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Sporting Reunions, Contemporary Collections and Collective Biographies: A Case Study Harry Batt's '71 England Team

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Introduction

As befits its status as the world's most popular team sport, football has fared better than most other sports and disciplines in its coverage of academic titles.¹ In the twenty first century, increasingly public sites of soccer have also made women and girls contribution to football more easily available to wider audiences.² From 2016-2018, an eighteen-month Arts Council England funded project, delivered by the National Football Museum, researched and re-interpreted its women's football collection. The Chris Ungar collection was purchased in 2015 from a private collector and covered the women's game internationally from the late nineteenth century to 2015. The documentation process gave curatorial and academic staff the time to explore and research the material, making connections between objects and giving a revised focus to future collection policies. Documentation was the essential first step in opening up a collection for public engagement and academic research. This now forms part of the National Football Museum's permanent collection given designated collection status by the Arts Council in 2014. This recognises the National Football Museum's collection as one of outstanding resonance, national significance and quality.

Having been selected as the academic lead to The National Football Museum to assist with the purchase approximately 6,000 item Chris Ungar collection of women's football memorabilia, Jean Williams subsequently worked with the museum to interpret the collection.³ Given that Williams has contended that, until this point, oral history was an essential methodology to research the women's game, given the lack of archival material in key world collections, including the FIFA archive in Zurich, the UEFA archive in Nyon, and the FIFA collection at the National Football Museum, this appointment marked a radical opportunity to reappraise what kinds of history museums of football should be exploring and presenting, and, by extension, other museums which feature, or are solely dedicated to, sport.⁴

This work then links three related, but distinct, areas of academic debate. The first of these is the relationship between academics and sporting museums, and how collaboration between museum professionals and academic colleagues can begin to address a traditional divide between the two professions.⁵ So the details of the collaboration and innovation provide an exemplar for how other sporting museums might address issues of gender, in the footfall of their visitors, and more generally encourage diversity. By providing wider access to the Ungar material, the National Football Museum has contributed to increased debate and exploration of the tournament's significance amongst the international academic

community. The Museum hosted its first academic conference focusing on the history and heritage of the women's game to mark International Women's Day 8 March 2018, at which there were several papers and discussion about this tournament and its role in challenging stereotypes around gender and football in Mexico and beyond.⁶

A second key issue arising out of what is now undoubtedly the most important global collection of women's football items, dating back to 1869, was the need to develop contemporary collections for future use. Most of the objects in the collection pertain to men's and boy's football, but this is slowly changing. The need to engage with the women who played in Mexico and other important international tournaments outside the auspices of FIFA, and whose personal histories and memorabilia can help challenge the existing narratives around women's football, inspired our initiative to re-unite women involved in football between 1945 and 1993. Using Sporting Heritage Day as a hook, the Museum opened up its doors to all women engaged in football in this period. Sports museums, as