macbeth, 2008). Secondly, this action mirrors the first steps taken by the FA towards amalgamation with the WFA when it took over the management of the national squad and the strategic development of the women's game (Woodhouse, 2002). In February 1998, it was announced that the SFA had accepted the recommendation of the Independent Review Commission and as a result the SWFA was granted affiliation. Given that much of the review's recommendations were ridiculed at the time, it seems incongruous that this one

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<sup>261</sup> Although it has not been possible to obtain written findings of the review, the small information from newspaper articles and Walker's obituaries gives an indication that it is unlikely that the review specifically considered women's football, although the SWFA were one of the organisations consulted. Walker was secretary during the time of little contact between the organisations and even though there was a representative on the review from both Sweden and the Netherlands there is no indication that they particularly supported the women's game. The commission had actually recommended that a number of associations be combined and so it may be that the SWFA were contained within this group, rather than being singled out.

<sup>262</sup> Two development officer roles, funded by grants from the SFA and the Football Trust had been working in Aberdeen and the central region since May 1995.

was singled out for approval (Wilson, 2011).<sup>263</sup> It may be, that actioning this recommendation enabled the SFA to move towards the integration of women's football demanded by funders, while not being seen to take the decision themselves. Although uneasiness had been expressed within the SWFA about the loss of grant funding attached to the national team, affiliation meant that it could finally seek additional grants and longer-term sponsorship. However, while affiliation provided a seat on the SFA council, it only brought one vote, meaning the national organisation had the same voting power as an individual men's football club. While the changes were imposed on the SWFA, the collaboration with the SFA that emerged from the protracted discussions was a significant advance for the progression of women's football in Scotland. Used to functioning with little respect or external support, the SWFA now had the credibility it had long desired which enabled it to continue to formalise and develop business-like characteristics, as the basis for professionalisation (Hoye, et al., 2020).

### *Scottish Women's Football*

The evidence available suggests that at the start of the 2000s, the SWFA, whilst still generally operating within the boardroom archetype, was beginning a transition to the final archetype of executive office (Hoye, et al., 2020). As in previous decades, women who had played now wanted to assist in accelerating the progression of women's football by becoming involved in the SWFA. These women had developed competence and expertise for business administration and strategic planning and were able to introduce systems and procedures to deal with the increasingly complex work (Cooper, 2019; Hoye et al., 2020; Stewart, 2020).

In June 2000 the SWFA held an extraordinary general meeting, which passed a resolution to turn the SWFA in to a limited company. This transition happened in 2001 when the SWFA became the SWF (Ltd). Whilst the immediate effect on operational matters appears to have been small, the move established the entity as a company that could enter into contracts in its own name (including employing staff), had the legal right to money it made from sales and keep its profits, was

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<sup>263</sup> According to the Obituary for Walker published in the *Independent* in 2011, although derided at the time of publication, by 2011 many of the recommendations were seen as crucial to the development of Scottish football (Wilson, 2011)



responsible for paying its own debts and liabilities and is responsible for its own actions.<sup>264</sup> This confirmed the SWF as a separate entity from the SFA and prepared the way for it to grow and develop on its own terms, rather than continually seeking amalgamation.

AGM papers and minutes for this period were more professionally written and as a result contain limited peripheral details. What is presented is a generally efficiently operating organisation although there continued to be issues with funding and service level agreements with the SFA. A characteristic of the boardroom archetype (Hoye et al. 2020; Kikulis et al., 1992), is the specialisation of roles and committees, and an example of this within the SWF is the creation of the Scottish Women's Football League (SWFL) which was set up to undertake the administrative and operational work for the leagues. Internal pressure for the SWF to further develop was exerted in 2002 (Jick and Peiperl, 2011; Skinner et al. ,1999), when the premier league sought to break away from the SWFL in an attempt to foster a more professional attitude and gain more media interest and thereby lead to sponsorship.<sup>265</sup> The Scottish Women's Premier League (SWPL), was still very much a part of the SWF and used McGonigle as its administrator. The hope was that the venture would attract the media coverage based on the standard of football played and the fact that the majority of the national squad played in the league. As identified throughout this chapter, gaining sponsorship without exposure is very difficult. At this point the league was looking for £20,000 from sponsorship to contribute towards costs but this proved difficult to secure.<sup>266</sup> However, the SWPL continued to develop and grow and at the start of the 20/21 season there are now two premier leagues sponsored by Scottish building society with eighteen teams participating.

The previously observed frequent 'churn' of office bearers within the committees, was replaced by a growing number of board members remaining in position for longer. In 2009, it was agreed that in future, anyone seeking election to the role of

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<sup>264</sup> From <https://companieshouse.blog.gov.uk/2018/05/15/what-does-it-mean-to-be-a-limited-company/> last accessed 28.03.21

<sup>265</sup> The twelve founder members of the SWPL were Ayr United, Cove Rangers, Dundee, Giulianos, Glasgow City, Hamilton Academical, Hibernian, Inver-Ross F.C., Kilmarnock, Lossiemouth, Raith Rovers and Shettleston.

<sup>266</sup> <http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/scotland/2183986.stm> last accessed 30<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

chair should have been on the board for at least two years.<sup>267</sup> However, the board generally remained comprised of coaches and others affiliated with clubs and so although they may have had business-based experience, for many their main input and interest related to operational rather than strategic matters. This meant that while the SWF continued to operate efficiently, it retained the characteristics of a boardroom archetype for a significant period of time. The transition to the next organisational model started in 2013. Although the number of people with business backgrounds working in football generally, was steadily growing, it remained minimal within the SWF. However, there were now people on the board who recognised the need to change this if the SWF was to further evolve. Over time women with backgrounds in business but no direct involvement in a club or even women's football, were invited to join the board. As a result of their observations on the approach to the running of SWF, a review panel was set up (MacLaren, 2019).<sup>268</sup> In an echo of the resisted changes twenty years before, the conclusion of the review was that the composition of the board was not conducive to driving the game forward and that there should be more balance on the board between business and football expertise. The review was accepted and following a recruitment campaign the newly configured board was launched in June 2014 (MacLaren, 2019).

### **Phase 3: Executive Office Archetype – about 2015 to 2020**

The launch of the new board, saw the beginning of the transition to the final archetype on the spectrum from amateur to professional, which is executive office (Hoye et al., 2020). As discussed previously, transitions do not usually involve complete change from one day to the next but are rather an evolutionary movement. From the start of the work of the reconfigured board the SWF were operating within the executive office archetype in terms of their public facing work. This included a rebranding of the organisation, with all aspects of the work linked by a family of brands and the creation of a standalone SWF website.<sup>269</sup> However

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<sup>267</sup> A potential indicator of the proportion of women on the board was the fact that the typed version of the amendment to the constitution originally said 'her nomination' in relation to the chair and this had to be changed to her/ his at the meeting.

<sup>268</sup> Vivienne MacLaren is current Chair of SWF and this information comes from her oral history testimony. The review panel included Laura Montgomery from Glasgow City FC and Sheila Begbie in one of her last pieces work related to women's football before moving to Rugby Scotland.

<sup>269</sup> The previous website had been a page on the SFA website that was infrequently updated.

there remained challenges within the administration of the organisation. At this point Maureen McGonigle had left and her work had been partly taken over by a member of staff seconded from the SFA. At the end of the secondment the board took the opportunity to review what was required to move forward (MacLaren, 2019). However, while this work was underway members of the board were required to be very hands on, undertaking a variety of administrative tasks and therefore, for a short period of time, reverting to a kitchen-table archetype. The main driver for the reconfigured staffing was to ensure that the organisation was able to deliver a comprehensive professional service to its members. The first post to be filled was that of clubs and competitions officer to improve the service to the members and this was followed by administrative posts and the appointment of an executive officer to be responsible for the operational aspects of the SWF and inform board decisions on strategy.

These appointments required funding and initially this was a challenge. At the beginning of this period the main income still came from members with, in 2014, just £3,000 commercial income. By 2019 this had risen to £150,000 but this took hard work and demonstration of the increasing professionalism of the SWF, (MacLaren, 2019). Funding continues to be a central issue for the SWF as they remain an affiliated national association rather than being recognised as the lead body for women's football. This means that they cannot receive grants directly from bodies such as FIFA, UEFA, **sportscotland** or the Scottish government and as a result much time and energy is spent on attracting and retaining grants. The effect of this is discussed further in chapter seven.

In its support of moving member clubs towards a professional outlook, the SWF has encouraged them to improve their administration, management, marketing and engagement with fans and the public. In support of this a suite of standard template documentation and training courses and workshops have been provided. Given that at the time of writing, 80% of the SWF individual members are under eighteen there has been a positive lead on the promotion of child protection issues with the SWF being the first sports body in Scotland to appoint a child protection director to their board. The youth membership also informed the work

with SHAAP as the sponsor of the performance leagues (MacLaren, 2019).<sup>270</sup> As part of improving its outward image, the SWF website is used to both inform and connect members, collate news items and provides a club locator function for anyone seeking a local club.<sup>271</sup> Work was also undertaken to promote live streaming of women's football to build the fan base, with the first live streamed match attracting an audience of 100,000 (McIntyre, 2020). Many clubs now stream or record their own matches. There is also an engagement with social media by the SWF and clubs. This is useful in both promoting the game and at times refuting the negative comments which women's football continue to attract.<sup>272</sup>

The potential for further development continues to be frustrated by the fact that despite forty-nine years spent growing the women's game, SWF are not the accredited lead body for women's football in Scotland. The SWF currently combines the work of several associations within the men's game as they are responsible for all levels of the women's game from elite to grassroots (McIntyre, 2020). The SWF has been working hard to raise standards and promote the elite game while supporting the semi-serious and recreational clubs. It has now reached a plateau and requires resources in order to begin to make up the gap with other countries (McIntyre, 2020).

In February 2020 it was announced that the Executive Officer for SWF had been seconded to lead the Scottish FA's Girls and Women's Strategic Project to oversee the Scottish FA's Review into Girls' and Women's football.<sup>273</sup> At the time of writing the outcome of the review is still awaited but it will be pivotal in determining the next phase of women's football in Scotland.<sup>274</sup>

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<sup>270</sup> Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems.

<sup>271</sup> Unfortunately, whilst the website does provide an 'archive' of informative news items, press releases and results, this only goes back to 2016.

<sup>272</sup> At the time of writing the Covid-19 pandemic continues to have a devastating effect on the promotion of the women's game in Scotland with the rules pertaining to the re-introduction of football favouring the men's game due to the prohibitive cost of regular testing  
<https://www.heraldscotland.com/sport/19141874.welcome-return-womens-top-flight-still-testing-times-ahead/>

<sup>273</sup> <https://scotwomensfootball.com/swf-statement-staff-update/> last accessed March 30 2021.

<sup>274</sup> The appointment of Fiona McIntyre to the vacant role of Head of Girls and women's football at the SFA has, at the time of writing, done nothing to clarify the situation.

## Conclusion

With the appointment of Fiona McIntyre to the role of Head of Girls and women's football at the SFA, in February 2021 the SWF advertised for a new Chief Executive Officer. The recruitment pack for the post demonstrated the extent to which SWF has become a professional sports organisation.<sup>275</sup> The information pack centres the vision and mission of the SWF to realise the

needs, wants and unlimited ambitions of its girls and women, and continually challenge and support the high-quality development and provision of those who work tirelessly and play fiercely in football.

And uses the strap line:

**UNITED** in Progress, **EMPOWERED** for Growth, **REALISED** in Scotland's Girls and Women.

While reflecting current business terminology and marketing techniques, in essence the mission statement is virtually identical to that espoused by the SWFA in the 1972 match day programme. What is different is the organisation behind that message.

This chapter set out to trace the development of the SWFA/SWF and examine the ways in which it sought to both encourage and manage the growth of women's football in Scotland. In doing this, it makes an original contribution to knowledge as this information has never been collated before. The development was mapped through the lens of design archetypes (Hoye et al., 2020; Kikulis et al., 1992). This facilitated the examination of the SWFA/SWF as it grew and transitioned from a kitchen-table archetype through the boardroom phase, eventually achieving the executive office or professional archetype (Hoye et al., 2020). In line with academic literature, the move through these archetypes was influenced by both internal pressures and the wider social context (Campbell and Williams, 2014; Campbell, 2020; Dunning and Sheard, 2005; Jarvie, 1991). The transition through the archetypes is shown in table 5 below:

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<sup>275</sup> <https://scotwomensfootball.com/vacancy-chief-executive-officer-ceo/> last accessed March 30 2021.

Scottish Women's Football Association		Scottish Women's Football	
1972 to 1993	1994 to 2015	2015 to 2020	
Kitchen Table	Boardroom	Executive Office	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer led - Mainly by parents</li> <li>• Personal interests and loyalty influence decisions and roles undertaken</li> <li>• Day to day operations with limited ad hoc forward planning</li> <li>• Finance raised through subs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board comprises predominantly women and many of them are ex-players with administrative or business experience</li> <li>• Board roles determined by skills and experience</li> <li>• Decisions being taken for benefit of women's football</li> <li>• Introduction of paid employee</li> <li>• Administrative efficient and effectiveness</li> <li>• Finance from grants, sponsorship and subs</li> <li>• Emerging vision and strategic planning</li> <li>• Initial media and PR work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of directors and separate paid employees</li> <li>• Board comprises a mix of football and business expertise</li> <li>• Decisions taken to further women's football and the organisation</li> <li>• Longer term strategic planning</li> <li>• Increasingly stable finances with longer term and larger sponsorship deals</li> <li>• Professional staff to undertake strategic and operational work of the organisation</li> </ul>	

Table 5. Mapping of SWFA/SWF transition through design archetypes

The creation of the SWFA was due initially to disinterest in and lack of support for the women's game from the SFA, as remained the case for much of the past forty-eight years. The SWFA started out as a kitchen-table organisation, set up by committed volunteers, and was run as an amateur entity with ad hoc planning, limited funding and members who were most interested in the benefit for their teams. Gradually the composition of the committee changed to include ex-players who had experience from the world of work. This started the move from inward to outward looking. The committee strove to improve the administration and organisation of the game but although some characteristics of the next archetype were achieved, there was insufficient support to fully move to the boardroom model (Hoye et al., 2020; Kikulis et al., 1992; Kikulis, 2000). Internal forces were pushing for change but there continued to be push back internally (Nichols, 2015) especially against those who were not immersed in women's football. However, support and funding provided by sportscotland drove a process of improved administration and introduction of business expertise which enabled the formalisation of practices associated with the boardroom archetype.

The organisation then repeated the process with further bureaucratisation of administration, role specialisation and increasingly effective forward planning. The organisation was making developments within the boardroom archetype and starting to stretch into the executive office model (Hoye et al., 2020; Kikulis et al., 1992; Kikulis, 2000). The catalyst for continuous improvement came from committee members (mainly women) who had business and administrative expertise and new ideas which enhanced the professionalism of the operations, promoting growth within the archetype. This included attempts at engagement with the media, to reach out to a wider audience and attempts to raise funds through commercial sponsorship. This work was assisted by both affiliation to the SFA and the move of responsibility for the SWNT and the strategic development of women's football to the SFA. This facilitated further internal developments and growth, including the transformation of the SWFA to the SWF but unlike the previous transition, the impetus to move to the final archetype came from individuals within the SWF who possessed the expertise to plan and implement the strategic development required to make the transition. Guidance was sought from those with business rather than football expertise and a restructuring and

realignment took place encompassing much of the executive office archetype (Hoye et al., 2020; Kikulis et al., 1992; Kikulis, 2000). The impetus was not only the continued desire to demonstrate the professionalism of women's football in Scotland but to use this to attract sponsorship. This was necessary because government, FIFA and UEFA direct funding continued to be denied without designation as lead body for women's football in Scotland and the trickle down of funds from the SFA continues to be minimal. The SWF needs these resources to further develop its strategic role and in the view of two of the narrators, this should come from the SFA as it was instrumental in blocking the development in the past and it now needs to address the imbalance in resources for girls' and women (Dennehy, 2019).

This work has provided a contribution to knowledge and suggested further research to be undertaken. Firstly, in terms of women's football in Scotland, this is the first collation of information charting the development of the SWFA/SWF and therefore contributes to sports history and in particular women's sports history. While recent research has questioned the continued relevance of the kitchen-table archetype for the current context (Hill et al., 2021), the three archetypes remain useful for tracing the development of a sports organisation across a number of years. This research has demonstrated the usefulness of the archetypes in tracing the transition within a smaller women's sports organisation, a research subject not often tackled in the literature (Dowling et al., 2018). In both these areas, there is further work that can be undertaken dependent on material and narrators being available. Finally, the work speaks to the possibility of examining a governing body that has had a predominantly female gender ratio across most of its existence which is unusual in the sporting environment, even for women's sports (Adriaanse and Schofield, 2014). Although this research study was not able to further this avenue of enquiry it has uncovered its potential interest to academics of gender diversity in governance (Adriaanse and Schofield, 2014). A more detailed discussion of areas for future research is contained in the main conclusion. The next chapter, the final of the findings chapters, moves the focus to the women who have been involved in women's football across the past sixty years, centring their voices to explore their lived experiences.



## 6. Jackets for Goalposts

This is the third and final chapter presenting the findings of the research, developing the narrative of women's football in Scotland between 1960 and 2020. Chapter four mapped the development of the women's game in Scotland during the sixty-year period, detailing the growth domestically and internationally. Chapter five considered the governance and leadership of women's football across the same period. These two chapters have provided significant information about the history of women's football in Scotland which has previously been largely ignored by writings on either football in Scotland or Scottish women in sport. The purpose of this chapter is to centre the lived experiences of a range of individuals from across the sixty-year period, whose resilience, determination and resistance of constraints, provided the foundations of today's growing women's and girls' football community. It will firmly place them in the narrative and amplify the voices of often unheard women (FiLia, 2018). The importance of this chapter is that it gives women who have been historically silenced and rendered invisible, "a public voice that adds a deeper human understanding to the historical record" (Wieder, 2004:23).

The recounting of the experiences has been collated into sections, based on a structure used by Macbeth (2004, 2006), which is in turn, adapted from Stevenson's (1999, 2002) work on athlete career paths. It covers five stages from the women's initial encounters with football to retirement or withdrawing from involvement in the wider football community. Together these provide a vivid description of the lived experiences of the women who played football in Scotland during the past sixty years, including the challenges and opportunities encountered by them. In doing so, it reveals a narrative that counters the official historical record that aligns football with men and recognises and celebrates the voices of women who have largely gone unheard (Wieder, 2004).

The chapter starts with an overview of the narrators and the approach taken to interviewing them and analysing the data gathered.<sup>276</sup> The chapter continues with an overview of the concept of serious leisure and an athlete career pathway which

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<sup>276</sup> Further details of the narrators whose voices are heard in this chapter are located in Appendix 1.

is used to collate and present the information. This leads to an in-depth consideration of the narrators' experiences during the different stages of their sporting lives. The final section discusses the narrators' perceptions of the challenges faced by women's football in Scotland across the sixty-year period.

## Overview

The accounts explored in this chapter recall the lived experiences of twenty-seven women, gathered through a combination of oral history interviews and the collection of additional information from a variety of sources that became available during the research.<sup>277</sup> These include participation in the making of a radio programme, a question-and-answer session at a conference and informal conversations.<sup>278</sup> The information for three of the women comes from television and football club documentaries made about them.<sup>279</sup> Through the process of obtaining informed consent the women agreed to the use of their given names in this thesis. This was, at least in part, because they were proud of their achievements and pleased to contribute to the narrative, often expressing the view that this work was long overdue (Le Roux, 2015).<sup>280</sup> In this chapter those given names are used, however, as explained previously, in earlier chapters they are referenced by their family name, in line with other people whose work is cited. This is an acknowledgement of their part in the construction of knowledge. The information that was gathered at public events is attributed to the individual woman as the comments are public record although the information from personal conversations is used as general information rather than attributed. The

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<sup>277</sup> While reference is made to narrators, in this chapter, all those referred to are women and so this term has been used as well, in part to continue the process of centring women in the narrative.

<sup>278</sup> The radio programme was for Radio Scotland and featured Rose Reilly, Elsie Cook, Margaret McAulay and the author. The Q&A, featuring Rose Reilly and Elsie Cook and compared by the author, was the opening session at the Womens Football Conference organised by the author (more details are given in Appendix 4). There was also email correspondence between the author and Elsie Cook and the informal conversations took place with a number of the women at the football conference and during the period of research.

<sup>279</sup> *Rose Reilly* (2019) documentary - this link <http://www.purpletv.tv/programmes/RoseReilly> is to the page on the Purple TV website The Women Who Built Glasgow City. <https://www.purpletv.tv/programmes/TheWomenWhoBuiltGlasgowCity>

<sup>280</sup> The process of obtaining informed consent is explained in chapter three. Some of the women gave blanket approval for their name to be used in any narrative reports that came from the research, others requested anonymity in published articles. In particular the women who are still involved in the women's football community and especially those who work for the Scottish Football Association, requested that their views regarding barriers to development be shared sensitively. It was agreed that these would not be directly attributed but part of an overall discussion.

information from the two television programmes and video interview is also directly attributed to the individual women, as these too are part of the public record.

As explained in chapter three, a narrative approach to gathering data was adopted to enable narrators to tell their story in as much depth as they wanted, in the style they wanted and to concentrate on the parts they felt to be important. The data was scrutinised for the original categories identified but through the use of deductive analysis, additional categories or nuances emanating directly from the data that had been gathered were identified or existing categories adapted (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Kelly, 2014). The categories that are discussed within the chapter evolved from both the inductive and deductive analysis (Rivas, 2012) and are detailed here grouped under the broad theme:

**Challenges** – opportunities to play; finding a team; having sufficient players; the facilities and equipment; travel to games; fundraising; maintaining a squad and ‘amateur’ coaching and organisation.

**Opportunities** – playing football; fitness; friendships; competitions; travel abroad; playing for national team; personal development and coaching/ refereeing.

**Motivation** – love football; be with friends; being independent and being competitive.

The use of broad questions proved useful in prompting memories and the recall of experiences, opening up discussion with the women recalling events they said they had not thought about for some time. This underlined the important role of oral history in the collection and preservation of personal memories (Yow, 1995) or emotional memory which, according to Cvetkovich (2003), comprises those details of an experience or event that are moving, sensory and personal. Where there is an absence of ‘official’ documentation and the narrative is a counterpoint to sanctioned histories, the role of memory becomes an invaluable historical resource and, “ephemera and personal collections of objects stand alongside the documents of dominant culture in order to offer alternative modes of knowledge” (Cvetkovich, 2003:8).

## Sporting Careers

The framework used to present the results of the analysis is derived from the work of Macbeth (2004, 2006) in her consideration of the socialisation of women footballers in Scotland. This is an adaptation of the work of Stevenson (1999, 2002) on the socialisation of athletes which considered different points in the sport's 'career' of both elite and masters athletes. Stevenson draws on Prus's (1984) interactionist model to assist in understanding how individuals become and then remain involved in athletic pursuit. He contends that, "an athletic career begins with a process of introduction to a sport, followed by various inter-dependent processes of ever-deepening commitment to this sport" (Stevenson, 2002: 132). In her work, Macbeth (2006) identified five stages through her participant's journey through football which, as described previously, are: introduction to football; initial involvement in formal football; developing a commitment to women's football; changing participation and retirement from football. These stages are used in this chapter to group and organise the experiences of the women. The experiences are considered with regard to a number of issues including socialisation to football, participating in stereotypically male arenas and women's experience of 'serious leisure.' As a result of the amateur status of women's football in Scotland, the women within this research, when playing in Scotland, were playing football as a leisure pursuit, albeit often at an elite level. However, the effort, persistence and investment devoted to participation make it identifiable as 'serious leisure'. This is a concept developed by Stebbins to describe activities that drive participants to commit to the acquisition of skills, knowledge and experience rather than 'just' the pursuit of fun (Stebbins, 1992 in MacPhail and Kirk, 2006). Those undertaking serious leisure are described as following a career path, not an occupational career but rather a participant's progression in the skills and knowledge associated with the activity and gradual immersion into the community that it takes place in (Raisborough, 2007). As a concept it can assist in examining the complexities of the lived experiences of those undertaking long-term and time intensive leisure (Raisborough 2007). Academic writing on serious leisure has taken many routes but the subjects considered here, relate to women's participation and the benefits

from the leisure which are perceived to outweigh challenges that may be faced (Jones and Symon, 2001).

Overall, this chapter seeks to provide a foundation for understanding the variety and similarities within the experiences of women who navigated their way through their pursuit of a serious leisure 'career' in football (Swanson et al., 2018). The next section presents the experiences of the women as they are introduced to football.

## **Introduction to Football**

The majority of the women were introduced to football at a young age (below ten) through informal play either at home or with friends locally. A few have been told by family that they would play with a ball as soon as they could walk, while others recall games with family members and friends where they lived. This experience does not differ across the time period with those who played far more recently being as likely to play in the garden, street or park as those who played in the 1960s and 1970s. This is evidenced by the experiences of Jane talking about the late 1960s:

It was a new estate with lots of children around – mostly boys. There were a few girls, I wasn't interested in playing with dolls and whatever, so I would go and play with the boys playing football. (Jane, 2019)

and Kerry talking about the late 1990s:

I was always sporty growing up and she [mum] was the one that encouraged me to kick a ball around – playing with me in the garden. (Kerry, 2019)

All those who took part in this informal play said that they were welcomed in by those playing, who were mostly boys. For some it was a point of pride that they were not the last to be picked for teams:

I was just treated like one of the team, it was the thing of picking teams and everyone standing with two people picking teams and the nice thing, I guess, was not always being the last one to be picked, so that was an accolade – not to be last picked. (Sheila, 2019)

or that the boys would actively seek them out to play:

I just started playing with the people around me and the boys soon found out that I was good...They would come up on a Sunday morning and say 'you coming out to play football?' and because we were not at school, we played all day. (Margaret, 2019)

All those who took part in this informal play said that there were never any issues and it soon became clear that they were as good, if not better than the boys. It may be that the ability of the girls meant that there was no impact on the boy's enjoyment of the game and so they felt no need to seek to exclude them. Additionally, this informal play, with local friends may mean that, in contrast to school, the boys were less concerned with boosting their esteem and status and were therefore more accepting of the girls (Clark and Paechter, 2007). A number of the women spoke about playing football whenever they could to practise their skills and because they enjoyed it:

I was playing street football, unorganised, could be two a side; one v one or twenty a side. I played all day and all night. (Magi, 2018)

The women also spoke about informal playing in their primary schools:

I played from P1 onwards in the playground at breaks and lunchtime. (Amy, 2019)

Again, all reported that they were welcomed by their peers, it was rather the teachers and other authority figures who sought to dissuade them. The welcoming by peers is in contrast to findings of studies such as those by Clark and Paechter (2007), who found the girls not to be made welcome in informal playground football. However, the role of teachers in policing participation is echoed in their study and this is discussed further in the next section.

Family support and encouragement is a potential predictor of continuing participation in non-traditional sports (Murray and Howatt, 2009) and for many of the women who were introduced to football at a young age there was positive support. The women who were not actively encouraged by their family on the whole did not report barriers being placed in their way. Rather, there was toleration of an interest that it was hoped their daughter would 'grow out of'. This was never overtly stated but several of the narrators had received this impression:

When I went to secondary school, mum was probably thinking that's the end of the football. (Jane, 2019)

Again, Rose Reilly was an exception, having been locked in her room to prevent her playing but after she kept finding a way to play, the family gave up trying to stop her.<sup>281</sup> These predominantly supportive attitudes meant that most of the women were not aware that football may not be viewed as a suitable game until they moved to an involvement in more formal play. Clearly, Rose had been made aware at school but Chris received reinforcement of gender appropriate sports from her brother:

I remember saying to my brother, 'if I was the best player in the world could I play for Scotland?' and he said no. I said 'what if I was better than Pele?' and he still said no. He wasn't being horrible it was just how it was. (Chris, 2019)

A number of the women also had experience of watching men's football, usually with their fathers, which enhanced their understanding and enjoyment of the game. For Elsie, this was her only introduction to football prior to starting to play at twenty-one. Only one of the women, Kerry, recalled watching women's football having been taken by her Mum:

I remember I was in primary 6 or 7 and went to watch Falkirk ladies at the old Brockwell stadium – one of the last games played there and it was last league game and they won SWFL2 and at that point I don't think I had even realised there were women's teams in the local area ... I remember coming away from that game – they had the big boards that said 'congratulations league winners' and they were getting their photos with it and it seemed great and I went into school the next day and said to my friends – I am going to sign with Falkirk Ladies when I am older – always in my head that was who I wanted to play for. (Kerry, 2019)

The women in this research all had an introduction to football at a young age, either playing or watching. The positive impact of support and often encouragement from their families aligns with studies considering the process for socialisation into sport (MacPhail and Kirk, 2006 and Murray and Howatt, 2009).

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<sup>281</sup> Rose Reilly (2019) documentary, <http://www.purpletv.tv/programmes/RoseReilly> Last accessed 12 April 2021.

## **Initial involvement in formal football**

Given the high degree of consistency in terms of the women's first involvement in informal football, there was far more variance in the move to more formal play. Some of this variance comes from the women themselves but much of it was rooted in barriers being placed in the way of the women's involvement (Macbeth, 2006).

For the majority of the women there was no move to formal play whilst at primary school, either because they did not seek a place within the school team or because they were stopped from joining. This barrier was in place for much of the period under consideration. The experiences of many of the women indicate that whilst the boys may have been accepting of their participation in informal football, their teachers were not so accommodating. In the most extreme case this involved corporal punishment when Rose endured the wrath and disapproval of the nuns at her school but this did not stop her playing (*Rose Reilly, 2019*). This aligns with studies on the subject, including Clark and Paechter (2007) and Carlman and Hjalmarsson (2019).

In the late, 1960s, both Jane and Chris wanted to play for the school team and indeed would have been welcomed by the boys they played informally with. However, in both circumstances, the headteacher of the school forbade their participation. As Chris explained:

A couple of the boys had gone to the Headmaster unbeknown to me, to say 'Christine Henderson is really good, better than so and so, can she play in the team'. Apparently, he got angry at them and nothing was ever said, later the boys said they were frightened by him. (Chris, 2019)

In the mid-1980s, Emma was delighted when she was picked for the school team but this was short lived:

In Primary 6/7, there were trials for the school football team, I went along and I was picked by the parents who organised it. I was so excited and remember being given a school strip and wearing it to bed. But then one of the coaches had a conversation to explain that school was told I was not allowed to play as it was against local regulations. (Emma, 2019)



Emma attended all the training sessions and went to all the matches, but had to watch from the side. Her Dad went to the press in an attempt to get the rule changed, which it was, but too late for Emma who was moving to High school. In the early 1990s, Amy faced a similar situation but took matters into her own hands:

School had a football team in P7. They were going to play in their first tournament and the teacher said to me, 'girls aren't permitted to play in the tournament', so I went down to watch....I went up and asked the co-ordinator, 'whys you not letting girls play?' and they said 'no, you are allowed to play'. I challenged my teacher and was given a strip and played. (Amy, 2019)

Amy said that at the time she was just pleased to play but with hindsight believes that the teacher (who was not in the Physical Education (PE) department) had just seen all the issues that could come with her playing and had tried to avoid them:

Looking back on it with hindsight she was the assistant head and probably didn't want to do it [the tournament] and adding a girl was too complex. (Amy, 2019)

At about the same time in the early 1990s, Jennifer also faced issues with resistance on the part of the headteacher:

We were playing at breaktime in P3 and I scored a goal and the boys wanted me on the team. The PE teacher was up for it, the only resistance I was aware of was from the headteacher who was very traditional. I was the only girl who had played in the football team at the school which had been open for a 100 years. She [Headteacher] was resistant to the extent that if there were football and netball matches at the same time, I was almost forced into playing netball. (Jennifer, 2019)

However, the PE teacher and her family encouraged her to keep going and Jennifer played for the team. These last two examples align with the findings of Carlman and Hjalmarsson's (2019) study of a 'sport for all' programme in Sweden, that indicated that policies aimed at equality will only succeed if those in authority are willing to actively support them. Equally, the attitudes demonstrated by various teachers across the period studied here may speak to notions of the construction and shared understanding of an 'authentic participant' (Crawford, 2003). The construction of the authentic participant is frequently gendered thereby working to

exclude women and girls in spite of their potential skills (Crawford and Gosling, 2004), in these cases from the school football team.

Interestingly, Kerry had no issues with those in authority in terms of playing for a mixed team in the early 2000s but did face some hostility from the boys (she was the only girl), questioning her ability. Here, Kerry's experience is closer to those studies which found boys to be the barrier either due to a desire to boost their own esteem and status (Clark and Paechter, 2007) or from concern that as there are limited places on the team, a girl may usurp them (MacPhail and Kirk, 2006). Two of the women were involved in a girls' team at their High school. The teams were good and through the formal structure for girls' football in schools, they became involved in a women's club having been approached by coaches, as discussed in the next section. There were also a few of the women who found the opportunity to play football when they were at university.<sup>282</sup>

For a number of the women who started formal playing at a younger age, the route was via a local boys' club. The examples of this route into formal football come from the first half of the period of research, with Margaret and Rose in the 1960s, Susan in the 1970s and Amy in the early 1990s. For most of them, the choice of a boy's club was because they were not aware of any girls' teams. Rose was aware of a local team (organised by Elsie Cook) but as she was only seven, she had been told to come back when she was older and had joined the boys' team.<sup>283</sup> Those women who started playing football in a boy's or mixed team were often surprised when they find out how many other girls are interested in football:

We were playing in a competition, a round robin format where there were ten or twelve other schools that were all girls only teams which was my first insight into how many girls in the Falkirk area where I lived actually played. (Kerry, 2019)

While a number of the women had experience of formal play before moving to a women's team, for others their first experience of formal football was with a women's team. In his study of masters' swimmers, Stevenson (2002) identified two main processes through which participants started formal masters swimming.

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<sup>282</sup> As indicated in the conclusion, University football is outside the scope of this research and would be an interesting topic for future research.

<sup>283</sup> Purple TV Purple TV, Rose Reilly (2019) documentary, <http://www.purpletv.tv/programmes/RoseReilly>

These were either by seeking it out or through solicited recruitment. The experiences of the narrators in this research followed a similar pattern although the recruitment element can be further broken down to formal and informal. The narrators who sought out women's football did so through: newspaper adverts:

I was probably not aware of women's football until the age of 15 or 16. I saw an advert for a women's football team in the (Glasgow) *Evening Times* and that was the first I had seen, I didn't know they existed, though clearly, they did. I phoned up the number and they told me to come along. (Maureen S, 2019)

asking at sports centres about local teams:

I stayed in East Kilbride at the time; I went into the local sports centre and said, 'Do you know any women who play football?' And there was an East Kilbride Ladies Football team, I got a phone number and I phoned the woman and I started going to training. (Fiona, 2018)

or seeking out teams in the local area. The narrators who were younger at this point often enlisted the help of their parents, again highlighting the importance of family support (MacPhail and Kirk, 2006). In one example, when Emma was unable to find a team, she and her father set about setting one up which went on to be relatively successful. The others were recruited, formally or informally, into playing. One fifth of those interviewed had been formally approached by a team coach or another person involved in the women's game and invited to join a team. The invitations came as a result of them having appeared in a newspaper report, been noticed when playing for a boys' team or through development work with schools. For example, Jennifer was invited to join a women's team when she took part in an event at High school organised by another of the narrators, who spotted her potential:

I remember Sheila Begbie coming to the school on a couple of occasions and taking sessions. (Jennifer, 2019)

In contrast, two of the women reported having been spotted by scouts for boys' teams but then rejected when it was realised, they were girls. This happened to Rose who was scouted by Celtic FC in the 1960s and to Amy who was scouted by Rangers FC in the 1990s.

The informal recruitment route refers to situations when narrators were 'recruited' by friends to come along with them to a team. This often happened as the narrator

moved to high school and made new friends, making schools a main avenue to entry into playing, even if that was not directly due to a team at the school. For example:

I became friendly with a girl at school who I knew played football. She said – do you want to come and play for a team and I said yes immediately.  
(Magi, 2018)

There were some exceptions to the school route for informal recruitment. Heather was recruited by her friend to play in a team set up by a community project and Elsie was 'recruited' by her Mum to be part of the team set up in 1961 to play a works team for charity.<sup>284</sup> The majority of narrators were very happy to have found a team and been able to play and were evidently enjoying the memory during the interview. Only one narrator did not enjoy the transition to playing girl's football and even though she participated in national development camps, she did not develop her 'commitment' to women's football until adulthood. Within writing on serious leisure, there is discussion of 'career contingencies and stratifiers' which are elements that prevent or dissuade an individual from taking part in an activity (Stebbins, 1992; Bartram, 2001). Contingencies are the general factor, in this scenario, difficulties in finding a football club. A stratifier is a dimension of personal identity that increases the likelihood that someone will be prevented from taking part. In this case the fact that there were far fewer girls' and women's football clubs which were not well advertised meaning there was limited promotion and thereby a lack of awareness of the opportunities available (Macbeth and Magee, 2006). There were significant barriers to the to the promotion and communication of women's clubs which suppressed the level of participation in football among teenage girls and young women (Bartram, 2001). The next section discusses those who were able to find a team and continue playing.

### **Developing a commitment to women's football**

Moving to this stage of the 'career' is the point at which, according to Stevenson (2002), participants begin to engage with the activity, become entangled and start to modify parts of their lifestyle to take part. The commitment applies to both the actual activity and involvement in the wider 'community' associated with it. For the

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<sup>284</sup> Information about the team Heather played for, Lochend Thistle and Stewarton Thistle which Elsie played for is in chapter four.

narrators in this research, in addition to playing and training, entanglement in this serious leisure activity involved fundraising, supporting administrative work, dealing with equipment, long travel and poor facilities (Bowness, 2020; Raisborough, 2007).

At the outset of the research, the inductive analysis identified three potential main themes of challenges, opportunities and motivation for narrator's experiences (Rivas, 2012).<sup>285</sup> These categories were used to inform the questions asked during the semi-structured interviews (Rivas, 2012). In the post-interview deductive analysis, some of the categories remained, whilst others were found to be of more or less importance than anticipated and new or adapted categories emerged (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Rivas, 2012). For example, there was little evidence of the narrators perceiving that the attitudes of family, friends or the SFA presented challenges to their participation. However, poor or limited facilities, travel to games and fundraising were frequently mentioned. In terms of the opportunities afforded, there was reference to travel, friendships and for some, personal and career development. In terms of the motivations for narrators, overwhelmingly 'gratification' came from the sheer enjoyment of playing football which was further enhanced when playing (and winning) in competitions or for the national team. Everyone, even those who played for a relatively short time, repeatedly mentioned their love of playing football.

The remainder of this section describes the experiences of the narrators, amplifying their own voices, through the themes of challenges and opportunities. Together these provide a picture of the balance of short-term costs against long-term gratification that is associated with developing a commitment and carving out a career path within serious leisure (Bowness, 2020; Raisborough, 2007; Stevenson, 2002).

### *Challenges*

An issue raised by the narrators who played in the first half of the period covered by the research, was the lack of opportunities to play. This was caused by the relatively small number of teams affiliated to the SWFA thereby limiting the

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<sup>285</sup> Other themes related to the development of football and attitudes of the governing bodies.

number of opponents. This in turn led to the development of large numbers of tournaments, including 5-a-side to try and increase the games to be played and give the women “something to play for”, (Margaret, 2019) as discussed in chapter four. Narrators who played from the second half of the period felt that there were enough opportunities to play and, given the increased level of training for most teams, felt the balance of league matches and cup competitions was appropriate.

Another pervasive recollection of a challenge, were the poor or limited facilities and equipment that were available to the teams the narrators played for either in the early part of the time period or in lower division clubs. This may have been expected for those playing before the restrictions were lifted in 1974 but the situation remained and has not been fully resolved to this day. Examples of the situation include, clearing the pitch, painting lines, putting up nets, little training equipment, limited kit issue, changing in cars or mini-buses and going home muddy. As Marion explained:

If you forgot to book the pitch you had to take what you were given. Some of the places were no more than a field, full of puddles, you couldn't run properly and the ball would keep getting stuck. (Marion, 2019)

The pitches could be ash, gravel, sand and astro turf:

We played on blaze for so long 'cos no one else would take it, so the women got it. It was luxury to play on grass. (Kate, 2019)

and a number of the women, such as Susan, can recall gravel related injuries:

Some [pitches] were worse than others, near Ravenscraig it was an ashen pitch and gravelly and I had to have a penicillin injection because I had taken all the skin off my legs – so a few bad ones. (Susan, 2019)

Even if there was potential access to reasonable pitches, this could be frustrated by booking systems that favoured any aspect of men's football, even training, over providing facilities for a woman's match. This also impacted on the timing of matches, as the lower standard pitches would not have floodlights; therefore, in order to play in the light in winter, matches had to start at 2pm. This is just one of the issues encountered by women players that underlined the hegemonic view that football is inherently male and that women are secondary, othered or inferior (Bryson, 1987; Dunn, 2016).

Having secured a pitch there were then often difficulties with arranging officials for the match. Again, this is little surprise for those playing before 1974 but the problems continued for some time after then. Most of the time there was only expected to be a referee with club members assisting but even this could be difficult to arrange and at times no referee may have been preferable to the one that attended. There were accounts of poor-quality referees, sent to the women's game as they were not used by men's matches and, in one account an official who was drunk on the pitch. However, other narrators reported that they encountered no issues.

While those playing more recently generally had the basic requirements, the situation varied dependent on the level played at be that in the divisional hierarchy or youth teams. For example, Kerry played at all age levels within her club and the junior teams were expected to contribute to setting up the pitches in a way that was reminiscent of earlier times:

U13 and U15, we had to set goals up, put the nets up and everything, we had a good group of parents who would get involved in that. U17 we trained on the rubber crumb played on grass then too but we had 11 a side goals that we could wheel out that already had net attached! (Kerry, 2019)

There was also the issue of securing grounds for training. As many of the teams were playing on council-owned pitches it was not possible to train where matches were held. And as a result, teams would seek out local 'green spaces' to train hopefully for free. These would be local parks or grass fields. These might not be set up for football training and so all equipment would be brought in or improvised. In recalling her early experiences of training, Emma said:

We used to train on muddy grass fields with no goals, use our jackets for goals and probably wouldn't even have cones at the time and five footballs between us. (Emma, 2019)

These experiences largely improved across the time period, with clubs linking in with men's or junior clubs and thereby having access to improved grounds. However, this issue has not completely been resolved and at the end of the 2018/19 season, due to a breakdown in the booking system, Glasgow City's last

game away to Motherwell had to be played on a public pitch with no changing facilities or disabled access.<sup>286</sup>

The lack of facilities and equipment includes kit provision. In the early part of the period these were borrowed or brought through parental donations and always washed at home. Jane recalled from her start at Edinburgh Dynamos:

For the first kit Mrs Scott got a provy cheque .....and went to a shop in Leith and got us a new kit which was very exciting. (Jane, 2019) <sup>287</sup>

If it was not possible to obtain sponsorship, the kit could be mismatched, old and ill fitting. This applied as much to the national squad as clubs, as before the first international match in 1972, the jerseys were bought by Elsie from a jumble sale in Stewarton, using money donated by Rose Reilly's father (Cook, 2018) and she then sewed on the Scotland badge to each jersey with the shorts and socks being loaned by Rangers Football Club. Over time things did improve as sponsorship was obtained but even recently, lower league clubs asked players for contributions towards the kit. However, expectations may also have been lower with women pleased with what they were provided or had to buy. At times, even small gestures were greatly appreciated:

I think what happened the second night was, I was given a holdall, a football holdall. It was black and I can still smell it, that black plastic. It had green lettering saying Monklands LFC and oh my God that was just like fantastic. (Magi, 2018)

The assumption that 'this is just how it is' often requires a newcomer to question the status quo. Laura, from Glasgow City, explained that when Kat Lindner came to play for City in 2005, having played in both Germany and America, she was appalled at the conditions (Laura, 2020).<sup>288</sup> It was this reality check which made Laura and her co-manager, Carol-Anne really question the state of the game in Scotland as discussed in chapter four.

The next issue regarding playing or training was the lack of provision for changing. Players, especially in the early days, travelled to and from matches or

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<sup>286</sup> <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/sport/local-sport/swf-chiefs-reviewing-motherwell-ladies-20749099> Last accessed April 12 2021

<sup>287</sup> A 'provy cheque' is a personal short-term loan from the Prudential.

<sup>288</sup> *The Women Who Built Glasgow City*  
<https://www.purpletv.tv/programmes/TheWomenWhoBuiltGlasgowCity>



training in their kit or changed in cars or mini buses (if these were available) or a variety of buildings. These included toilets or someone's flat if it was near to the playing area. Kate recalled:

The changing room was the bottom flat in the block which was a women's refuge. We would change in the living room and walk up to training ground. With other teams, you would turn up at there would be no facilities, so you would change in the back of a car, change on the bus, there were no toilets and no showers. (Kate, 2019)

Some clubs did have changing rooms but these may have been a walk from the training or playing area or the rooms may not have been in the best of conditions in terms of repair and cleanliness, particularly if they were part of the council facilities. In these cases, the best rooms would be used by the visiting team and the home team would be in with the maintenance machinery, as both Sheila and Jane recall from their early days with Edinburgh Dynamos:

Facilities then were terrible, more like a gardener's shed thing. There was a couple of changing rooms, a few chairs lying about, cramped facilities and lucky if any showers and if there were, they were grotty. Other clubs were all much of a muchness, all just playing on the Council parks with normal council facilities. (Jane, 2019)

Sheila had a similar recollection:

So, you would have things hanging off the handles of a lawnmower or some different kind of a machine and it was really pretty awful actually particularly in terms of training, especially if it was cold or it had been raining because you couldn't have a shower or anything, it was really pretty horrific. (Sheila, 2019)

Over time this improved and more recent teams had access to changing facilities with showers and plenty of room to change. The standard does, however, still depend on the level at which the teams play with, unsurprisingly, the better facilities in the elite clubs.

Another often mentioned issue was the lack of enough women in the squad to ensure a full team on a Sunday, never mind substitutes. This is mentioned both by several narrators and referenced in SWFA correspondence which, in the 1980s, sets a minimum number of players per team at seven. The reasons for absence

could be shift work, family commitments, travel problems, injury or walkouts.

Having extolled the virtues of her football bag, Magi went on:

The name of the team wasn't Monklands – they were Vale of Clyde LFC at that point but as often happens in women's football there had been a big fall out and the squad was pretty much depleted. (Magi, 2018)

However, for some narrators there was also a perception that there was a lack of commitment on the part of some women. This was something that Macbeth (2006) noted in her research as a major frustration for those who were taking the playing seriously. This issue generally reduced as the period went on but, certainly for lower league clubs, did not completely go away.

A big challenge recounted by players was getting to and from training and matches. The women who played from the 1960s to the 1990s talked of long or multiple bus journeys:

[It was a] young team, no one could drive, went everywhere on a bus. So, my recollection is walking 45 mins to training, 45 mins back as I didn't have the money for bus fares, I walked everywhere, the training ground was also the meeting point for catching the bus on a Sunday. (Kate, 2019)

There were also examples of hiring mini buses, buying old mini buses and car sharing when possible. There was also use of taxi's when bus timetables did not suit the match timings and hitch hiking when the other transport broke down. There were some clubs that had provided or sponsored transport, for example Heather's club used a minibus provided by the project that started the team and Magi's team had brought an old school mini bus, which provided many memories especially on the frequent occasions it broke down.<sup>289</sup> For Edinburgh Dynamos:

Mr and Mrs Scott [managers] would hire buses so we would contribute money to that. We also had, there was a guy called Charlie the bookie... he put in some money to make it easier for everybody. (Jane, 2019)

For those reliant on buses, travel to and from a match on a Sunday could take all day due to the distance and Sunday timetable. It was also pointed out that even if there were cars or mini buses available, travel could still be very time consuming

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<sup>289</sup> It broke down on way to Bells tournament in Perth, leaving the team to hitch hike and they all arrived at different times from each other and the kit followed later. It also broke down on the way to France so the team had to catch trains instead.

as, until relatively recently, leagues were country wide and there was not always an adequate standard of roads. If the team were in a cup final provision was made to hire a coach for the occasion. From the late 1990s onwards, those travelling to play were more likely to be given lifts via parental car pools and then lifts or driving themselves with older players. As stated previously, more recently, the travel arrangements depend on the age group and level of club, but group travel by coach remains something that is generally only used on special occasions.<sup>290</sup> The difficulties in travel arrangements were as a result of lack of funds and in the earlier period, this meant there was a reliance on public transport which could also be problematic.

Jennifer was able to provide a very interesting insight into the situation more recently, for teams in different divisions, having, in a relatively short space of time, played in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd tier. The information in the quote below is collated from several answers within the interview:

3rd tier Club – you would get to games yourself, either travel together in cars or meet there; we brought kit initially but then it was provided but you would try to keep it in good condition for as long as possible to save money. We had a small training pitch which was sand based with goals in tatters, matches were on grass pitches with goals.

2nd tier– for local games you would get yourself there; there was an ‘away’ budget for 2 buses per season; there was good kit with training kit brought our self, but this changed over time. At one point a volunteer at the club had sourced sponsorship for the kit; the club didn’t have a home base so training was on rough grass, no marking and equipment in container; for matches there were pitches on a slope or astro turf or 3G.

Top tier – buses provided for travel; fruit, nuts and water at training and matches; no subs to be paid; excess kit with different colours for different training sessions and we didn’t pay for any of it, everything was provided. (Jennifer, 2019)

Many of the previous issues link to the challenge of fundraising which spanned the whole time period and was mentioned both by every narrator and the other sources of information. For women’s football clubs in Scotland, there is no consistent source of funding, unless the team is closely aligned to a men’s club.

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<sup>290</sup> Although, across the interviews, more than one mention was made of the impressive coach that Kemnay had for travelling to away matches from Aberdeen.

This results in constant concern for both team administrators and the SWFA/SWF as detailed in chapter five. The effect of this lack of funding directly impacts on the players in terms of both the standard of the facilities, equipment and travel and the need to take part in fundraising activities. Players pay subscriptions or 'subs' to the club, which is then used to pay for club affiliation and player registration to the association. Clubs then endeavour to arrange sponsorship, usually from local businesses to cover other expenses. In some examples the sponsorship led to name changes for the teams such as Stewarton Thistle temporarily becoming Lees Ladies and other teams adopting the name of their sponsor such as Giuliano's who were sponsored by an Italian restaurant. If sponsorship was not available, or did not cover everything it was necessary for players to raise additional funds, which was done in a variety of ways.<sup>291</sup> These included, sponsored walks; race nights; raffles; 100 club; scratch cards; bag packs; can collections and event nights:

Sponsored walks – Forth Road bridge and Arthur's seat – that was the main fundraising – pontoon tickets were constant. (Jane, 2019)

Whilst the women saw these as important for the club it was an additional drain on their time and could also be embarrassing. For some it was the fact that they were older and being asked to undertake tasks associated with younger people, such as bag packs, or it was that the money for subs and fundraising came from the same small group of family and friends who were repeatedly asked:

The funding bit was a bit challenging in terms of having to be continually asking people for money and quite often I would just pay it myself – I had a job on a Saturday working in a sports shop – and sometimes it just felt easier to pay it myself rather than asking people all the time. (Sheila, 2019)

In their study of sports club fundraising, Gallagher et al. (2012) highlighted this issue of asking the same people over and over to contribute especially when these people were also likely to be those volunteering in other roles at the club. This fundraising is still prevalent throughout women's football, as it is for many smaller sports clubs. This was highlighted in the Glasgow City documentary which discussed the issue, showing footage of raffles and contributors expressing

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<sup>291</sup> Gate receipts were either not an option due to the location of the match on a public park or the numbers involved were very small and did not raise much money.

discomfort at bag packing in a supermarket when an adult. This constant fundraising can have other impacts, as collection can 'shaking', usually at men's matches, could expose the young women to negative comments:

Fundraising, we had to do lots even within the national team set up. Can collecting (donation cans) it was soul destroying and degrading especially the comments you may overhear. No one was unkind to me but you could grasp what was being said about women and football. (Pauline M., 2019)

This is an example of men feeling the need to reinforce gendered behavioural expectations and the position of football as male territory and comment on incursion into the territory both physically in collecting and figuratively in playing football (Clark and Paechter, 2007).

While the women, at times, were bemused during the interview at the conditions they dealt with, none expressed the view that it diminished their enjoyment of the game and a number felt it increased the sense of camaraderie. The biggest laughs either during the interviews or with women talking together were around shared memories of these challenges. Indeed, Jennifer, who had played at three different levels of the game, felt that some of the provision at the elite club, as detailed above, was potentially excessive, suggesting that team spirit could be promoted by adversity. Kerry also spoke to this, noting that some of her most memorable times were when the team worked hard and pulled together as they were struggling to compete in the league.<sup>292</sup>

One of the issues that the women highlighted only became apparent with hindsight, which was that the coaching available to women's teams was often of poor quality, especially in the earlier part of the period. This was noticed by narrators either as they progress to better teams or become involved in coaching themselves. This manifested itself in poorly organised training or inappropriate exercises and was usually as a result of a 'volunteer' doing their best but with no formal training:

Their only qualification was being a bloke who liked football. (Diane, 2019)

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<sup>292</sup> Her team had been promoted despite being effectively mid table because those teams above them in the league were development teams of clubs that were in the higher league. The development teams could not be promoted and as a result her team were promoted above their skill level. This was a challenge but she felt it brought the team together.

This speaks to a fundamental difference between women's and men's football which has been partially alleviated by the development of youth pathways but can still be present. For boys, football is omnipresent, whether they are interested or not. This means that by the time a boy joins a team they will usually have played for many hours and be at a consistent standard as those boys who do not reach that standard have opted out of playing.<sup>293</sup> For girls and women, there was far less opportunity to 'practise' their play and many joined a team without much playing experience or knowing the positions:

My favourite player was a right back for Celtic and so when the manager said 'what position do you play hen?', I said right back but I didn't really know what that means. (Magi, 2018)

So, it is then very important for there to be a trained person taking the coaching, not merely a parent or someone who used to play. Obviously without these individuals there would have been even slower development but in some ways that development was despite this shortcoming. The development pathways which are now available for coaches, means that there is an expectation of a better standard of coaching even at grassroots level.

In Macbeth's research (2004, 2006), respondents said that issues relating to perceived and actual player sexuality could be a challenge within teams. The sexuality of narrators was not explicitly discussed in this research as it was not seen as directly relevant to the data gathering and there was space for it to be raised if it was important to the interviewee. Some of the narrators discussed it and others made remarks that indicated their current relationship was lesbian; for example, mentioning their partner and then saying 'she'. As noted by Cox and Thompson (2001), the perception that most women football players are lesbian can present a challenge for those participating in women's football and this was the case for some of the narrators. This challenge presented either as negative comments made to them about their motivation for playing or teenagers being uncomfortable with the thought of being 'labelled' as a lesbian and this putting them off joining a team. None of the women who discussed it said that there had

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<sup>293</sup> This may be self-selection or as a result of peer pressure as gender stereotypes can apply to boys who do not conform as well as girls.

been any issues or inappropriate behaviour towards them, especially amongst those who played at a young age with an older team.

This discussion has shown that, in order to pursue either their serious leisure or elite sport the women had to overcome a number of on-going challenges. However, given that the majority of the women continued to be involved for many years, it would suggest that the challenges were mitigated by the opportunities afforded to the women. The opportunities highlighted by the women within the research are discussed below.

### **Opportunities**

The first and most important opportunity for the narrators was the chance to play football, a sport they were passionate about:

I just loved it – I loved playing. (Maureen S., 2018)

This sentiment was replicated across all interviews, even for those who came to football when they were a little older or due to changing circumstances were only involved for a short period of time. There were many examples of the women feeling that they were the only girl / woman interested in football and being amazed when they found out that there were others and that they could play in a team. For others, finding (or founding) a team meant that the obstacles that had been placed in their way were able to be overcome and they could pursue the sport they were passionate about. For some of the women this was as serious leisure and others it was as an elite sportsperson, both at club and national level. It is difficult to convey here the strength of feeling on this topic displayed by the women, even with the use of quotes. The sheer delight that the women expressed through words, smiles and laughter was irrepressible and clear illustration of the inability of the challenges to overcome the desire to play (Jones and Symon, 2001).

Linked to their enthusiasm for playing, another perceived opportunity expressed by the women was the prospect of improving their skills. This was mentioned in relation to a number of aspects of the game. Firstly, when the women were at a team that had a good coach who was able to work with them to improve performance. For the players from earlier in the period this would usually be a

male coach but as the period progresses there is the introduction of more women coaches, especially those who have played previously.

For the women, who played before the development of youth teams, there was the opportunity to improve their game when playing with older, more experienced women. Many started playing in teams with age ranges from eleven to mid-thirties. This meant that they quickly needed to improve their fitness to keep up and to develop their skills to keep their place in the team:

My first official game for East Fife, aged eleven, was against Edinburgh Dynamos who were **the** team at the time. Sheila Begbie was marking me and the first thing I done was to nutmeg her and score a goal. She came up and shook my hand, which was really good. (Susan, 2019)

Although the descriptions of these mixed age teams raise a number of issues that might be of concern today, the women had positive memories and could see that they were looked after by the 'older' women.<sup>294</sup> For example, this facilitated the narrators being able to travel to away games when still young girls. Pauline M for example said,

The expectation from my mother was that they would look after me given that we were going to play in a national league. I remember the first time we were going to cross the bridge and play in Edinburgh; she was not for letting me travel or go without signed consent, cos she felt it was too far for daughter to go with a group of adults. (Pauline, M., 2019).<sup>295</sup>

A further way that the narrators felt their playing improved was through meeting different teams at tournaments or cup competitions. The first leagues and competitions were welcomed because of the opportunity to both play more football and to play different teams that allowed the honing of skills. This opportunity is mentioned in testimonies from throughout the period either as a benefit for teams or for individuals. For individuals it was about meeting different players with different skills that they needed to match or that brought them to the attention of higher-level clubs. Those competitions which were outside the SWFA organisation brought together many different teams and the women enjoyed the competition. Tours abroad also enabled the teams to gauge how they were doing

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<sup>294</sup> Given the youth of the women at the time, those who are older may be in their early twenties.

<sup>295</sup> Pauline M said that with hindsight some of this may have been a problem for the women, but they never said anything to her.



in relation to teams from other countries especially those that were perceived to be more advanced than Scotland. Alongside the eleven a side matches were the 5-a-sides. In chapter four there was an exploration of the attraction of these tournaments but in summary, they gave the opportunity for yet more football but additionally, for the smaller teams there was the chance to win tournaments as fewer players were needed and different skills required.

An opportunity mentioned by the majority of narrators was the chance to travel. For some this was within the country as they played in the national league but for the majority it was travel abroad (including the rest of the United Kingdom) on tours or with the SWNT. The opportunities were about visiting countries that they might not have done otherwise; meeting new people; seeing the way women's football was viewed in other countries and bonding with their team mates. The cost of travel was a challenge but the fundraising did not seem so arduous when a trip abroad was the goal. It would also appear that most of these trips took place without incident or at least not ones that overshadowed the excitement. Countries mentioned include Germany, Holland, Spain, Morocco, America, Ukraine, Italy, Bulgaria, Faroe Islands and in England, Manchester, Blackpool, Mansfield and Liverpool.

A further opportunity expressed by the majority of narrators was that of the camaraderie at the time of playing; making new friends and developing friendships that would last a lifetime:

I think the camaraderie as well – the laughs the friendship, the support network and with each year, further developed the memories that you have. (Pauline M., 2019)

This aligns with one of the perceived benefits of serious leisure of social contact and sharing experiences with others (Jones and Symon, 2001). It was important for the narrators to develop friendships amongst those in the football community or who were supportive of women playing football. The narrators spoke of both making new friends and keeping in touch with existing friends who were supportive of their participation in football. The former was almost inevitable due to the amount of time devoted to football and several narrators commented on the effort they would take to facilitate the latter:

Two of my best friends weren't playing football but they knew I was playing and they lived near Meadowbank when I was training there and I would go up for a cup of tea before getting the bus to go home. (Jane, 2019)

This is consistent with the findings of Murray and Howatt (2009), in their study of girls who played rugby, "the presence of a supportive social environment was crucial in enabling women to overcome constraints to participation, notably socially prescribed norms of behaviour" (Murray and Howatt, 2009: 71). Many narrators spoke about friends or acquaintances they are still in touch with today, that they met through football, even those women who spent a relatively short period of time in the women's football community:

I made good friends, mates I am still close with today, which is great. (Kerry, 2019)

Still friends with people to this day – there were people of like minds – could have conversations on the long bus ride. (Chris, 2019)

In fact, two of the women came to the oral history interview together. Only two of the women were not in touch with anyone from their days in football. An opportunity mentioned by a small number of women was the impact of women's football on their personal development both in terms of skills such as coaching or refereeing and improvements in self-confidence and self-belief. This aligns with writing on the benefits of serious leisure which can include self-actualisation (Jones and Symon, 2001) and was certainly the case for Emma:

Football gave me everything, it's my life, I have gone through a hard time in my life and football has got me through it. Opportunities that I will be forever grateful for...given me confidence, lets me come out of my comfort zone, football changes your life and made me the person I am today. (2019)

The opportunities and the long-term gratification they brought clearly outweighed the challenges even if the involvement with women's football was only short lived. However, in Stevenson's (2002) study of master swimmers and Macbeth's (2006) of women footballers even for the committed proponent there were interruptions to participation. The next section considers the stage in a sporting 'career' where it may become necessary to change or adapt participation.

## Changing Participation

Amongst the narrators, those who experienced interruptions were in the minority with most choosing to shape their lives in ways that accommodated the football rather than the other way around. Feminist studies of leisure have found that women have far less time to spend on what might be deemed leisure pursuits due to gender expectations of the roles women take on, even if they additionally work outside the home. As discussed by Dilley and Scraton (2010), a few researchers have begun to address the question of how women negotiate and claim time for serious leisure. The women in these studies often came into conflict with their families over the amount of time they spent on their leisure activities. The overall contention is that women need to carve out space for leisure through negotiation with family and friends negotiating space “around normative female roles”, (Themen and van Hooff, 2017: 547). During the inductive phase of analysis, the category of ‘negotiating space’ had been included within the theme of challenges as it had been anticipated that this would be a significant barrier. In recognition of this, the interview contained a question specifically on this subject. However, only two of the narrators had been involved in a situation that required negotiation between themselves and their husband about playing football with the result that one gave up football and one gave up her husband. For one other narrator, her involvement in playing football was relatively short (three years) and so the negotiation of space did not become an issue. Even those narrators whose parents were not fully in favour of their involvement did not feel that strong barriers were put in their way and so there was no serious issues that needed to be overcome. Sheila gave the following example:

My Dad saying ‘You’re not going, you can’t play if you’ve got a cold or the flu’ and going out with my football boots tucked under my coat and stuff like that. Coming home caked in mud and hearing ‘I told you not to play’ and saying ‘Sorry’. (Sheila, 2019)

but there was no real attempt made to stop her playing.

For the other narrators, this lack of requirement to negotiate appears to come from one of two factors. Either they began playing at a young age and therefore friendships and relationships were built on the basis that football was a priority. Alternatively, they were older but independent and therefore had no reason to be

given 'permission' to play and from there maintained or built friendships and relationships on the basis that football was a priority. This apparent difference in findings from other studies of women who participate in serious leisure is an interesting area for further investigation with a larger and potentially more diverse participant group.

However, whilst the narrators may not have needed to negotiate space, they did need to shape their lives to prioritise their serious leisure by managing conflicting demands on their time (Raisborough, 1999):

Football was the priority and other things fitted in around it – so I was lucky enough to be able to change my hours at work to fit the football 7am – 3pm and then at 3pm getting bus to the commonwealth pool to train and that was Monday through to Friday. Sometimes on a Saturday I would train as well and then game on a Sunday– that was my life and I fitted other things in between it. (Jane, 2019)

This potential conflict was explored by Raisborough in 2007, when she noted that studies had demonstrated that, "serious leisure becomes the central organizing principle in people's lives" (Raisborough, 2007: 688). For some narrators this was a matter of choosing or remaining in jobs that gave them the flexibility to train and play matches on a Sunday. In some instances, this was to have a job that was 9 to 5 Monday to Friday:

I was in control of my own time working 9-5. I was offered to do shifts when I was 22/23 but said no because it wouldn't fit in with the football. ... I got to training, got to games because I was a day shift. (Maureen S., 2018)

or if that was not possible, to find a co-operative colleague who would regularly swap shifts:

I was a residential worker – early, late, night shifts – if late go to gym in morning, if early then could go to training. To get every Sunday off I done a double shift on a Saturday swopping with one of the guys I knew who did a double shift on a Sunday. (Amy, 2019).

For some it was a decision to put a career on hold for as long as they could and then withdrawing from or changing their participation in football. This was explained by Susan:

I made time to play and train etc but as my job got more responsible it got more difficult. If I wanted a career and house and car then I would need to apply myself at work as well and common sense would need to prevail.

Had to balance the football with career and the long working hours.  
(Susan, 2019)

For others, at times their career or employment took priority and football needed to fit in around that. Kate was an example of this, having balanced long-term involvement in women's football with working. She pursued several different careers and took time to focus on different aspects of her life as required. At times this was football, at times her career and at others, different priorities. Others, such as Amy, Emma, Kerry, Jennifer, Pauline M. and Sheila, sought out paid employment and a career in football that would enable them to continue to be involved in the women's game while no longer playing. Three of the narrators played outside of Scotland as professional or semi-professional footballers. As discussed in chapter four, several of the women helped to shape and develop women's football in Scotland through their work after playing. Some worked as coaches; some were involved with the SWFA/SWF, the SFA, or others set up new clubs.

Two of the women had long gaps in playing football before returning to it. One was because of lack of available information about women's football when she was ready to move to formal play and one because her confidence was such that although playing regularly as a junior, she did not feel able to join a women's football team until later. For both women, once they re-joined football, they had a very enjoyable experience and one remains working in women's football now. For the narrators the process of changing their commitment to fit with other demands on their time was largely positive although for two of them it was painful to reach a point where they needed to stop playing to take their employment career forward. For most of the narrators this decision was based on the opportunity to embrace new opportunities and alternatives rather than being prevented from continuing by barriers being placed in their way.<sup>296</sup> Obviously, this finding is only representative of this sample, it may not reflect wider experience and would be a suitable avenue for further research with a larger and potentially more diverse participant group.

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<sup>296</sup> Although one of the narrators was given an ultimatum by her husband, she saw this as part of being married and a mother and, at the time, accepted the position.

## Retirement from Football

None of the narrators are currently still playing football, although one retired only shortly before her interview, after playing for nearly thirty-five years. Many of the narrators are still involved in football in a variety of ways.

It is, therefore, necessary to distinguish between retiring from playing football and stopping being involved at all. For the majority of narrators their retirement from playing was due to a specific injury; the feeling that their body was taking too long to recover from each match; feeling they now wanted to focus on other aspects of their life or the recognition that they now needed to put their employment career first:

The decision to stop playing was evolving across the last season as so many parts of my body were in pain. (Maureen S, 2018)

So, the knee at that point was ok but the dislocated shoulder kept coming out – I was just a wreck. A little while later the knee went again and a couple of operations later, I decided it was all too much hassle. (Fiona, 2018)

I had started teaching in 1983/84, was teaching at that point and I got a really bad injury and I was off work for a while, and they basically said to me that I needed to make a choice whether you play football or are a teacher, and so I made the decision that actually probably at that point there wasn't a life career in football for me, so I taught. (Sheila, 2019)

I did Masters here [Stirling] two years ago, I played in the Uni team in SWPL 1 and had my job, so I was working and studying and playing which took up 40 – 50 hours a week – so something had to give and unfortunately it was the playing. (Kerry, 2019)

For a number of the narrators this was a low moment and they took some time to recover. For others, making the decision to retire gave them control over when it was to happen. Others retired but then returned to or continued to work within the women's football community, as discussed above.

For two of the women, the decision to end their involvement in football was taken out of their hands. One was forced to stop playing by their husband and for the other the death of their mother meant she lost interest in playing as her mother had been a driving force behind the team. All but one of the women continue to be interested in football, although several now follow the men's game more than the women's. Others are very active in following the women's game both domestically

and in terms of the national team abroad. So, for many there is the view that football has never really left them, it is with them the whole time.

## **Being a footballer**

The foregoing sections have charted the experiences of the women across their football career. However, the one aspect of the analysis which has yet to be explored is the motivation of the women to continue in football given all the challenges they had to face. Alongside the opportunities that there were, the overriding motivation expressed by the women was their passion for football:

I've played football since I can remember. I love everything about the game, talking about it, watching it, thinking about it and of course playing it. I joined the Dundee Strikers when I was fourteen years of age and I thought it was great to play for a girl's teams after playing the game so long at school, with all the boys. When I found out there was a team for women, I was in heaven. (Linda, 2019)

Then when it happened it was like a dream come true – to pull on a strip and be part of a team – I remember standing there and looking at myself and thinking this is brilliant. (Chris, 2019).

The following quote from Pauline H., who only stopped playing a few months before her interview, aged 45, encapsulates the feeling of the women:

There is nothing like being on the pitch, not thinking about anything else in life for 90 minutes. There would be a point in time when you could see the team needed something and you could work out what that was and do it. I got a buzz out of that – days off go up the park with a bag of balls and practise free kicks and then when you got one in the game you could tell that was because of the practise. Doing things on a pitch that you thought about doing and then can do – 'I'm going to put that in the top corner' and then you do, that is a great sense of achievement. (2019)

Although there is now far more opportunity for young girls to aspire to be a footballer, this was not the case when the women in this research started their journey, and for all of them there was a need to resist barriers placed in their way. Studies of serious leisure have begun to explore its potential to create spaces of resistance, challenging existing restrictive gendered identities (Bowness, 2020). Within the interviews, the women were asked if they had ever felt that by playing football, they were making a statement about gendered sport and the role of women. None of them had started playing for this reason and most did not think

about it during the time they played although some reflected on it afterwards and felt that they were trying to make the point that women should be able to undertake whatever sport they wanted to. However, for most, this was not overtly about making a statement but rather fulfilling a dream to play.

The final section of the interviews asked the women if they had thought about why women's football had developed slowly in Scotland in relation to comparable countries. Some of the women had not thought about this at all, whilst others provided detailed opinions on the matter. Given the roles of some of the women currently, this is the only aspect of the discussions where there were requests for anonymity and the following comments are therefore a combination of answers. The reasons given by the women for the slow pace of development were: Scottish culture; Scottish men's attitude to football; Scottish men's sexist attitudes towards women; lack of investment; lack of qualified coaches; the attitude of the SFA, (frequently referred to as 'the Blazers') and the slow development of the women's association. The reasons proposed by the women will be explored in more depth in the next chapter.

## **Conclusion**

The purpose of this chapter was to bring the history of women's football in Scotland across the past sixty years, to life through the presentation of the lived experiences of women who played football during this period. The voices of the women describe a journey through sporting lives in football undertaken through participation in the pursuit of 'serious leisure.' The stages of that journey following on from the approach used by Stevenson (2002) and refined by Macbeth (2004, 2006), start with an introduction to the game and move through commitment to football and conclude with retirement from involvement in women's football. For some of the women this journey took a relatively short time but others are still following the 'career'.

The amplified voices of these women bring the account to life, rendering them and their story visible. It also underlines the challenges that they faced in pursuing their dream to play football. However, in the main, the challenges or costs were far outweighed by the long-term gratification (Raisborough, 2007), afforded them through their involvement in football. None of the women saw themselves as path breakers at the time they played and only a few have reflected on the effect their



efforts have had on the development of women's football. Nevertheless, their involvement embodied the fundamental aims of feminism, to create equal rights and opportunities for women through the resistance, reconstruction and subversion of stereotyped gender identities (Dilley and Scraton, 2010). What also shines through is not just the determination to play football, but the sheer delight of having been able to participate in the sport strove to play.

The testimonies have identified a change over time, in the extent to which women have agency within their lives to shape their careers, choice of friends and partners and choice to pursue serious leisure. The majority of women in this cohort would appear to have the scope to shape their lives to accommodate the football and the agency to decide when the accommodation is no longer possible. Further research with a more diverse group of women would be beneficial to fully explore how women balance the participation in serious leisure with other socially defined roles they may undertake.<sup>297</sup> In an echo of the point raised by Macbeth (2006), a limitation of this research, along with other studies on sports participation, is that it does not illustrate the experiences of those who either did not participate or who attempted to but found the barriers too difficult to overcome. To study these women would give a fuller picture and a "more comprehensive understanding of the severity and impact of various degrees of constraint on human agency, would be achieved" (Macbeth, 2006:32).

Chapters four, five and six together represent the 'findings' element of this thesis and make a unique contribution to the knowledge available about women's participation in football in Scotland over the past sixty years. The findings show the slow rate at which women's football developed over this period. Still today, it is not seen as equal to the men's game. The next chapter explores this matter in more detail and seeks to determine why the development of women's football in Scotland was at variance to other comparable countries.

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<sup>297</sup> Diversity here refers but is not limited to ethnicity, class, and carer responsibilities.

## 7. A long time coming

Despite the struggle for recognition, acceptance and respect, as shown by the proceeding three chapters, women have played and organised football in Scotland continuously throughout the past sixty years.<sup>298</sup> By late 2020, the women's game had achieved continued increases in participation, expanding numbers of elite teams, increased geographical coverage, recreational alongside performance leagues and positive performances on the international stage. Behind these achievements, is a narrative of resilience and determination by those involved to in the women's game and one of the research objectives was concerned with exploring the reasons why carving a space for women's football in Scotland was so problematic. Chapter four began the exploration by examining the extent to which the rate of development differed from other comparable European countries.<sup>299</sup> The evidence presented showed how development in Scotland was, and continues to be, slower even though at the end of the 1960s, women's football in Scotland was in a similar position to the other countries. The purpose of this chapter is to consider possible factors contributing to that stalling in development

### **Exclusion from the narrative**

As explored in the literature review, women have had little visibility in studies on Scottish society, history or culture (Breitenbach, Brown and Myers, 1998). There have been improvements in recent years but there remain aspects of Scottish culture and society where the work of integrating women's experiences into the dominant narrative has yet to be completed (McDermid, 2011). This lack of visibility is particularly notable within sport where consideration of women's participation within Scottish sporting culture has been minimal, reinforcing and reproducing gender divisions (Reid, 2004). These divisions are amplified within Scottish football, which throughout this thesis, has been shown to be male centric, intrinsically linked to masculine hegemony and interwoven with the reinforcement

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<sup>298</sup> As indicated in chapter 1, football has been played by women in Scotland for far longer than this, but this is the period covered by this research and thesis.

<sup>299</sup> The countries were Denmark, England, Germany, Ireland, Norway and Sweden.

of patriarchy (Macbeth, 2008; Stirling and Schulz, 2011). As observed by Macbeth (2008):

The gendered nature of sport, particularly football, in Scotland has had significant impact on the development of the women's game, and on historical and contemporary attitudes towards women's participation in football, and has resulted in women footballers being marginalised within this popular cultural sphere. (Macbeth, 2008:89)

Marginalisation is further evidenced by the limited writing about women and their space within the Scottish football community in the past sixty years. This dearth is echoed in academic writing with Macbeth (2002, 2004) starting the work and this thesis continuing the task. The paucity of academic writing on Scottish women's football may partly have been due to the lack of easily accessible archive material and contemporary information, leading to the need for specific dedicated research into the subject. However, the lack of archive material and writing are also indicative of the lack of value placed on the lived experiences of women, especially when those experiences do not fit with the hegemonic narrative that football is a sport that 'belongs' to men. Scotland is not unique in this position as globally there is frequent opposition to women's participation in the traditionally 'masculine' football community.<sup>300</sup> This is at least in part because such participation represents a threat to assumptions about sport; undermining its reinforcement of "traditional male and female gender identities" (Hargreaves, 1986:116) which are used to underpin hegemonic patriarchy.

From her research, Macbeth (2008) highlighted the attitudes of several sectors of Scottish society as being particularly significant in influencing the development of women's football in Scotland. The sectors she discussed were family and friends, schools, Scottish football and the Scottish media and the current research similarly identified these as having significant influence on development of women's football in Scotland. This chapter builds on both the work of Macbeth and earlier discussions within the thesis, to explore the constraints faced by women's football over the past sixty years within the wider context of Scottish

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<sup>300</sup> For exploration of this attitude in a number of areas see *Female Football Players and Fans: Intruding into a Man's World* Pfister and Pope (Eds) (2018) Palgrave Macmillan

society. Additionally, the research has identified evidence of positive influences which are also explored.

The chapter opens with a consideration of writing on the development of women's football and uses this as a platform for a framework for considering the factors that had the capacity to either suppress or advance women's football in Scotland. The main body of the chapter draws on evidence from a range of sources, including primary research, to analyse the way in which these factors effected the development of women's football. Aspects of the information used within the discussion have been explored in the preceding findings chapters, and these will be referenced throughout this chapter. The chapter closes with a brief consideration, informed by developments in comparator countries and opinions gathered during the course of the research, of areas that could be a focus for promoting the development of women's football in Scotland.

### **Analysing the development of women's football**

Within the analysis of findings, within the past three chapters, the effects of the social context have been centred. Consideration of enabling and constraining factors shaping development is particularly relevant to analysis of the relatively slow rate of growth of women's football in Scotland across the past sixty years. As indicated earlier, the study of women involved in football, has become a rich stream for analysis and research within the sociology of sport and gender studies. However, there has been less engagement with the subject with regard to the history and development of women's football. As a result, whilst there is a slowly growing body of writing about the history of the women's game across the world, the amount dedicated to considering what factors may have affected that development is limited.

Three articles, written on the historical development of women's football in a particular country, included reference to the process of development. Two of these related to women's football in the Republic of Ireland (Bourke, 2003) and Liston, 2006) and one centred on Danish women's football (Brus and Trangbæk, 2003). The other source identified which considered the factors that may influence the development of the women's game, was *Women on the Ball* written by Sue

Lopez (1997). In the introduction to her chapter exploring women's football across the globe, Lopez (1997) writes:

The various ways the game has developed in different countries obviously reflect a nation's football culture and its broader social and cultural differences. These influences can be seen in the gender relations, the education process and the way in which the media present the game. Obviously, funding plays a crucial role, but there also appears to be some correlation between the success of a nation and the extent to which it involves women as leaders, and the degree of autonomy provided. (Lopez, 1997: 112)

In their article about the development of women's football in Denmark, Brus and Trangbæk (2003) cited the factors identified by Lopez (1997) and extended the influence of the football culture to make explicit the effect of the attitude of the male-dominated football associations and their responses to the involvement of women in football (Caudwell, 2011). Liston (2006) argued that the development of women's football parallels wider social and cultural developments which have impacted on gender relations and therefore, the sport-gender nexus. The consideration of the impact of culture on development offers a dimension that takes into consideration the fact that for much of its development women's football in Scotland has had to contend with being neither accepted nor encouraged. This will also provide scope for the examination of gender and manifestations of Scottish masculinity (Hassan, 2016) that are intrinsically linked with football in Scotland.

In 2008, Macbeth wrote about attitudes to women's football in Scotland and the ways in which these had an effect on development. She examined the attitudes of family friends and school and whether or not they were supportive of girls playing football. She then considered the wider context of the Scottish male-centric football community and finally examined the attitude of the media. She found that family and friends were mainly supportive and that there was a mixed response at schools. This was balanced by the less supportive attitudes of the football community and the negative media coverage. The analysis in this chapter, builds on this work by considering these attitudinal issues as part of the constraints to the development of women's football.

Combining the factors identified across the writing produces an inventory of elements which were cited as having an effect on the development of women's football. These included football culture, the broader social culture (including gender relations), media representations of women's football, the education system, coaches and managers, the Government and other sporting bodies and the attitude of the male-centric football association to participation by women in football. Despite different approaches, the influence of the wider societal context is a common thread throughout the pieces and this aligns with the historical sociological approach discussed earlier.

The challenge, for this chapter, was how to reflect the elements of socio-historical analysis that have been undertaken throughout the thesis and use them to consider their effects on development of Scottish women's football. It was important to present the discussion in a way that recognised the inter-relationships of factors or groups, while retaining clarity. A route was found in Fisher's (2018) examination of the discrimination against women's participation in football and the constraints used which act to devalue, under develop and render invisible women's place in the football community. These start with institutional legislation seeking to ban women from playing; as these bans are lifted, socio-cultural norms are invoked to inhibit women's participation. Then as gender identities and roles change, so economic obstacles have been invoked thereby holding back the development of the game (Fisher, 2018). The discussion starts with consideration of those elements that have constrained the development using the three strands identified by Fisher (2018). The discussion will consider how these strands have obstructed development in Scotland and where appropriate, will make reference to experiences in the comparator countries. It should be noted, however, that as with the phases discussed in earlier chapters there is no hard border between the influence of one restriction and the next (Dunning and Sheard, 2005; Maguire 2011). Rather, while one barrier may have been the primary source of limitation within a particular phase, the others were also present, they do not appear and disappear in a set order or timeframe. The chapter, therefore, considers the constraining effect of a particular strand across the whole sixty-year period, while acknowledging that one particular element may have been the main driver in a particular phase. The analysis has been guided by

the principles of critical feminism which recognise that hegemonic masculinity, supported by the cultural norms of male domination and female subordination, shapes gender relations (Kitching et al., 2017).

## **Constraints**

Whilst changes have occurred there remain sporting arenas that hold fast to the gender-sport nexus and women seeking to participate set in motion a two-way resistance, “women against the status quo and men trying to maintain it” (Olive et al., 2015: 259). The purpose of this section, is to consider the elements that have assisted in the maintenance of the male status quo within the football community thereby constraining the development of women’s involvement in football in Scotland.

## **Institutional laws**

Within the discussion the term ‘institutional laws’, has been used to reference not just the formal regulations of football institutions such as the Scottish Football Association (SFA) and the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA). It also considers informal institutional approaches or stances that had a constraining impact on women’s football.

### *Restrictions on women’s football*

As discussed in chapter four, women across Europe played matches similar to the organised football seen today from as early as the 1870s (Bosley, 2007; Brus and Trangbæk, 2003; Fasting, 2003; Hjelm and Olofsson, 2003; Kjær and Agergaard, 2013; Pfister, 2003; Skille, 2008 and Williams, 2003a).<sup>301</sup> Women’s participation in football was generally not welcomed by the male football community although it did prove popular with spectators. Interest increased in England during World War One, when men’s football was suspended. Contrary to expectations, the high spectator numbers continued after the war and Williams (2003a) contends that it was the perceived threat to the commercial interests of those involved in men’s football that precipitated the action to restrict women’s football. Although the shorthand term ‘ban’ is often used to describe the action taken by the English Football Association (FA) in 1921, the actions were about restricting women’s

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<sup>301</sup> There are records of ad hoc matches more akin to folk football from earlier especially in Scotland.

access to facilities for training and playing and ability to work with officials (coaches, referees) who were licensed by the FA (Macbeth, 2002; Williams, 2003a).

Having been initiated in England in 1921, the restrictions were then enacted in many countries. In Scotland there is some debate over exactly what date a ban was enacted with some (Macbeth, 2002; Williams, 2003a) pointing to 1921 but with others (Gibb, 2018) contending that it did not formally start until 1947. Whichever is correct, the SFA certainly appeared to follow the spirit of the ban with records showing the issue of letters to football clubs prior to 1947, reminding them of the restrictions and the penalties for non-compliance (Macbeth, 2002). The official rationale for the restrictions, was a concern for the health and wellbeing of the women and in particular their reproductive capabilities (Kidd, 2013). This argument was used by male football associations in many countries, and concern about the effect of physical exercise on women continued to be cited, despite the fact that in 1964 the American Association of Sports medicine claimed there were no reasons to stop women undertaking the same sport as men (Fasting, 1987).

In Europe the first countries to recognise women's football as a legitimate sport were West Germany and France.<sup>302</sup> As discussed in chapter four the pressure from these countries along with concern about the potential commercialisation of women's football in Italy, prompted first FIFA and then UEFA to consult their members about the recognition of women's football (Williams, 2011). In 1971, UEFA members approved the recognition of women's football by 31 votes to 1, with Scotland the lone dissenting voice. The SFA decided to take this UEFA motion as guidance rather than a ruling and refused to lift the restrictions (Macbeth, 2002). There is no clear information about why the SFA defied the ruling with records merely stating that they disagreed with the proposal and Willie Allen, SFA Chief executive, explaining that it did not approve of women playing football.<sup>303</sup> There may have been an element of wanting to be seen as

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<sup>302</sup> Before Unification.

<sup>303</sup> Barclay, 'Pretty Impressive...the glory girls spurned by Scotland's soccer bosses', November 1972. Newspaper article from the Margaret McAulay personal collection but no further information as the clipping has removed this.



independent and different from other associations, in particular England, as this has been a consistent theme in the Scottish male footballing psyche (Bairner, 1994; Moorhouse, 1987, 1991).<sup>304</sup> The SFA held their position for a further two years despite growing participation and lobbying by the newly formed Scottish Womens Football Association (SWFA). The SFA's lifting of restrictions in 1974 was likely the result of external pressure, from UEFA and incoming Equal Opportunities legislation rather than a change of opinion.<sup>305</sup> Whatever the influence, these factors together enabled women's football to begin transition to the next phase of their development, although institutional issues continued to exhibit degrees of constraint.

### *Recognition without support*

The recognition of women's football did not automatically lead to support and funding. From 1974 until the early 1990s, the SWFA struggled to develop the women's game, with minimal resources to organise domestic and international football. As the SWFA gained confidence it recognised that the way forward was to affiliate or even amalgamate with the SFA as this would enable it to attract funding and media attention to increase membership. However, attempts were thwarted by the SFA and the insistence that to demonstrate suitability for affiliation, the SWFA needed to be more professional, increase membership and demonstrate less financial reliance on the SFA. The imposition of these criteria without clarification and the challenge to the SWFA in trying to achieve them was discussed further in chapter five. The SWFA believed that as a national organisation with ambitions for expansion, affiliation should not be based on numbers alone (Belcher, 1988). However, the SFA were using gendered definitions of professionalism and affiliation criteria based on previous, all male, experience. The institutional sexism built into the policies and practices at the SFA meant that the effect of 'institutional laws' were felt long after the official

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<sup>304</sup> Barnier and Moorhouse have written extensively on football, nationalism and Scotland v England, "what binds Scots together - a dislike of the 'English' which has historical, material and cultural roots and which is given colour and circumstance, among other things, in the regularities of the structure of British football" (Moorhouse, 1987:200).

<sup>305</sup> This is discussed further in chapter four.

restrictions were lifted (Capodilupo, 2017; Martin, 2006; Stirling and Schulz, 2011).

During this time period, there was an equal lack of interest from both UEFA and FIFA in encouraging the women's game. The incentive to include women's football in the established football institutions came not from genuine respect but from a wish to bring to a halt the commercial interest that had been developing in Italy and Germany (Williams, 2011). Official recognition did not bring immediate benefits and in an effort to 'protect' the women's game and its amateur status between 1971 and 1981, sponsorship for women's football was also repeatedly turned down at national and international level (Williams, 2011). The situation was exacerbated by the lack of a UEFA women's committee which was only reconvened in 1980 when Italy again sought to take organisation of women's football across Europe into their own hands. As with Scotland's example, action from UEFA was prompted by external pressures and, in this case, resulted in the inaugural European championships (Williams, 2011).

Whilst the SWFA focused its attention on affiliation, comparative information from other European countries, discussed in chapter four, showed that although affiliation was an important goal, it was not a guarantee of support and progression (Brus and Trangbæk, 2003; Williams, 2011). In England, for example, the WFA was affiliated to the FA in 1983 but found little support from the arrangement. This is illustrated by the comment, in 1988, from Ted Croker then secretary of the FA:

Football is a game of hard, physical contact, a form of combat. It is and must remain a man's game. Women have no place in it except to cheer on their men, wash and iron their kit and serve refreshments. (Paraphrased by Dunning, 1999:236)

A change came in 1993 when, eager to push for success on the global stage in a fast-growing sport, the FA took full control of English women's football as it was concerned by the lack of organisational capability (Dunn, 2016). The WFA may not have been fully convinced by this move by the FA as, "their previous lack of enthusiasm has been hidden by slogans of a dynamic bureaucracy responding to a fast-growing female sport" (Williams, 2006).

However, there were individual countries where the development of women's football was moving forward. In 1976 the Football Association of Norway said publicly that they would be interested in accepting women's football into the association and a women's committee was established (Fasting, 2003). The committee set a number of aims and objectives, such as developing consistent rules; establishing leagues; running an official championship, developing a national team and education of female managers, coaches and officials (Fasting, 2003). Achieving these gave women's football in Norway a sound base from which to grow. Writing in 1987, Fasting credited the positive development of women's football in Norway to strong female leaders and the women's committee that worked well within the football association. In West Germany, after a slow start momentum grew and the 1980s saw the development of regional leagues and women's committees which were established at both national and regional level. These led to growth and development and success at international level which resulted in the West German team winning the European Championship, the first time they qualified (Bosley, 2007). The breakthrough was in part attributable to the establishment of women's committees, that initiated a number of schemes and projects which confirmed women's football as a recognised sport and ensured continuous growth and development (Pfister, 2003). It would appear that for there to be progress there needs to be two elements, adequate inclusion in the organisation with a women's committee and a strong commitment (often from women) to work to build from this position and take the agenda forward. This early amalgamation of football associations has, despite some initial lack of support, been credited with creating the foundation for the future successes of these nations (Skogvang, 2019).

### *Working Closer*

In 1991, the Scottish Sports Council launched its Team Sport Scotland initiative, with one of the objectives being to increase the opportunities for players and coaches in team sports across Scotland (Begbie, 1994). Chapters four and five contain a discussion of the effect of this on women's football in Scotland.

However, the strides made by the SWFA did little to assuage the resistance on the part of the SFA to affiliation. Whilst it is acknowledged that Norway sets a particularly positive example, the difference with Scotland is substantial. In 1992,

although the SFA had finally agreed to run certificated coaching courses for women it was still six years away from agreeing affiliation. In the same year, the FA in Norway disbanded their specific women's committee because it was felt women's football was fully integrated into the wider association (Fasting, 2003). Although this may have been, in part initiated as the result of Norwegian Sports Law (1992) that required proportional gender representation on sports boards, the effect was increased support and inclusion for the women's game (Fasting, 2003). Over time the working relationships between the men's and women's football associations in Scotland became closer. This is likely due in part to the SFA coming to believe that the SWFA could conduct business in a professional way, albeit that this was based on male defined professionalism. The SFA finally approved the affiliation of the SWFA in 1998 but perhaps equally significant was the agreement for the SFA to assume responsibility for the management of the women's national football team and the strategic development of girls' and women's football. As discussed in chapter five, the new approach from the SFA may not have been entirely voluntary (Macbeth, 2008). It is likely that changing attitudes were in part required by the Scottish Executive and **sportscotland** along with gender equity criteria becoming tied into funding criteria for development initiatives:

It is possible therefore that the shifting attitudes towards women's football may have, to some extent, been a result of both external pressures on the SFA and potential funding opportunities available to the SFA. (Macbeth, 2008:107)

The change in Scotland paved the way for a number of developments with regard to girls and women's football at grassroots level as well as investment in the national team. This was a big step forward in the development of women's football in Scotland but it continued to lag far behind the situation in Norway where, in 1999, Karen Espelund began her term as General Secretary of the entire FA (Fasting, 2003).

Freed from the responsibility of administration and management of the national team the SWFA was able to focus on the development of the domestic game. As discussed earlier in the thesis, the organisation and administration of the domestic and grass roots game significantly progressed from 1998. The position of the

national team also improved due to the investment by the SFA, the appointment of experienced coaches who were able to further develop the team and the organisational framework within the association. The national development squads are, at the time of writing, headed by former women players and experienced coaches which further strengthens the potential for future national teams. Working relationships between the SFA and SWF have been strengthened and the SFA are starting to acknowledge and address the impact of previous negative attitudes.<sup>306</sup> The final section of the chapter, looking forward, has more detail on the latest developments.

This section has demonstrated the ways in which the institutional laws, stances and policies of football associations have, across the past sixty years endeavoured to limit the development of women's football. Equally, the section concluded with positive progress that has resulted from a change in the stance and policies of the SFA, albeit that these were prompted by changes in the wider social context. As discussed earlier, the three sources of discrimination against women's participation in football do not work in a linear fashion with the cessation of one before the next takes effect. Rather, whilst one may be taken as a primary barrier, the others interplay across the period. The next section considers the effect of socio-cultural norms which have, despite progress in the demands for women's equality, constituted a barrier across the sixty-year period.

### **Socio- Cultural Norms**

It is clear from the information in the section above, that women's football in Scotland was not given support or even respect by the dominant football association, for a large portion of the time period covered by the research. With limited national media coverage, it may have been assumed by many that this only affected a small number of women and so was not considered problematic. However, it might have been expected that as time progressed, the changes in the gender power balance in wider society would have 'filtered down' to the participation of women in the football community. Indeed, for Liston (2006), the

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<sup>306</sup> An example is the work to issue retrospective Scotland caps to those women who played football for Scotland between 1974 and 1998. The first retrospective caps were presented at Hampden before the friendly against Jamaica in May 2019. As part of impact work from the research, the author is part of the group looking to trace the women internationals from this time period and arrange for them to receive caps. More detail on this is given in Appendix 4.

gradual rebalancing of wider societal gender inequalities is the main driver for the development of women's football. However, misogyny is far from eradicated and when it does surface it acts as a reminder that in society and particularly in football contexts, gendered social relations retain significant influence (Caudwell, 2011). The reality for many women and girls playing football is that whilst there may have been changes, the view of the male centric football community has not significantly moved:

Girls and women in football consistently struggle against sexism and gendered stereotypes to be recognized as legitimate participants and members of the football community. (Forbes et al., 2015:523)

This poses the question, why does the power imbalance between men's and women's football persist? The answer, in part, is to be found in the social control methods that act on women and girls to ensure they behave appropriately (Bennett et al., 1987). In this section, the focus is on the facets of socio-cultural norms that have combined to constrain the development of women's football (Fisher, 2018). Not all the features would have had an affect at the same time, in sequence or to the same extent but together they formed a conducive context (Kelly, 2007) which resulted in the suppression of women's football in Scotland.<sup>307</sup>

#### *Resistance: 1960 to 1977*

Although the 1960s are often seen as a time of huge changes in Great Britain, at least in the early part of the decade changes at a structural level had little impact on women's and girls' day to day lives. While education was open to both boys and girls, many of the subjects on offer were segregated on gender lines. In primary education, girls and boys received virtually identical physical education however, according to narrators, informal play was segregated and this reinforces gender roles (Duke and Crolley, 1996). The physical education in High School was equally gendered, with care taken to protect girls presumed less robust bodies, by offering them non- vigorous games which excluded football or rugby (Macrae, 2012).

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<sup>307</sup> This is the circumstances, discourses and experiences that promote or assist a situation to persist and normalise practices (Kelly, 2007). In this case it is the circumstances in which women's football operates which promote or allow discrimination against women playing football to persist unchallenged.

Women were expected to be the homemaker with a husband who was the main breadwinner. They may have taken on part time jobs, but these were predominantly poorly paid, gender role stereotypes were prevalent and they were still expected to undertake all the unpaid and carer work at home (Browne, 2014; Pugh, 2015).

A major component of the work of the second wave of feminism and the women's liberation movement across the 1960s and 1970s was concerned with exploring the production of masculinity and femininity via gender stereotypes (Richardson, 2008). The gender stereotypes which have negatively affected women's football in Scotland are those concerned with women and sport. As discussed in the literature review, the culturally embedded practice of sport provides an excellent site for both perpetuating gendered ideology and the reinforcement of the 'rules' for performing femininity or masculinity (Skillen and Osborne, 2015; Williams and Hess, 2015). The notion of the divergence of gender attributes (Pfister, 2010) results in sport generally being seen as a male arena as it provides an opportunity to celebrate ideals of masculinity: strength, stamina, skill and combat. Historically, women have been given limited access to sport, centred on those which were deemed to be aligned to the performance of femininity such as netball, gymnastics, swimming or tennis (Kidd, 2013). Equally, through gendered leisure, women were expected to find entertainment with other women either at home or suitable venues. A further element of the socio-cultural context is the degree to which women had agency, which is the ability to make effective choices and transform those choices into desired outcomes, which depended on circumstances and the subject matter of the choice (Cornwall, 2016).

Many of the narrators that commenced playing in this period started at a young age, but for some there were gaps in opportunities to play, they were discouraged at school and struggled to find teams.<sup>308</sup> There was a lack of awareness beyond localised teams and small competitions, so the women's football community was generally disjointed and isolated. As discussed in chapter four there was some

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<sup>308</sup> A recognised limitation of research focused on those who played a sport, is that there is no information from those who were prevented from playing at a young age.

localised coverage by the media but infrequent national reporting. Lack of awareness of, and access to playing football for young girls not only limits opportunity for those who want to participate but also stifles development of football skills. It can take over 10,000 hours of practice to master a skill (Begbie, 2019) and boys often start this process virtually from the time they can walk. If this opportunity is denied to girls, then when they take up the sport later, they have to work harder and take longer to develop the skills. As a result, the pool of players who had reached 'elite' standard for international matches in the 1960s and 1970s was small. In comparison, in Norway in 1973 the Norway Cup for youth teams was established and from the outset girls' teams participated (Fasting, 2003). This promotion and encouragement of young girls to play was likely to have been one of the reasons for Norway's success on the international stage. The lack of separate youth football in Scotland also meant that there was often no clear succession planning for teams as players retired or left. This, in turn, may have led to the disbanding of teams, disruption to playing careers and therefore a potential negative impact on the standards and growth of women's football.

A recurring theme within the research was the role of the media in the maintenance of patriarchal values, gender roles and the reinforcement of cultural aspects of masculinity (Connell and Messerschmitt, 2005; Trolan, 2013). Examples in earlier chapters have demonstrated that there was a variety of localised reporting with the majority being contained in the social pages rather than the sports section. Equally, although evidence has been found of regular coverage, including match announcements followed by reports, the predominant approach was to connect the matches to an event rather than being reported for their own sake. Although generally supportive, the local reporting of women's football predominantly framed it as recreational, as the sporting context created by the media rarely includes women (Pfister, 2010). The media reinforces the idea that real football is undertaken by men and women engage in entertainment by rendering them invisible within sports pages (Lebel and Danylchuk, 2009 cited in Fink, 2015) and placing them in the social sections. In Scotland, the lack of nation-wide media coverage exacerbated the view that few women played football. This was echoed elsewhere, for example in Sweden, when in 1968 the Secretary of the Swedish Football Federation declared that there was no women's



football although the leagues in Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö somewhat contradicted this statement. However, the lack of media coverage meant that many across Sweden would have agreed with him (Hjelm and Olofsson, 2003). The consideration of images presented by the press during this period, affords examination of the ways in which the media discourse supported dominant gender roles and values. It both reinforced and disrupted the hegemonic male view of women's involvement in football (Creedon, 2013; Kane and Greendorfer, 2013). This included team photographs of clean and presentable women in poses that alluded more to dance troupes or beauty parades than football matches (O'Mahony, 2018). There was also frequent depiction of women involved in sport in heteronormative roles such as wives, girlfriends, and mothers, thereby reinforcing the constructed gender roles (Cooky, Messner and Hexhim, 2015). Reporting often focused on the appearance of the women or sought to undermine their footballing abilities but this was not confined to Scotland. In 1970 when the West German team participated in the Unofficial World Cup, a journalist who went with them wrote what was seen as a humorous piece because the notion of women's football was so absurd it must be funny (Pfister, 2003). In Scotland, there was a pervasive suppression of the awareness about women's football and encouragement of the belief that it was not a game for women or girls. This worked in tandem with the restrictions placed on women, including limited leisure time to stagnate development of women's football in terms of numbers participating (Shaw 1994, 1999).

However, those who were playing questioned and sought to overturn the restrictions placed on them. Scottish teams, invited to play in England, began to experience more organised matches, leagues and competitions and the desire to replicate that in Scotland grew. This led to the formation of the SWFA, the start of a national league, domestic trophies, and a campaign to overturn the SFA restrictions. Care should be taken, however, not to present this as a vanguard of the women's movement (Liston, 2006). Even though the actions of the women, in seeking to end the sexism and oppression they experienced (hooks, 2000) were enacting feminism, narrators from the period, generally did not view themselves in this way at the time.

While in retrospect many accept that they were championing women's rights, at the time their objectives were solely that women's football should be recognised as a legitimate sport and to play in decent conditions. Equally, whilst the women's liberation movement was active in Scotland during this period, as was the experience in other countries, the activists had more pressing concerns (rights at work, to reproductive rights and to freedom from violence) and often saw sport as a male preserve and of no interest to them (Kerr and Jennings, 1990). The SWFA managed to generate limited press interest in their campaign to gain recognition but it was presented as a social interest matter or an opportunity to criticise the SFA. Throughout the period from 1960 to about 1977, although there was more women's football being played across the country, the socio-cultural context of sport was underpinning restrictions rather than seeking to rally against them and boost the development of women's football.

*Persistence: about 1974 to 1998*

Scotland, along with the rest of Great Britain and Europe made progress towards closing gender gaps across the period under examination in this section. For the most part Scotland kept pace with its European counterparts and in some areas set an example, with work on violence against women and the emphasis on fair representation in the emerging devolved government (Browne, 2014). Women were entering the work force in large number, due to both new opportunities in the changing nature of work and necessity through job losses in male dominated heavy industry (Browne, 2014). However, there was a perception that the new notion of individualism diffused activism and impeded the growth of feminism in Scotland (Kerr and Jennings, 1990). As a result, the influence of entrenched gender stereotypes that shaped many aspects of women's lives, remained. The long held and protected connection between men and sport was certainly still in evidence in this period. Sport does not happen in isolation, attitudes towards those who participate reflect existing socio-culture norms. Examining editions of the *Scottish Journal of Physical Education* published at the time provides an insight to those attitudes. As discussed in the review of literature, there were few articles about women or girls and several calls for change in the view that sport is male. The following quotes are from articles that appear in the journal across the period under discussion:

'Football is a man's game', a quote from research with school children and labelled as something to be expected and further that the general opinion was that girls ought not to be involved in anything rough. These are school children but they are getting the message from the society they are growing up in. (Moir, 1976)

Sport is male and despite all the changes for women at all levels of their lives, this model persists. Women are patronised and tolerated in sport but not taken seriously. (Thomas, 1985)

These were forerunners of the use of gender as a lens for analysis in sport and indicate that, at that point in time, overt gender-stereotypes persisted. Sports, especially those that are held to affirm and celebrate masculinity, may be seen as a male sanctuary that need to be protected and retained as a refuge from the demands of women for equality and fair treatment (Burton Nelson, 1996; Kidd, 2013). The progress that had been made towards balancing gender power, however limited, may have led to some men feeling threatened. Additionally, the Thatcher era decline (1979-1990) in traditional industries such as mining, steelworks and shipyards and the resultant increased unemployment for men, may have led to feelings of displacement and alienation. Claims that feminism emasculates men and renders them unable to fulfil the 'male role' in society surfaced regularly during this period and led to what became known as 'backlash' (Faludi, 1992; Pugh, 2015 and Walby, 1993). This is a reaction or response to, "the threat posed to the hierarchical gender order by feminism" (Pfister, 2010:244) and the reaction can be to seek to rescind the small hard-won victories regarding women's rights (Faludi, 1992) and thereby protect areas traditionally viewed as male arenas. For Walby (1993), backlash is more than calls to turn back the clock and return women to the home but also results in changes to the form of patriarchal relations. She contends that as women gain more independence the site of women's oppression moves from the private to the public sphere. As a result, the mode of oppression is more collective than individual and although in public patriarchy women are allowed into certain arenas, they are "segregated and subordinated there" (Walby, 1993:88). Whilst her frame of reference was work, wages, careers and access to the welfare state, the analysis equally applies to the football community in Scotland in the 1980s and 1990s. This connection aligns with the view that as men's power relative to women has declined, so the importance of symbolic expressions of masculinity has increased (Burton Nelson,

1996; Dunning, 1986; Theberge, 1987) and football in Scotland undoubtedly has a strong link to masculinity (Barnier, 1994). It may also be that in the attempt to find refuge from unemployment, loss of status and shifts in gender power, men clung more tightly to the notion of an “imagined community” offered by football (Anderson, 1983). This community may also assist in boosting personal pride, “Identity with a club, its traditions, its fortunes and its vicissitudes gave many ordinary people a sense of personal worth” (Reid, 2005: 18). This echoes an opinion expressed by psychologist, Nanette Mutrie in 1992, when in an interview with *Scotland on Sunday* she said:

Football is very important for male culture, it gives a focus they can share, something to talk about and they can identify with a successful and striving team which lends a certain status (Mutrie, 1992, cited in Barnier, 1994:21)

In addition, Reid (2005) identifies a connection between shipyards, coalmines and factories that produced a uniquely Scottish style of football. So, as well as a replacement community and a sense of worth, football provided direct links back to and a celebration of, the way things had been, “The beautiful game is part of the collective memory of Scotland” (Reid, 2005: 18).<sup>309</sup> The imagined community does not just apply to individual clubs but to the national team as well and provides an expression of shared national feeling and identity (Boyle and Haynes, 2009; Bradley, 2011; Moorhouse, 1987). Thus, football affords several opportunities for building a sense of belonging, community, national identity and status. Without the provision of written records or accounts of meetings and discussions it is not possible to directly link the desire of men to protect ‘their’ football and the suppression of the woman’s game but it is probable that this was all part of the public patriarchy backlash (Walby, 1993). This attitude may explain the lack of support for and respect of the women’s game from the male football community. One manifestation of this can be found in a long running (1965-1991) promotional campaign by Tennent’s Lager, one of the main sponsors of Scottish football during this period. The campaign centred on scantily clad women called the “Tennent’s lovelies” whose pictures were on cans distributed at games and who featured promotional campaigns with Scottish footballers (Gutzke, 2012). The

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<sup>309</sup> Whilst this may have held true for a majority of men, it should be noted that as well as potentially excluding women, it also excludes large numbers of men either who do not enjoy football or who do not fit the stereotypical macho image of the (male) football fan.

message would appear to be that this is the place of women within football: supporting men, non-verbal and embracing stereotypes of femininity. As a point of comparison in 1985 Ellen Wille, as chair of the women's committee, took her place on the Norwegian FA executive committee. However, in the interest of balance it should be noted that the English FA was not any further forward-looking in its views on women and football as illustrated by the comment from then secretary Ted Croker in 1988, discussed earlier.

During this period the media continued to underline the cultural message that football is a man's game and women playing are not to be taken seriously. The shortage of memorabilia for this period, means there are limited newspaper cuttings for consideration. However, amongst the Scottish Football Museum collections that have been accessed for this research, have been cuttings which included a suggestion that women's football might lead to a lipstick league and nylon tights trophy and headlines such as "*make a pass girls*". These are examples of attempts to use a form of humour to both belittle the women as footballers and reinforce gender stereotypes. Within the SWFA archive is a selection of press releases produced in the early 1990s. It has not been possible to ascertain whether these actually appeared in newspapers but, as discussed in chapter five, the wording used within them reflects approaches used to gain acceptance by the press. These include promise of an appearance of a 'top Celtic player' as well as women players and positioning men's football as the authentic sport and women's football as the other (Dunn, 2016). As discussed in chapter five, this indicates both a lack of awareness of gendered language and the acknowledgement that to attract attention you needed to include men's football (McGonigle, 2018). Press releases from across the period use language and images that sought to underline gender stereotypes and norms, seeking to keep women within those roles and producing an environment which saw women's participation in football as unnatural and to be stifled. The abilities of the players were ignored with the established football community, viewing their participation as less serious than men's which was reinforced by the stance taken by the media. Silence within the media, indicating a lack of interest, disapproval or both has been a continuous feature of the response of hegemonic masculinity to

women and girls who do not behave appropriately, in this case playing football (Bennett et al., 1987; Fink, 2015; Trolan, 2013).

Thus, for the period from about 1975 to about 1998, while women's football was recognised there remained within the dominant football community a view that it was not a suitable sport for women, not real football and therefore, not worthy of respect, backing or encouragement. The socio-cultural context enabled the maintenance of this view as the lack of awareness of the situation and focus on other issues meant that there were no concerted campaigns, outside of the women's football community, to improve the status of women's football. It has been argued that the more women engage in male appropriated spaces, men will seek to marginalise and discriminate against women in an effort to preserve the gender order (Forbes et al., 2015). This was certainly the case within the football community but as discussed previously, interventions from the wider sporting community, such as Team Sport Scotland, to some degree counterbalanced these constraints.

*Progression: about 1995 to 2020*

Across this period, women's access to work grew further but achieving equal pay with men for the same work continued to be an issue. Equally, notions of gendered occupations continued, so that women still needed to challenge stereotypes to be given full access to the world of work. At the same time, shortages of affordable childcare continue to limit the opportunities for women to work, as they consistently bear the majority of childcare and household responsibilities (Browne, 2014; Pugh, 2015).

In education, initiatives to combat gender stereotyping have been introduced and this extends to sport (Education Scotland, 2018). Girls and young women have been generally encouraged to take part in sports such as football and rugby and more women are working in non-playing roles within the football community. However, views about the roles of men and women are entrenched within society, and run deep in the collective consciousness. As a result, their influence continues to be felt throughout the period.

Although there was evidence of a gradual change in approach to women's football from the SFA, according to the Scottish Parliament Enterprise and Culture

Committee inquiry in 2005, it would appear that the wider football community did not demonstrate support for women's football (Macbeth, 2008). In response to a question about whether the club licence scheme should require clubs to demonstrate integration of women and girl's football into their structures, nearly 52% of online responders answered no and of written responses only a quarter responded to the question at all. There were some favourable responses but notably the Scottish Amateur FA and the Scottish Youth FA both considered that women's participation in football should be dealt with by the proposed recreational association (Macbeth, 2008). This indicates that, at that time, the women's game was still not seen to be part of official 'legitimate' football structures and more recent evidence, as discussed below, would suggest that there has been little movement from this position.

Academic writing on women's football in general has expanded into new fields of enquiry with the focus on historical accounts waning (Valenti et al., 2018). Whilst it is positive to have more writings about women's football, the lack of work on the situation in Scotland, in comparison to writing on men's football, points to further evidence of women's football not being regarded as part of the mainstream football community. There continued to be limited press reporting of Scottish women's football well into this period but this was in line with situations in other countries. In the Netherlands for example, between 1995 and 2007 press coverage was almost non-existent (Peeters and Elling, 2015). When there were pieces in Scotland, they were often negative. It is interesting to note that this period included a decline in the performance of the national men's team and various issues within the men's game, however, rather than turning to the women's game there are continued examples of blatant misogyny. For example, in 2013, BBC Radio Scotland presenter Tam Cowan was temporarily taken off the air, after he vehemently criticised the use of Fir Park for women's internationals in his *Daily Record* column.<sup>310</sup> In a November 2013 interview with *The Independent* newspaper, Laura Montgomery (at the time, Glasgow City FC club manager) suggested that media coverage of women's football in Scotland often reflected sexist and misogynist attitudes. This is due to a preponderance of "stupid male journalists", according to Montgomery (Scott-Elliott, 2013). The issue

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<sup>310</sup> Fir Park is a football stadium in Motherwell, Lanarkshire and is the home ground of Motherwell FC.

is not just about negative reporting but also the centring of the men's game as authentic football and the continued reinforcement of the idea that men's football is central to the Scottish psyche (Reid, 2005). In March 2018, on the day that Scotland's Parliament passed a ground-breaking Domestic Abuse Bill, many television news reports led with a story about the manager of the national men's team. In late 2020, as the men's national team qualified for the Euro Championship, the majority of the media discourse centred on this being the first Scottish team to qualify since 1998, rendering invisible the qualification of the women's team in 2017.

However, as the number of women and girls playing has grown, so the tone in some parts of the media has slowly begun to change. This has been in part due to the growing number of women journalists who are either writing about sports or are writing more general pieces about women football players in national newspapers or football magazines such as *Nutmeg*.<sup>311</sup> However, this level of coverage is still miniscule in comparison to the men's game and even when the women's national team and teams such as Glasgow City FC are achieving more than the equivalent men's team on the international stage. In fact, at the time that Glasgow City FC made history as the first Scottish team of either gender to reach the quarter finals of the UEFA Champions League, the *Scottish Sun* was writing pieces stating that "women's football will never be popular" (Lindner, 2015a). At the same time another article suggested that a recent £1.2m investment in women's football by the SFA was wasted because the women would not perform well and it took funding from the men's team. The irony was that the women's team was ranked 11<sup>th</sup> in Europe compared to the men's ranking at 29<sup>th</sup> (Lindner, 2015a). The use of 'silence' (lack of coverage) or belittling pieces within the media, continues to be a feature of the response of hegemonic masculinity to women and girls who play football and therefore do not conform to gender stereotypes (Bennett et al., 1987; Plaza et al., 2016; Theberge, 2000). In 2017, Glasgow City, highlighted this by including the phrase 'You can't be what you can't see' on the player's tops to underline the need for visible role models, with

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<sup>311</sup> <https://www.scotsman.com/news/insight-women-s-football-can-t-be-what-you-can-t-see-1-4505202> and <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/women-s-football-has-everything-to-play-for-6v2r3306g> accessed 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018.



only 5% of sports media coverage in Scotland is given to women's sport.<sup>312</sup> There has been a relative increase in media coverage in other countries, however analysis in the Netherlands demonstrated that despite additional coverage, football still remained aligned to men and masculinity (Peeters and Elling, 2015).

The use of social media and websites has generally been a positive move for both individual clubs and national organisations in promoting and developing the game. Clubs, the associations, players and media outlets use social media to inform and engage with fans. This is usually positive and a fast and effective way for information to be disseminated and enables supporters to feel part of a growing community. It also provides a gauge of the thoughts of some in the dominant football community which are not always positive. While expressions of views such as Tam Cowan's are not usually given high profile reporting, the level at which unconscious bias and stereotypes persist is often demonstrated on social media. In early 2019, as people looked to buy new shirts to celebrate the SWNT participation in the Women's World Cup, they were presented with the picture below which was used by JD Sports (official partner of SFA) to advertise the Women's home shirt.

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<sup>312</sup>From the levelling the playing field report published by the Scottish Women and Girls in Sport Advisory Board in 2019 <https://www.genderequalmedia.scot/files/levelling-the-playing-field-report-2019.pdf>  
The chair of the SWF is a member of the board.

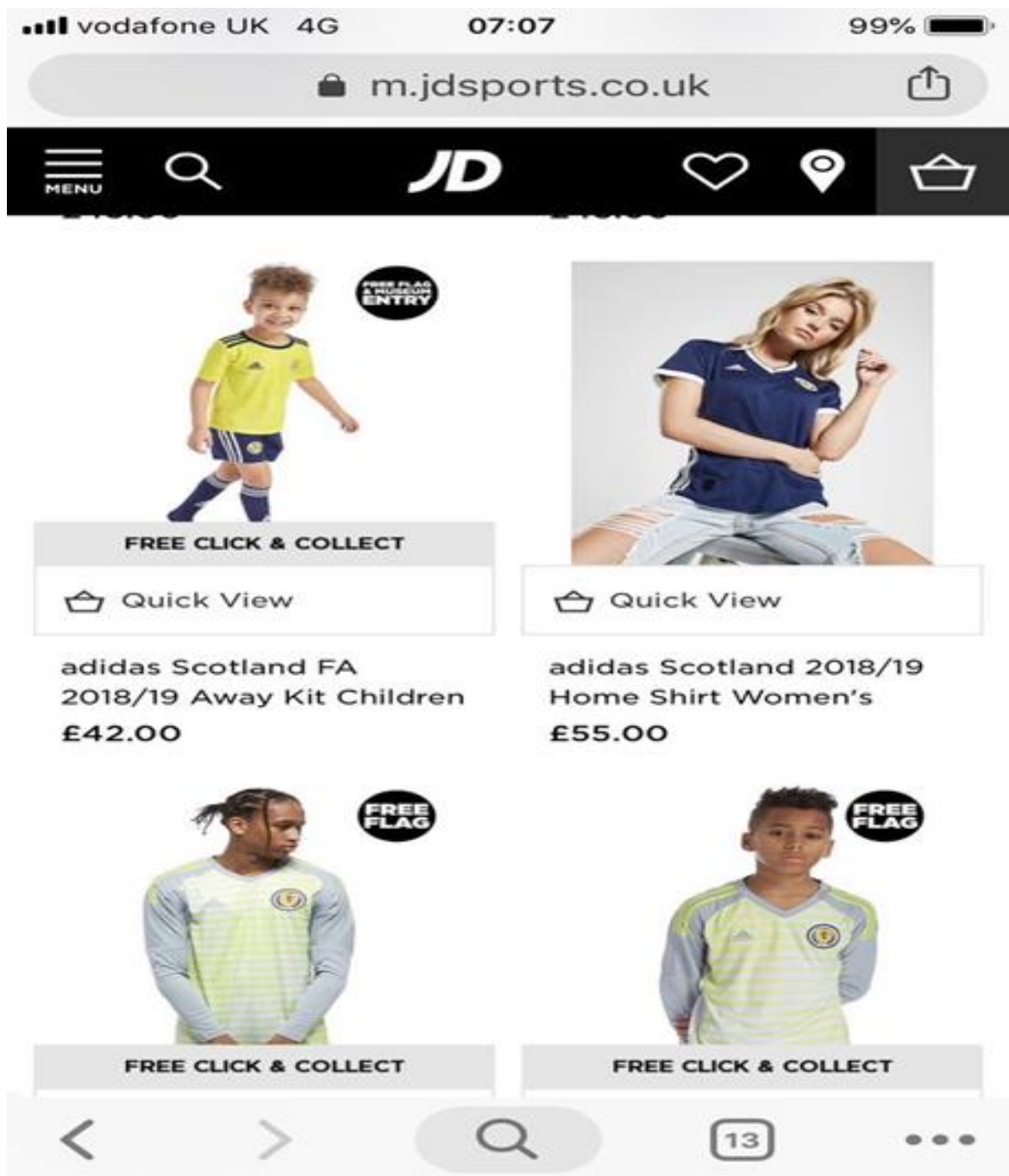


Illustration 1. JD Sports advert for Scotland national team kit

The framing was in sharp contrast to the men's and boys', reinforcing sexist stereotypes. However, social media facilitates almost immediate push-back against reinforcement of gender stereotypes and the response to the advert was swift and negative. One complainant also pointed out that there were no pictures of girls wearing football strips, thereby reinforcing the message that football, as sport, is for boys and men. Following outcry on social media platforms the picture

was removed, which shows the potential for change through these platforms.

However, the fact remains that it is far from a lone example and:

It's an indication of the systematic and often benevolent sexism that is so deeply ingrained in football culture at all levels. It provides a glimpse of a more general tendency for women's football not to be taken as seriously as a sport, even by its own governing bodies. (Lindner, 2015b:2)

In addition, the sexism repeatedly trivialises sportswomen's accomplishments, thereby supporting traditional gender ideologies, perpetuating male power and privilege and reinforcing the notion that women deserve lower status in society (Fink, 2015). This all indicates that there is still a long way to go to achieve a level playing field.

However, women's and girls' football continues to grow with reports that the number of registered female players in Scotland jumped by 21% to more than 17,000 during 2019, according to official SFA statistics (Green, 2020). In the article reporting the increase, Scott Bland from Drumchapel United in Glasgow, was quoted as saying:

I believe that girls now see football as a sport that they can play in rather than just watch. Every week we have new girls coming into our club – and what is encouraging is that they are often five and six-year-olds preferring football to dance and gymnastics. (Bland, quoted in Green, 2020)

This is very positive, not just because of the increase in participation but also the change in the view of football to a viable alternative to dance and gymnastics for girls. The rates of participation in women's football in Scotland may be increasing but they remain behind those of most of the comparator countries discussed in chapter four. However, it should be noted that these figures are relative and while, for example, Norway is far ahead of Scotland, the participation of Norwegian women in football is still far behind of that of men. This means that whilst the "general societal development, particularly movement for women's liberation or processes of gaining equality status amongst the sexes" (Skille, 2008: 528) has undoubtedly helped the participation levels in Norway, even there; football is still dominated by men. This indicates that, while the impact of socio-cultural norms may be beginning to recede, they have far from disappeared and there remains a need for them to be resisted. At the same time, women's football is subject to economic barriers imposed as patriarchy's next line of defence (Fisher, 2018).

## **Economic Barriers**

In her analysis of factors that stifle women's football, Fisher (2018) saw economic barriers as those which come into play after the influence of socio-cultural norms have started to wane. As with the other barriers, economic issues have been present throughout the past sixty years, much of the time inextricably linked to the other strands in the suppression of women's football. It is the case that attitudes towards women's football have begun to improve, particularly over the past five years as the national team has come to prominence, Glasgow City has done well in European competition and more games have been shown on television. In addition, women sports journalists have championed the game and helped to bring it to the public's attention on a national scale. However, this increase in awareness has not led to an equivalent rise in club sponsorship and funding. This section explores the past and current economic obstacles besetting the development of women's football in Scotland.

### *Barely Getting by: 1960 to 1990*

The lack of decent facilities and the restrictions faced by women who wanted to play, somewhat overshadowed the fact that there were also no financial resources. Those involved in trying to organise games in the 1960s were, of course, aware of the limitations caused by the lack of funding but these were 'absorbed' within the other issues and dealt with it as necessary.

The recognition of women's football made some aspects of organising teams and leagues more straightforward but the lack of resources and the impact of them continued through to the early 1990s. For many of the narrators, one of the few negatives they were aware of at the time they played was the almost constant fundraising. Obviously, this is the type of activity that many local sports clubs across the country are involved in perennially. The difference here was that this was not a local team in a local league but a team in the top Division of a national league.

The SWFA was engaged in the same struggle to raise money at a national level. Their efforts focused on members, as this was the area, they had some influence over. However, this led to conflict as discussed in chapter five with teams being required to fundraise on two fronts. The result of limited finances was the constraint of attempts at developing the game and raising awareness because

time spent on fundraising took away from time spent on moving the organisation forward. It also required money to pay for advertising as the media did not automatically report on women's football. Attempts were made to gain long term sponsorship through marketing but according to the records of the SWFA, these early attempts gained little more than the letter writing of previous committees and the strategy was dropped. This speaks to the issues raised within the institutional legislation sector above, where the requirement was for the SWFA to become more professional, gain more financial independence and grow the game. These elements are inextricably linked and without affiliation leading to potential for sustained sponsorship, there were no resources to grow participation or further develop the professionalism.

*Slow improvements: about 1990 to 2014*

As indicated previously, the changes in public policy towards sports development at the start of the 1990s had a profound impact on women's football. Development work by Team Sport Scotland led to an increase in resources for administrative work, for promoting and playing the game in schools and building women's football at a grassroots level. There was a small increase in sponsorship opportunities but these were mainly linked to sponsorship of the men's game or were very short term, such as the partnerships with B&Q and Scottish Blend, both of which were beneficial but only lasted for a year or two.

Finally, in 1998 the SFA agreed to the affiliation of the SWFA, however, affiliation did not bring access to funds from international football or national sporting bodies. This meant that the SWF (as it became in 2001) and individual clubs needed to continue to raise funds in order to operate. For elite men's clubs and the national team much of their financial resources come from sponsorship and TV rights deals, options that are less available in women's football. Even the clubs within the premier leagues do not have access to the levels of financial support achieved by those in the equivalent men's league. This is in part due to the sporting triangle, reflecting the business relationship between sport, television, and sponsorship (Whannel, 1991) although the television element is now extended to include any form of mediated sport (Boyle and Haynes, 2009). The notion of sponsorship is not new and organised sport has always been largely dependent on external financing, usually through local business sponsorship. Larger

sponsorship arrangements are often made when a business can see the potential for linking national or international advertising with a sport. However, the demand for sports sponsorship is not evenly spread amongst sports and is almost entirely based around media attention, as one of the main reasons for sponsorship is increasing public awareness (Boyle and Haynes, 2009). This presents a problem for women's football in Scotland: without its own nationwide public awareness, it has little to offer larger sponsors. It is also an issue for Football Associations wishing to capitalise on the potential of women's football to expand and grow, whilst ensuring that this, "poses no threat whatsoever to the highly commercialised world of male professional football" (Williams,2006:157).

#### *A step change about 2014 to 2020*

Over time the SWF has built up a sufficient reputation to attract sponsorship partners including the Scottish Building Society, SSE, InspireSport and Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems (SHAAP). However, these are recent achievements with SSE becoming the first major sponsor of women's football in Scotland in November 2016. As noted in chapter five, commercial funding grew from £3,000 in 2014 to £150,000 in 2019. This was due to work by marketing professionals who were members of the board and seconded staff at the SWF and their work began to pay off when they secured SSE sponsorship. SSE already had involvement in women's football in England and expressed a desire to support development of the game in Scotland. Having attracted one significant sponsor, others became interested. The next was the Scottish Building Society which signed a three-year deal in 2017 to sponsor the senior leagues, SWPL 1 and 2. This gave further backing to the plans for growth and development. InspireSport are the current travel partner assisting in the organisation of trips to tournaments and football tours. Finally, in March 2019 came the newest sponsorship agreement with SHAAP. This group was named as sponsor of the National Performance League and NPL Cup, the elite level for girls' club football in Scotland, for the 2019 and 2020 seasons. In 2016 SWF stated that it would never accept sponsorship from alcohol or gambling companies, as it saw itself as responsible for setting a positive example to its membership. This partnership was significant for a number of reasons, including the fact that SHAAP became the first sponsor of the SWF youth game and SWF was the first ever sporting

organisation to be sponsored by SHAAP. The partnership between SWF and SHAAP is the first Scottish football sponsorship specifically aimed at tackling Scotland's alcohol problems.<sup>313</sup> These are all positive developments and indicate that awareness of women's football in Scotland is reaching levels that attract significant sponsors. However, it should be remembered that it has taken forty-four years since the formation of the SWFA to secure consistent longer-term sponsorship that is based on the work of the SWF itself and not solely aligned to other bodies such as the SFA. This does allow for a degree of autonomy and choice over partners who promote the values and ethos of SWF. However, an illustration of the previous financial situation and the impact of these deals is that SSE's sponsorship of the Scottish cup allowed prize money to be paid for the first time in 2017, and that as a result of the Scottish Building Society deal, from 2018 there was to be prize money available for the SWPL 1 and 2 winners:

As the women's game continues to grow, having the support of an organisation such as Scottish Building Society will help us achieve our vision of being a world class footballing nation" (Fiona McIntyre, 2017, quote from Tartan Kicks website).<sup>314</sup>

This is positive news but behind the need to explore this funding stream is the fact that without recognition as the lead body for women's football in Scotland, the SWF has no access to direct funding from FIFA or UEFA and is limited in its ability to apply for funds from **sportscotland** or the Government. It should receive monies from FIFA and UEFA via the SFA but the release of funding is slow to non-existent (MacLaren, 2019). With the SWF as an affiliated national association, having just one vote on the SFA Council, the same as a single men's club, it has little opportunity to influence decisions about the allocation of funds.

If sponsorship is to be the route for funding, at least in the immediate future, then women's football will need to continue to endeavour to attract both participants and spectators to increase attractiveness to sponsors (Boyle and Haynes, 2009). While participation is currently rising, on the whole, spectator numbers are not. The challenge is to make women's football a spectator sport in an effort to make women's football teams an on-going viable business (Alexander, 2019). As an

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<sup>313</sup> SWF\_SHAAP\_Performance\_League\_sponsorship\_07\_03\_19.pdf

<sup>314</sup> <https://tartankicks.uk/2017/08/24/scottish-building-society-named-as-new-swpl-sponsor/> accessed 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

example, in 2019 St Johnstone Women's FC averaged 70 to 100 spectators per home game. The club estimates that it would take average gates of 4000 to enable it to move from just covering costs, to a position to invest and grow. This would not be from gate receipts alone but also from sponsorship (Alexander, 2019). However, the club would need to demonstrate a sound fan base to attract prominent sponsors. Speaking in July 2020, Shelley Kerr, then Scotland manager, said she felt that interest in the women's game was still not growing sufficiently despite the recent successes of the national team and that not enough had been done to capitalise on the interest shown at the time. While Kerr acknowledged that attitudes towards and interest in women's football had improved, she believed that was still a lot that could be done.

It was reported that she said:

Probably the hardest thing, for the World Cup and before that, was that a lot of journalists weren't that interested in women's football and then all of a sudden you have a bit of success in our country and everyone is all over it. I just hoped that would have continued post-World Cup and it hasn't. (Kerr, 2020 in Dewar, 2020)

Kerr went on to suggest that there was a need for a different approach to marketing women's football. This aligns with the outcome of a session at the '*Everything to Play for*' conference organised by the SWF at Hampden in 2019.<sup>315</sup> As part of a discussion the delegates were asked which of the FIFA development principles, they felt Scottish women's football as a community should concentrate on as a next priority. The delegates ranked marketing and promotion as the most important area for development in order to grow the game. This will need to include considering how to grow spectator numbers but building spectator numbers is an issue for many countries in Europe. Some average 1,000 spectators for league matches but in others the numbers are much lower with Norway, in 2017, averaging 239, which is marginally lower than Scotland at 300 (UEFA Statistics, 2017).<sup>316</sup> This means that, in the bid for sponsors, television coverage becomes even more important (Skogvang, 2019). Scottish women's football has been well supported by BBC Alba, providing television exposure at

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<sup>315</sup> This was a conference organised by the author and more details are given at Appendix 4.

<sup>316</sup> These are the last statistics available from UEFA.



both club and national team level which in turn, may assist in being able to attract sponsors through that exposure (Ramon and Haynes, 2018). However, this is still a small amount of coverage in comparison to the saturation levels of men's football on television.

The growth of the women's game has seen a number of men's clubs work more closely with their women's teams and several have professional women footballers for the first time.<sup>317</sup> However, the position is not the same throughout the league and the partnerships need to be monitored over the next few years, especially as in difficult financial times, the women's team is often the first to be effected, both in Scotland and Europe.<sup>318</sup> There are other clubs, such as Glasgow City, which prefer to be independent and to make decisions based on their principles but that brings its own financial and organisational challenges. While it is the case that Scottish women's football was until the Covid-19 interruption in 2020/1 was experiencing resurgence and growth, it is still subject to the same structural disempowerment as it has throughout the past sixty years. Given the extent of the factors constraining the women's football community, the present level of organisation and funding represents a successful outcome. The next section considers the factors which elevated the game and to an extent, balanced out the constraints.

## **Elevations**

The factors having a positive influence on the women's game are smaller in number than the challenges but were significant enough to mitigate the constraints and ensure that albeit slowly, the game did develop and grow. The first was the sheer determination of the narrators to organise and play football. This is undoubtedly the most important enabling factor and is strong enough to outweigh many of the constraining issues, discussed in the thesis. As has been demonstrated issues with funding and facilities have continued throughout the past sixty years. However, women played because they were committed to the game and, as explained by a narrator, no man was going to stop them doing

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<sup>317</sup> Aberdeen, Hearts, Celtic, Rangers and Hibernian have made large investments in the women's game.

<sup>318</sup> An example from here is Cove Rangers as discussed in chapter four and in Sweden, the elite champions Goteborg FC were disbanded at the end of December, having been in existence since 1970, as the men's club could not provide the investment, they felt was required to take the team to the next level.

something they enjoyed (Cook, 2018). Even though conditions have steadily improved, there remain many obstacles to overcome and success has been dependent on the involvement of people with a strong commitment to playing and growing the game.

The women may not have seen themselves as part of the women's liberation movement but they were taking part in what James Scott described as the politics of everyday individual or collective resistance to the status quo (Scott, cited by Katzenstein, 1990). Given the gender stereotyping throughout the period, the women players were taking part in acts of resistance, both by carving out time for a serious leisure pursuit (Deem, 1982) and by that leisure activity being non-traditional. The mere act of the women stepping out to play football can be taken as a form of resistance, as the act of embodying a 'footballer' is a challenge to the notion of football as male (Clark and Paechter, 2007). The narrators shared a desire to change the view of football as belonging to men and were, therefore, one of the many disparate groups within the women's movement linked by:

Sustained efforts to bring about social change by individuals and groups who share a collective identity developed on the basis of a common opposition to dominant norms and who may use unconventional tactics... as part of their mode of operation. (Grey and Sawyer, 2008: 5)

As with so many sports organisations, women's football has relied very heavily on support from people happy to volunteer for non-playing roles including club secretaries, coaches and the members of the SWFA /SWF committees. Without their commitment the game would not have been able to continue. Parents have also played a vital role especially at grassroots level by providing taxi services, kit cleaning, encouragement and support to the team and financial input during fundraising. Another element of this support was enabling their daughter's enthusiasm for football and allowing them to travel to matches and to spend time away from family.

In her analysis of the development of women's football, Lopez (1997) underlines the requirement for there to be 'disruptive men' who champion women's football. The theme of men who disrupt the conducive context to encourage and assist in including women in sporting communities has been explored by a number of

writers (Lopez, 1997; Olive et al., 2015; Skogvang, 2019 and Stirling and Shulz,2011). During this time period, there have been a number of disruptive men involved in the women's game who have committed time and energy to developing and promoting the game.<sup>319</sup>

As discussed earlier, Liston (2006) contended that changes in the society wide cultural context impacted on gender stereotypes and the changes these brought enabled women's football to develop. An example of a positive influence from this progression is the emergence of women who through skills and experience in their non-football careers could bring strategic thought and project planning to women's football. From the mid-1990s onwards, the SWFA/SWF, the SFA and individual clubs benefitted from the strategic work undertaken and the professional aptitudes applied. This enabled women's football to grow and develop in the absence of strong financial commitments and wider recognition.

Social media platforms and the use of websites have been a positive move for women's football with news, information, commentary and interaction between clubs, the associations and fans. This move has been described as being from communication (one way) to conversation (two way) (Spurgeon, 2009). The increase in 'conversations' on social media platforms has assisted in achieving an increase in fans who engage with each other and the teams. This is an antidote to the impact of media silence which, "cuts us off from those who share our interests, so that we often do not know that such kindred spirits exist" (Bennett et al.,1987: 372), a sentiment that could have been expressed by many of the narrators. It has also given access to information about clubs for those who wish to participate in football and opportunities for clubs to 'advertise' for members, a far cry from having to wander streets looking for women and girls who may be playing (Cook, 2018). For example, Facebook sites connect smaller clubs to their local community and raise awareness, especially for young girls. There is potential that the growth of coverage will overcome the attention deficit that old media showed towards women's' football (Vann, 2014).

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<sup>319</sup> Two examples of disruptive men are Tommy Malcolm who, as a coach and administrator, championed women's football in 1980s and 1990s and Colin Brown who set up Forfar Farmington in 1983.

## Going Forward

In 2014, FIFA produced a list of development principles aimed at guiding and supporting countries. Scotland still has a number of these to achieve and, as discussed earlier, those involved in the game believe that the priority is to secure funding and sponsorship. From this follow the opportunities to meet other principles such as increasing the number of qualified women coaches, increasing women in management and ultimately, professionalising the women's game. Scotland has lagged behind the majority of its European comparators and the biggest cause of this has been lack of respect from the male centric football community, been denied access to amalgamation and therefore the necessary funding. SWF has worked hard to secure television coverage which is crucial in securing funding via the sport, media and sponsorship triangle (Boyle and Haynes 2009). In order to gain more coverage, there is a need to continue to improve the standard of the game. The evidence from the Women's Super League in England is that the introduction of professional contracts facilities improvements in standards both through full time training, attraction of world-class players and top coaches (Simmons, 2021). At the time of writing, in early 2021, Fiona McIntyre the new Head of Girl's and Women's football at the SFA was developing a Girl's and Women's Football Strategy (McIntyre, 2021).<sup>320</sup> Given McIntyre's view while Chief Executive officer at SWF, it is likely that part of the strategy will be aimed at increasing the number of professional contracts in Scottish women's football. This would pave the way to ultimately achieving at least one level of professional football in the women's game, and thereby unlocking the potential to attain the level of success and growth seen in other European countries with professional leagues.

The lack of financial support results in the marginalisation of women's football (Downes, 2015). In the short term, the SWF require more sustained and substantial funding from the SFA to enable them to properly address the adversity faced by women's football throughout Scotland from grass roots to elite level (McIntyre, 2020). This would demonstrate a commitment to developing the

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<sup>320</sup> <https://www.scottishfa.co.uk/news/fiona-mcintyre-s-first-interview-as-head-of-girls-and-women-s-football/?rid=13929> last accessed 18 April 2021

women's game and seeking to achieve a level playing field. As expressed by one narrator, it was the SFA who were central in effectively stifling the growth of women's football. Therefore, it is for the SFA to offer financial support to women's football to enable them to catch upon the year's they lagged behind. Women's football in Scotland is owed this by the SFA.<sup>321</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Reiterated throughout this thesis has been the fact that sport is an important arena for the disruption of socially constructed gender norms. It provides the opportunity to resist the social and cultural expressions of difference between men and women which have been used to oppress women (Theberge, 1987; Caudwell, 2011). Long before the emergence of feminist analysis and discourse on gendered sport, women in Scotland were enacting this disruption by playing football. Football is a misogynistic male-centred tradition that binds sport to masculinity and seeks to exclude women (Moreira, 2014). The dominant male football community sought to stifle women's participation as it was judged to threaten the male only sacred space. The women's football community has continued to disrupt the equilibrium at various points in the sixty years from 1960 to 2020, regardless of the attempts of the wider football community to exclude them and impose misogynistic gender norms.

In attempting to suppress women's football, the forces of hegemonic patriarchy used three approaches; institutional law, socio-cultural norms and economic barriers (Fisher, 2018). This chapter has examined the ways in which these factors have constrained the development of women's football in Scotland and has considered, through means of comparison whether or not this was different from other countries. The trajectories experienced in different countries with regard to the development of women's football have followed broadly similar patterns through bans or restrictions; periods of slow development, followed by a period of flourish or resurgence. The difference has been the rate at which the countries moved through that trajectory.

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<sup>321</sup> This was one instance where a narrator asked to remain anonymous.

Scotland's route has been very slow and has only really started to gather pace in the decade since 2010. The constraints placed on women's football have stemmed from the aforementioned contention that football is a male sport and that women do not belong. In opposition to these constraints are factors that have succeeded in elevating women's football. Women's football has faced opposition throughout its history in Scotland. However, women have resisted these attempts to curtail their activity and have, in the long term, through determination and perseverance, overcome the barriers in order to create a lively, nationwide women's football community. It is time that the narrative of women's football is made visible and celebrated within the sporting culture of Scotland.

## 8. Conclusion

From the outset, the central objective for the research was to expand the narrative regarding women playing football in Scotland. The clear lack of formal archive material (McMillian, 2015) necessitated revision of the initial wide scope of the project. While the core aspiration to uncover the ignored history of women's football endured (Reid, 2004), it was refined into four specific more tangible objectives that could be achieved within the scope of the research. These were:

1. To further uncover the narrative of women's football in Scotland across the period 1960 to 2020
2. To explore the experiences of the women involved in women's football in Scotland across the past sixty years
3. To examine the extent to which the rate of development differed from other comparable European countries and to consider what factors may have shaped the development in Scotland
4. To initiate the expansion of the existing limited archive of women's football in Scotland, through both tangible and intangible heritage with due regard to increasing the representation of women. To seek ways to effectively and appropriately share the findings of the research study with both academic and non-academic communities.

### Starting point

The literature review established that, while progress has been made in recovering women's participation within sports history narratives (Hall, 2015; Osborne and Skillen, 2015), there remain significant gaps. One such omission is the lack of knowledge regarding the history of women's football in Scotland since 1960. However, as previously discussed, absence of information does not automatically make that topic either interesting or of significance for research (Thompson, 2019). The merit in pursuing this research, came from the contribution it would make to re-balancing the gender framing of sporting narratives, particularly regarding women's involvement in football (Williams and Hess, 2015). An aim of this research was to make a significant contribution to

academic knowledge. However, of equal importance was the capacity for research outputs to be used to initiate the construction of a community of experiences and stories about women's football (Goldblatt, 2020a). This would, in turn, establish a claim for 'recognition' of women's place within the historical narratives of this central aspect of Scottish culture (Reid, 2004).

## **Appropriate Research**

Having clarified and focused the objectives, a research strategy was then designed to achieve the objectives while adhering to the principles of feminist research practice (Ramazanoğlu and Holland, 2002). Initially this involved work with secondary material to establish what was known and curated. Attention was then turned to primary research which comprised three elements. The first was archival research undertaken with both established collections and those that emerged during the research. Established collections were materials held at the Scottish Football Museum (SFM) including new donations made by narrators following their interview and digital newspaper archives for Aberdeenshire. An archival collection that emerged during the research comprised papers identified within the Scottish Women's Football (SWF) offices whilst on work placement. The second element centred on the collection of oral history testimony, focusing on the gathering of memories from those involved in women's football and the amplification of the voices of the women, centring their experiences (Brooks and Hesse-Biber, 2007; FiLia, 2018 and Forbes et al., 2015). The third element was the private collections of narrators including formal paperwork, football memorabilia and personal ephemera. Having undertaken the research, the material that was uncovered exceeded expectations allowing both the research objectives to be met and a platform for future research to be established, as discussed below.

## **Rebalancing the gendered narrative of Scottish football**

This thesis presents the first comprehensive outline of the development of women's football (organisation and playing infrastructure) in Scotland for the sixty-year period from 1960 to 2020. In doing so it continues the process of rebalancing the gendered narrative of Scottish football (Gibbs, 2018, Lawther, 2021; Macbeth, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008; Skillen 2019, 2021). This thesis, the article and



presentations based on it, along with the materials collated during research, contribute theoretically and empirically to academic knowledge and the potential for knowledge creation.<sup>322</sup> This contribution will be discussed below, in the sections reviewing the reported findings.

The research that informed this rebalancing was undertaken through the collection of original oral history testimonies and uncovered archives and private collections. This in turn enabled the creation of a shared narrative for those women who were involved across the sixty years but never saw their story in the public discourse about football. The sources identified and materials collated within the process of the research also confirm the historical credentials of the women's game and its central place in the previously male-centric mainstay of Scottish culture (Reid, 2004).

Additionally, outputs from the research have and continue to, contribute to the cultural heritage of women's football. They provide opportunities for women and girls to learn about the women who played and their experiences of football across the past sixty years. The collected testimonies, official papers, artefacts and memorabilia are a repository of cultural heritage (Haynes, 2020), creating a valuable resource for a wider group than the women's football community alone and assisting in exploring why "sport matters".

### **Expanding the Account**

The weaving together of physical, oral and emotional material in an act of methodological bricolage (Pratt et al., 2020), facilitated the expansion of the narrative of women's football in Scotland since 1960. The account of the development of women's football contained in chapter four demonstrated that despite the attempts of the male football community to suppress women's involvement in 'their' game (Caudwell, 2011), the women resisted, persisted and continued to play. The official leagues and participation numbers were maintained

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<sup>322</sup> Academic work has included presentations at conferences and publication of an article, 'Sisters doing it for themselves: the rich history of women's football in Scotland from the 1960s to 2020', *Sport in History*, 40:4, 456-481. Work with the football community has included the first national conference about women's football held at Hampden Stadium and several presentations to football clubs about the history of women's football. This will be continued after the pandemic. More generic work has involved newspaper interviews, radio programmes and interviews and participation in the Purple TV documentary on Rose Reilly. A full list is given at Appendix 4.

despite the lack of resources until a series of events in the 1990s brought about significant growth. The following decades saw progression in participation, attitudes to training and club management and public interest in women's football. The data presented connects to a growing body of work which seeks to uncover the historical narrative of women's sport. Although, work on the history of women's sport is slowly gaining traction with writing on specific sports and those on particular time periods, it is still underrepresented within the historiography (Osborne and Skillen, 2020). The importance of sport in women's lives is equally neglected by feminist historians or those writing on women's history and therefore this research adds a further dimension to the limited body of work (Nicholson and Taylor, 2020). If writing on the history of women's sport remains minimal, then that on football is even smaller with the study of women's football in Scotland, negligible. The historical focus of the pieces that have been written has tended to be either been on earlier periods (Gibbs, 2018; Macbeth, 2002, 2004; Skillen 2019, 2021) or one element of the narrative such as the SWNT (Lawther, 2021). As well as contributing to the body of information about women's sports history, this research contributes specifically to the neglected historiography of Scottish women's football. Simultaneously, it adds a further dimension to writing on the historical sociology of sport (Campbell and Williams, 2014; Campbell, 2015, 2020; Dunning and Sheard, 2005; Liston, 2006; White, 2000) through the interpretation of the different phases of development of women's football in light of the social context within which it operated.<sup>323</sup>

The focus of the account in chapter five is the progression of the Scottish Women's Football Association (SWFA)/SWF as the body overseeing the governance of women's football in Scotland. It promoted the game and built an infrastructure that enabled women to participate and have something to play for, despite the challenges faced. Charting the journey of the SWFA/SWF on the amateur/ professional continuum showed that it transitioned through the organisation models as described by Kikulis et al. (1992) from kitchen-table to executive office. The archetypes were designed to enable the consideration of development of sports organisations both in terms of their journey and in comparison, to others (Hoye et al., 2020). The SWFA/SWF took many years to

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<sup>323</sup> These are just few examples of the genre.

move through each of the three models on its journey to professionalisation, with external forces being the prime catalyst for transition. It was only the final movement from boardroom to executive archetype that was brought about through internal motivation and forces. This transition occurred when the board took steps to ensure the governing body had access to a mix of football and business expertise that optimised its ability to deliver efficient and effective services for its membership. Chapter five is an original contribution in terms of writing on the SWFA/SWF, of which this is the first. With regard to wider writing on sports governance it builds on both studies of the trajectory undertaken by governing bodies en route to professional standing (Dowling et al., 2018; Hoye et al., 2020) and those focussing on the composition of governance boards (Adriaanse, 2017; Adriaanse and Claringbould, 2014; Dowling et al., 2018, O'Boyle, 2017; Piggott and Pike, 2020). In terms of the former it adds a new dimension being both about women's sport and a smaller national body that is not in receipt of substantial government funding. This contributes to a growing trend of considering smaller governing bodies and equally extends the countries which have been the basis of study, albeit on a small scale (Dowling et al., 2018). While the material available did not allow for a comprehensive analysis of the gender ratio of the SWFA/SWF committees, there was sufficient information to illustrate that it defied usual convention by comprising predominantly women for most of its existence to date. This points to the possibility of a different frame of reference for writing that is more often concerned with the challenges faced by women on male centric boards (Adriaanse, 2017; Piggott and Pike, 2020).

### **Exploring lived experience**

Building the research strategy upon feminist values meant that central to the work was the desire to amplify the voices of women who were participants (FiLia, 2018; Hesse-Biber, 2008). It was, therefore, important to ensure that the experiences and memories of those women involved in women's football were given ample opportunity to be heard within the thesis. Chapter six focused on this, exploring the experiences of those involved in women's football across the sixty-year period in their own words.

The chapter was structured around the concepts of sporting lives, athletic careers and serious leisure to bring together and compare and contrast the experiences of

those who played in different decades. In many ways this showed that more remained the same than changed, at least until more recently for those in the elite categories of football. This work makes a contribution to several areas of academic writing. It builds on the work of Stevenson (2002) and Macbeth (2004,2006) to further detail the experiences of the women's playing 'career' from taking up the game to stopping playing and beyond. It also brings additional material to the work on serious leisure, (Bowness, 2020; Raisborough, 2007; Stebbins, 1992) in particular the view of the women that the benefits given by the leisure pursuit far outweigh the challenges of participation. The research also contributes positively to the body of work using oral history as a means to capture the often-neglected role of women in sport (Sheffield, 2014; Skillen and Osborne, 2015). Consistent from the narrators, were the smiles, laughter and passion that emanated as they recounted their experiences within the women's football community. This underlines the immense benefit that narrators bring to a project, giving generous access to experience and memory in ways that official reports, newspaper articles and even personal memorabilia could not (Cvetkovich, 2003; Taylor, 2020).

### **Differential development**

In addition to bringing together the history and experiences of women's football in Scotland, consideration was given to whether the rate of development differed from other comparable European countries and to consider what factors may have shaped the development in Scotland. The comparison undertaken in chapter four, demonstrated the slower rate of development of women's football in Scotland in comparison to Denmark, England, Germany, Ireland, Norway and Sweden.<sup>324</sup>

Building on this, chapter seven explored the factors which potentially shaped the rate of development in Scotland. The analysis followed the work of Fisher (2018) and her view that development is influenced by patriarchal structures using the three factors of institutional laws, socio-cultural norms and economic barriers. At the commencement of the sixty-year period, the men of the Scottish Football

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<sup>324</sup> See Bosley, 2007; Bourke, 2003; Brus and Trangbæk, 2003; Byrne, 2017; Fasting, 2003; Hjelm and Olofsson, 2003; Hjelm, 2011; Liston, 2006; Lopez, 1997; Pfister, 2003; Skille, 2008; Skogvang, 2019 and Williams, 2002, 2003a, 2007.

Association (SFA) did not believe that football was suitable for women. Although the restrictions were finally lifted in 1974, there was little material change to the experiences of women playing across the next twenty years. This is because the male football community were assisted by prevailing societal gender stereotypes to support their endeavours to limit the extent to which women's football developed (Buisse and Embser-Herbert, 2004). Although there continued to be little support for or encouragement to women's football, there was no public outcry about the overt sexism and discrimination taking place as feminist activism did not view sport as a site for action (Bruley and Foster, 2016). The result was that women in football continued to challenge for equality of opportunity on their own, with little support from the wider women's community. Although the effect of gender stereotypes is still experienced by women involved in football, it has declined to some extent. Fisher (2018) contends that as the effect of gender stereotypes begin to lose force, the final barrier women's football faces is economic, with financing being the third level on which patriarchy restricts the development of women's football. In Scotland there may be some benefits, in terms of ethos and values, for the SWF as one of the few women's football organisations in Europe that remain separate from its male counterpart. However, this comes at a price, which continues to be a lack of funding as it is not recognised as the primary football organisation for women's football and cannot therefore receive funds from UEFA and FIFA directly. It is, instead, reliant on the SFA distributing monies it receives for the development of women's football. The male hegemonic football community in Scotland have, across the past sixty years, used a variety of measures that have effectively blocked the progress of women's football in Scotland, regardless of whether this was their overt intention. Systems incorporating institutional sexism will produce policies that discriminate against women and this has been the case in the SFA (Capodilupo, 2017; Stirling and Schulz, 2011). This has resulted in Scottish women's football lagging behind comparator countries in terms of rates of participation, professionalisation of the domestic game and success in international competitions. The situation is beginning to improve but there is much catching up to do and progress has been stalled by the impact of Covid-19. As discussed in the last chapter, changes to the stance of the SFA do not appear to have been internally motivated and have therefore been generated by external pressures linked to legislation change and

potential impact on funding streams. The moves proved beneficial to the women's game but the lack of on-going fundamental change in the SFA means that there has been stagnation between these step changes. This may be about to change with the outcome of a review of the organisation and management of women's football in Scotland awaited at the time of writing (early 2021). However, while the results are pending, the former Executive Officer of the SWF has been appointed to the position of Head of Women and Girls Football at the SFA. What this means for the outcome of the review is unclear, but given the SWF is actively recruiting a replacement, their desire to remain a separate entity would appear to be currently secure.

## **Sharing and Outreach**

The final research objective contained two elements, with the first seeking an examination of the ways in which the findings of the study could be shared in academic and non-academic communities. Presentations on the research have been made in academic conferences within the University of Stirling and at external events connected with football, football history and sporting heritage.<sup>325</sup> An initial article, giving an overview of the research and findings was published in December 2020 and it is anticipated that more articles will follow along with the availability of the thesis for future researchers and those interested in women's football.<sup>326</sup>

Work to create a shared narrative of the history of women's football within the non-academic community has also progressed well, although some elements have been delayed due to Covid-19. Elements of the research have been included in newspaper and football magazine writing about women's football in Scotland. The author has also participated in a radio programme, alongside three of the participants, about the first international against England and playing football in the 1960s and 1970s. The author also appeared in a television documentary made about Rose Reilly and while Rose's story is only part of the Scottish narrative, it has assisted in starting conversations with people about

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<sup>325</sup> A full list of outreach work is contained in Appendix 4.

<sup>326</sup> An article the author wrote based on this research, 'Sisters doing it for themselves: the rich history of women's football in Scotland from the 1960s to 2020', *Sport in History*, 40:4, 456-481.

women's football in Scotland. Another initiative to bolster the shared community and narrative was a conference held at Hampden Stadium devised and organised by the author. This was the first time a conference on women's football in Scotland had been held at Hampden and the day was devoted to the past, present and future of the game. It also echoed a central theme of the thesis, in that it amplified women's voices by only having women participants in presentations and panel discussions. There were, of course, men in the audience as they have always been an integral part of the women's football community but it was important that the voices heard were women. The author has also given presentations at several football clubs and the WOW festival in Perth.<sup>327</sup> Further presentations have been planned but these are currently on hold due to the Covid-19 restrictions. Finally, work is being undertaken to bring more of women involved in football together. The first event was held at Hampden Park at the SWNT friendly match against Jamaica before the FIFA Women's World Cup France 2019<sup>TM</sup>. The author has been working with the SFA to trace all women who would have earned an international cap, if the SFA had recognised the SWNT between 1972 and 1998. The first group of women were presented their caps by First minister, Nicola Sturgeon pitch side ahead of the game.<sup>328</sup> While the author had been in contact with all the women present, some had not seen each other for many years and were delighted to meet again. The intention is to continue to work on this project and make contact with as many women as possible, with formal events to present the caps.<sup>329</sup> It has also been possible to reconnect some women via social media. As a result, the author is working with the Scottish Football Museum to hold an informal event at Hampden to bring narrators together. The events held so far and the on-going work mean that the research has had a significant impact, bringing information about the women's football in Scotland across the past sixty years, to a non-academic audience.

The second element of the research objective spoke to the need to rebalance the gender representation in the physical football archive in Scotland. The research

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<sup>327</sup> Women of the World.

<sup>328</sup> Link to a newspaper report <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/first-ever-scots-womens-team-16216930> last accessed 2 April 2021.

<sup>329</sup> It is also hoped that the author will be able to undertake further oral history interviews, thereby expanding the bank of testimonies accessible in the future.

has already prompted action as three narrators have donated materials to the Scottish Football Museum. Other narrators have entrusted materials to the author and discussions have begun about future permanent or on loan donation. The author is also working with the SWF and the SFM to ensure the safe storage of the archive materials uncovered by the research. In addition, it is hoped that both transcriptions and the original recordings of the oral history interviews will be incorporated into a digital archive that will enable wide access from across Scotland (and the globe). It is hoped that this will have the facility for women to share their own narratives, thereby expanding the collective memory of women's football in Scotland (Goldblatt, 2020a). In addition, there may be scope to utilise some of the material alongside the work of *Football Memories Scotland*, including starting a women's football reminiscence group.<sup>330</sup>

## Future Research

Overall, the research met the objectives set and was undertaken in a way commensurate with feminist research practice (Ramazanoğlu and Holland, 2002). While there was far more material uncovered than had initially been expected, this in turn, highlighted the areas where there remains a deficit of information. These areas, which point to potential research opportunities, include but are not limited to:

- Work based teams throughout the sixty-year period
- Research in newspaper archives for local press reports across the country
- Unaffiliated football leagues and competitions
- Schoolgirl and University women's football<sup>331</sup>
- Individual club case studies
- Further analysis of the sporting lives of individual women involved in football in Scotland

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<sup>330</sup> The work of the *Football Memories* project is detailed here, <http://www.footballmemories.org.uk/>

<sup>331</sup> For more than half of the sixty years under consideration, there was no distinction between women and girls' football', with varied age groups playing for the same team. However, from the middle of the 1990s girls' football in Scotland began its own development journey. Similarly, a parallel strand of women's football took place in Universities. In the late 1990s, these parallel strands combined when the university leagues/ association became affiliated to the SWF. Again, while this is referenced and discussed in relation to the development of the SWF, the evolution of University leagues is not written about in depth and is a matter for future research and writing.



- Research into the early movement of Scottish women footballers to play abroad
- Further comparison work between development of women's football in Scotland and other countries
- The development of the SWFA/SWF in comparison to official bodies in other countries or other sports
- The effects of women centred committees and management within the SWFA/SWF
- Examination of experiences of recreational teams

Finally, although possibly most challenging, it would be valuable to uncover the experiences of women who wanted to play but either never found the opportunity or faced barriers that they were unable to overcome.

## **Epilogue**

Women have been playing football in Scotland for nearly four hundred years, with early participation being on equal footing with the men either in folk football games (Macbeth, 2002) or in matches held as part of celebrations or feast days (Williamson, 1991). As the men's game became more regulated, so the recording of women's play diminished as men sort to claim spheres of influence for themselves, including that of sport (Hall, 2015). Sport is culturally important and has meant a great deal to Scotland however, this has almost exclusively meant men's engagement with sport (Reid, 2004). Despite attempts by patriarchy to suppress women's involvement in football in Scotland, it has persisted, as those involved worked hard to overcome challenges to play, develop and promote the women's game.

However, there has been limited opportunity to forge a collective shared history and certainly not one that represents the full picture across 400 years. This in turn has led to the perception that women's football has only been in existence for a short time, with the resultant lack of historical currency negatively impacting on the credibility of women's football (Goldblatt, 2020b). Through the centring of women's voices this research has started the process of deconstructing the dominant male narrative in the Scottish game, which has long been underpinned

by hegemonic patriarchy in both the malestream football community and the wider society it reflects. The narrative of women's football presented here demonstrates its rich history across the past sixty years and establishes its claim to inclusion in the cultural landscape of Scottish football. This is an empowering narrative which offers women the potential to claim collective space for shared histories (Goldblatt, 2020a) and a sense of community belonging and identity (Haynes, 2020). It gives women and girls the opportunity to learn about the history of women footballers and the adversities they overcame to forge a path for them. While it demonstrates that there is the need to constantly confront an arena that does not want them there (English, 2020), current players can draw strength and inspiration from the fact that they are continuing in a long tradition of remarkable women who resisted and, 'against the run of play' made space to participate. Popular culture in Scotland has drawn the football community as a mainly male preserve; this research reveals an alternative vision, with women not as a marginalised presence but as an integral part of the narrative of Scottish football from the 1960s to the present.

## Primary Resources

### Oral History Interviews with Narrators

Marion Barclay	15 October 2019
Sheila Begbie	8 February 2019
Colin Brown	23 April 2018
Elsie Cook	23 August 2018
Kate Cooper	12 March 2019
Heather Dunn	4 May 2019
Fiona Edwards	20 July 2018
Linda Gellatly	18 September 2019
Magi Hamilton	13 August 2018
Pauline Harvey	31 October 2019
Chris Henderson	21 March 2019
Emma Hunter	5 April 2019
Kerry Kennedy	15 October 2019
Jane Legget	8 May 2019
Vivienne MacLaren	12 June 2019
Tommy Malcom	16 February 2018
Jennifer Malone	12 June 2019
Margaret McAulay	21 January 2019
Amy McDonald	4 September 2019
Pauline McDonald	6 December 2019
Maureen McGonigle	2 December 2018
Fiona McIntyre	8 September 2020
Diane Robertson	18 September 2019
Maureen Simms	15 October 2018
Susan Williams	23 May 2019
Jean Stewart	11 July 2019
Niall Marshall	27 June 2019

## Private Collections

### Tommy Malcolm

Tommy had a wealth of tangible heritage that he shared with the research, which informed the analysis. Listed here are some particular items that were used in the thesis.

SWFA	AGM June 1982	
	AGM June 1983	
	Council meeting minutes	14 August 1982
	Council meeting minutes	5 March 1983
	League Council minutes	4 February 1984
	League Council minutes	August / September 1984
	League Council minutes	10 November 1984
	League Council minutes	12 January 1985
	Letter to TM dated 17.3.82 about affiliation to the SWFA	
	Letter to all clubs, admonishing players for their behaviour on recent international duty and to issue new guidelines that are being introduced. 25.9.82	
	Letter to all clubs– Survival plan for SWFA – help us help you	
20.10.82	Letter addressed to TM from fundraising committee – seeking update on additional monies raised by the club. 9.2.83	

Other papers the Tommy lent relate to the individual club - trips to tournaments or organising the day to day of the club – looking for sponsorship, getting grounds; block booking of council pitches and venues for end of season dinners.

Tommy wrote a history of Carmunnock Football club from 1981 to 1985, a story that warrants further research.

Tommy also produced a football magazine in the early 1990s – collections contain *Kick Off* magazine No 1 to number 12

He also produced match programmes for the team Glasgow Western, that he managed briefly in the early 1990s.

## **Diane Robertson**

Diane lent the research her scrapbook from the early 1970s which contains her match reports and analysis for each game she played. This is fascinating detail but little to add to the current thesis other than background context. This does represent potential source for future research.

## **Margaret McAulay**

Margaret had lots of tangible heritage that gave rich background context to the research which also represents a potential source for future research. Particular items

Green, H. (1969) Letter to Mrs McAulay

Green, H. (1970) Letter to Mrs McAulay

Unattributed and undated newspaper article *Pretty Impressive, the glory girls spurned by Scotland's soccer bosses.*

Unattributed article from the Ayrshire Post about the Butlin's Cup

## **Scottish Football Museum**

### **Jane Legget Collection**

Jane had donated a wealth of tangible heritage, which informed the analysis, including a book of newspaper cuttings. Listed here are some particular items that were used in the thesis.

Newspaper articles –

*The trouble with women* by Chick Young

Scottish Football Weekly No 3, 6<sup>th</sup> March 1975

*Oh Girls! Get on with the game* by the Editor

Scottish Football Weekly No 7 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1975

*Foul Play, women footballers accuse men of the SFA*

Unreferenced article – dated to 1988 by the matches it references

Programme	Scotland	v	England	1972
Programme 1973	Scotland	v	England	8 October
Programme	Scotland	v	ROI	March 1974
Programme	Scotland	v	Wales	26 April 1975
Programme	Pony Home International Championship			21, 22, 23 May 1976

Programme (Scotland won)	Scotland	v	England	1977
Programme	Italian Tournament 1978 – annotated with the results			
Programme	Italian Tournament			1979
Programme	Wales	v	Scotland	27 April 1980
Programme 1981	ROI	v	Scotland	29 March
Programme	ROI	V	Scotland	March 1983
Programme UEFA	England	V	Scotland	22 May 1983
Programme	Wales	v	Scotland	22 April 1984
Programme	Scotland	v	ROI	27 May 1984
Programme	Daily Express 5-a-side exhibition match			26 November 1986
Programme	Scotland	v	Northern Ireland	28 May 1986
Programme	Ireland		v Scotland	28 September 1986
Programme	Scotland	v	England	12 October 1986
Programme	ROI	v	Scotland	3 April 1988
Programme	Scotland	v	England	30 April 1989
Programme	Scotland	v	England	6 May 1990
Programme	Past masters 6 a side		Scotland v England	4 March 1991
Programme	England		v Scotland	20 April 1991
Programme	Leven Tournament			23 to 30 June 1974
Programme	Leven tournament			1980
Programme	SWFA Challenge Cup			3rd May 1981
Programme	Scottish Women's Challenge Cup final			20 April 1986
Programme	Scottish Women's Challenge Cup final			10 May 1987
Programme	Scottish Women's Challenge Cup Final			1 May 1988
Programme	SWFA Cup Final			27 May 1990
5th International ladies Soccer tournament – grand Hotel Varna (Bulgaria)				
30 March to 5 April 1992				

## SWF Archive

These are papers so far identified within the archive but due to Covid-19, it has not been possible to ascertain if all boxes of papers have been viewed.

AGM 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997,1998

AGM 2001, 2005, 2007

AGM 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013

Minutes League Council meeting	3 April 1993
Minutes League Council meeting	14 August 1993
Minutes League Council meeting	6 November 1993
Minutes League Council meeting	12 February 1994
Minutes League Council meeting	7 May 1994
Minutes League Council meeting	20 August 1994
Minutes League Council meeting	5 November 1994
Minutes League Council meeting	11 February 1995
Minutes League Council meeting	6 May 1995
Minutes League Council meeting	19 August 1995
Minutes League Council meeting	11 November 1995
Minutes League Council meeting	24 February 1996
Minutes League Council meeting	18 May 1996
Minutes League Council meeting	24 August 1996
Minutes League Council meeting	9 November 1996
Minutes League Council meeting	1 February 1997
Minutes League Council meeting	26 April 1997
Minutes League Council meeting	16 August 1997
Minutes League Council meeting	8 November 1997
Minutes League Council meeting	7 February 1998
Minutes Competitions Committee	11 July 1992
Minutes Competitions Committee	19 August 1992
Minutes Competitions Committee	23 August 1992
Minutes Competitions Committee	15 March 1993

## **Press releases**

### **1994**

- October Notice of Scottish University's semi-final
- November Notice of Scottish League Cup Final  
Notice of International Indoor soccer Championship

### **1995**

- May Photo call for Scotland v Australia
- Undated Notice of Summer cup & U13 festival
- 8th June Notice of U18 league
- Undated Notice of Summer Soccer Camp 7 – 11 August

### **1995 Cont.**

- Undated Notice of Gothia Cup in Sweden 15th to 23rd July
- 10th August Notice of launch of new strip (including fashion parade
- 27th August Notice of Arsenal tour
- 14th September Script of potential radio mention
- 5th October Notice re 'Goals for Girls' – conference to discuss future of girls football in Scotland

### **1996**

- 8th Jan Notice of photo opportunity & announcement – one-year sponsorship of the 1995/6 Scottish Cup – with Scottish Blend
- Undated Notice of Belgium V Scotland in Women's Euro  
Championship
- May Notice of women on SFA A introductory course
- July Notice of BP U16 Summer camp & Tournament
- December Notice of tour to Brazil by Scotland team

### **1997**

- Undated Notice re Australian Schools tour
- 24th March Notice re SWFA squad to meet Scotland Squad – that is the  
men's
- Undated Notice re matches and take over responsibility by SFA of  
national teams



SFA report - Football Development for Girls and Women in Scotland –  
Development Plan 1999- 2003 by Vera Pauw and Sheila  
Begbie

SFA Report Women's Football in Scotland – Annual Report 1999

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## Appendix 1

Brief biographies of the contributors to provide context for their testimonies, covering the dates they were involved in women's football and the roles they had. The dates of involvement start with time they joined a formal club. These are given in alphabetical order in relation to family name. Details of the dates of the oral history testimonies are given in the bibliography.

### Narrators:

#### **Marion Barclay**

Involved in the 1970s and early 1980s.  
Played at elite club level and for the SWNT.<sup>332</sup>  
Moved to Canada and continued to play there.

#### **Sheila Begbie**

Involved from the 1970s to mid-2010s.  
Played at club level and captained the SWNT.  
  
Worked for team sport Scotland as head of girls' and women's football development and then moved to take a similar role at the Scottish Football Association.  
  
She was assistant national coach and advisory committee member for the SWF.

#### **Elsie Cook**

Involved in the 1960s and 1970s.  
Played at elite club level.  
Managed the SWNT.  
First secretary of the SWFA.

#### **Kate Cooper**

Involved from the 1980s to date.  
Played at elite club level.  
Was volunteer committee member for SWF.  
Current club coach for SWFL club.

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<sup>332</sup> The term club is used throughout the appendix, for both clubs and single teams. The term elite is used to denote a team / club that played at highest standard as there were not elite levels per se throughout the sixty years. SWNT is used to denote playing for the national squad, even where that is prior to formal recognition of women's football or affiliation to the Scottish Football Association.

<b>Heather Dunn</b>	<p>Involved in the 1970s.</p> <p>Played at semi-serious club level.</p> <p>Qualified as a referee.</p>
<b>Fiona Edwards</b>	<p>Involved in the 1980s and 1990s.</p> <p>Played at semi-serious club level.</p> <p>Qualified as referee.</p> <p>Treasurer for the SWFA.</p>
<b>Linda Gellatly</b>	<p>Involved in the 1970s and 1980s.</p> <p>Played at elite club level and for SWNT.</p>
<b>Magi Hamilton</b>	<p>Involved from the 1970s to 1990s.</p> <p>Played at semi-serious club level.</p> <p>Coached youth football.</p> <p>Chair of the SWFA in early 1990s.</p>
<b>Pauline Harvey</b>	<p>Involved from 1990s to 2019.</p> <p>Played at elite and semi-serious level clubs.</p>
<b>Chris Henderson</b>	<p>Involved in the 1980s.</p> <p>Played at elite club level.</p>
<b>Emma Hunter</b>	<p>Involved from the 1980s to date.</p> <p>Played at elite club level and age group SWNT.</p> <p>Current co-coach of SWPL club.</p>
<b>Jane Legget</b>	<p>Involved in Scotland in 1970s and 1980s.</p> <p>Played at elite level club and for SWNT.</p>

<b>Kerry Kennedy</b>	<p>Involved from 1990s to date.</p> <p>Played at semi-serious level club.</p> <p>Qualified as coach.</p> <p>Currently working in regional development role with the SFA.</p>
<b>Jennifer Malone</b>	<p>Involved in the early 1990s and then 2000s to date</p> <p>Played at clubs from all three levels.</p> <p>Currently working in regional manager role with the SFA.</p>
<b>Margaret McAulay</b>	<p>Involved from 1960s to early 1980s.</p> <p>Played at elite club level and captained SWNT for first international match in 1972.</p> <p>Qualified as coach and coached 5-a-side teams</p>
<b>Amy McDonald</b>	<p>Involved from 1990s to date.</p> <p>Played at elite club level and with the SWNT.</p> <p>Qualified as a coach.</p> <p>Currently head coach for a club in the SWPL.</p>
<b>Pauline McDonald</b>	<p>Involved from 1980s to date.</p> <p>Played at elite club level in Scotland, England and the USA.</p> <p>Captained SWNT.</p> <p>Qualified as coach</p> <p>Currently working as manager of U17 national squad with the SFA.</p>
<b>Maureen McGonigle</b>	<p>Involved from the early 1990s to mid-2010s</p> <p>First administrator at SWFA/SWF.</p>

<b>Fiona McIntyre</b>	Involved from 1990s to date Played at semi-serious club level. Was first paid Executive Officer at SWF. Just appointed Head of Girls' and Women's Football at SFA.
<b>Vivienne McLaren</b>	Involved from early 2010s to date SWF board member and current chair of the board.
<b>Diane Robertson</b>	Involved in the 1970s and 1980s. Played at elite club level and for SWNT.
<b>Maureen Simms</b>	Involved from 1990s to 2010s. Played at elite club level.
<b>Jean Stewart</b>	Involved in the late 1960s and early 1970s Played at elite club level.
<b>Susan Williams</b>	Involved mid-1970s through to early 1990s Played at semi-serious club level.
<b>Contributors:</b>	
<b>Laura Montgomery</b>	Involved from 1990s to date Played at elite level. Co-founder of Glasgow City F.C.
<b>Carol Anne Stewart</b>	Involved from 1990s to date. Played at semi-serious level Co-founder of Glasgow City F.C.

**Rose Reilly**                      Involved from 1960s to 1980s  
Played at elite level in Scotland, France and Italy.  
Played for SWNT and captained Italy's national team.

**Narrators:**

**Colin Brown**                      Involved early 1980s to date  
Founder of Forfar Farmington  
Long term committee member of SWFA/SWF

**Tommy Malcolm**                      Involved in mid-1980s and early 1990s  
Coached two semi-serious clubs  
Volunteer for the SWFA, produced Miss Kicks  
newsletter.

**Niall Marshall**                      Involved from mid-2010s to date.  
Coach at semi-serious club.

## Appendix 2

Updated Information on the number of women's football teams from 1960 to 1974. Within the list of Aberdeenshire teams, a number appeared several times but others only once, within the newspapers examined.

Date	Teams previously written about	Teams identified from archive material	Aberdeenshire Teams identified from newspaper archive
1960 - 1963	Cambuslang Hooverettes Glasgow Gay XI Holyrood Bumbees Johnston Red Rockets, Fife Dynamites Stewarton Thistle Tayside Toppers		Kingussie Snowdrops
1964 - 1969	Aberdeen Prima Donnas Edinburgh Dynamos Motherwell AEI Westthorn United (who were the Glasgow Gay XI)	Alexander Bus Company LFC	Alford Amazons Baxter's Belles Black Rock belles Cross & Blackwell women's team Dunecht Factory Dazzles Forres Flamingoes
1970 - 1974	Dundee Strikers Wishaw Jags	Airdrie Arbroath LFC Ayr Rebels Dunfermline Ladies East Fife Harmony Row Monklands LFC Timex Tickers West End LFC	Huntley Hotshots Lossie lambs Lossiemouth women's team MacFisheries ladies Maconchies MacMarvels Nairn kestrels Rob Roy Rovers Red Devils Grantown Tarves women

## Appendix 3

### League Details

Through the research it has been possible to complete details of many of the leagues from 1974/5 through to 2020/21. There is insufficient space to record them all here but the details have been uploaded onto the Facebook page aligned with the research. This will enable the start of an ongoing dialogue with the wider football community.

Presented here are the two ends of the spectrum of development in structured women's football with leagues from 1974/75 and 2020/21.

League table from 1974/5 , the 10 teams shown alphabetically as no data on final league positions

<b>League Teams 1974/5</b>
Aberdeen Prima Donnas
Arbroath Rangers
Dundee Strikers
Dunfermline ladies
East Fife
Edinburgh Dynamos
Monkland ladies
Motherwell AEI
West end
Westthorn

and the leagues for 2020/21 with 82 teams in two levels – performance and recreational



Premier League season ongoing, teams shown alphabetically.

<b>SWPL1</b>	<b>SWPL2</b>
Celtic	Aberdeen
Forfar Farmington	Boroughmuir Thistle
Glasgow City	Dundee United
Heart of Midlothian	Glasgow Women
Hibernian	Hamilton Academical
Motherwell	Kilmarnock
Rangers	Partick Thistle
Spartans	Queen's Park
-	St Johnstone
-	Stirling University

Championship season interrupted due to Covid-19; teams shown alphabetically.

<b>Championship North</b>	<b>Championship South</b>
Buchan	Airdrie
Cove Rangers	Ayr United
Dryburgh Athletic	BSC Glasgow
Dundee West	Clyde
Dunfermline Athletic	Edinburgh Caledonia
East Fife	Edinburgh City
Grampian	Falkirk
Inverness Caledonian Thistle	Gartcairn
Kelty Hearts	Livingston
Montrose	Morton
Stonehaven	Renfrew
Westdyke	St Mirren
	Stenhousemuir
	United Glasgow

SWFL season delayed due to Covid-19, teams are shown alphabetically.

<b>Scottish Women's Football League</b>		
<b>Central / South East</b>	<b>North / East</b>	<b>West / South West</b>
Blackburn United	Bayside	Annan Athletic Women
Border Ladies	Buchan	Ayr United Football Academy
Linlithgow Rose	Dryburgh Athletic	Bishopton
Lothian Ladies	East Fife Development	Clark Drive Girls
Motherwell	Jeanfield Swifts WFC	Griffnock
Murieston United	Leven	Gleniffer Thistle
Murrayfield Ladies	Raith Rovers	Harmony Row
Musselburgh Windsor	Westdyke Dee Vale Girls	Kilwinning
Rutherglen Girls	-	Mid Annandale Ladies
West Park United	-	Millennium
-	-	Queen of the South Ladies
-	-	Stewarton United

Highlands and Islands League delayed due to Covid-19; teams shown alphabetically.

<b>Highlands and Islands League</b>
Brora Rangers
Buckie Ladies Development
Caithness Ladies
Clachnacuddin
Inverness Caledonian Thistle Development
Kirkwall City
Nairn St Ninian
Sutherland Women's Football Club
Orkney

## **Appendix 4**

### **Reporting and Outreach**

#### **Journal articles**

Fraser, K (2020) 'Sisters doing it for themselves: the rich history of women's football in Scotland from the 1960s to 2020', *Sport in History*, 40(4), pp. 456-481

#### **Academic presentations**

From charity fundraising to qualifying for the UEFA Women's Euro 2017: Mapping and Archiving Women's Football in Scotland from 1960 to the present. Paper presented at Arts and Humanities PGR Conference, University of Stirling, May 2017.

"Researching Women's Football in Scotland", paper presented at *Kick off! Engaging with Scotland's sporting heritage* conference, Hampden Park Stadium, Glasgow, February 2018.

"Against the Run of Play: The persistence of women's football in Scotland from the 1960's" paper presented at *International Football History Conference*, Manchester June 2018

Sisters doing it for themselves: Women's Football in Scotland from 1960 to 2018 paper presented at the *Football Collective conference: Challenging the Narrative* October 2018, Hampden Park Stadium, Glasgow

#### **Public lectures**

The History of Women's Football in Scotland – short talk given at the Women of the World (WOW) event, October 2017, Perth, Scotland.

The History of Women's Football in Scotland – talk given at an event run by local women's football club to celebrate International Women's Day, 2018, Hampden Park Stadium, Glasgow.

Talks on the history of women's football in Scotland given at Hearts Football club, March 2019 and Kilmarnock Football club, May 2019. Talks were to the girls' youth teams to begin the process of raising awareness of pathbreakers. At Kilmarnock, this was assisted by the presence of Elsie Cook and Rose Reilly in the audience.

## **Interviews**

The author has taken part in the radio programme 'Our story – Scottish Women's Football' with Mark Stephen

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0722ts5/p0722sym> Last accessed April 12 2021.

The author took part in the Purple TV Rose Reilly documentary *Rose Reilly* (2019)

<http://www.purpletv.tv/programmes/RoseReilly>

## **Everything to Play for Conference**

The author organised a one-day conference on the subject of women's football, past, present and future, held at Hampden Park Stadium on International Women's Day, 2019. The conference was a joint venture between Scottish Women's Football, the Scottish Football Museum and the University of Stirling.

This was the first conference on women's football in Scotland for nearly twenty-five years and the first ever to be held at Hampden Stadium. It further amplified women's voices by having women compare, present and make up panel discussions.

The conference was dedicated to Dr Kat Lindner in recognition of her contribution to women's football in Scotland.

<https://www.stir.ac.uk/news/2019/03/womens-football-conference-kicks-off-on-international-womens-day/>

## **Other Projects**

The author has been working with the SFA to identify and locate women who played with the SWNT but were not awarded caps due to lack of recognition and affiliation of the SWFA to the SFS. The first women were presented with their caps pitch side before the Jamacia friendly match. Other work on this is currently on hold due to Covid-19 but it is hoped it will resume later in the year.

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/first-ever-scots-womens-team-16216930>

The author is currently working with a television production company on a potential drama about Elsie Cook.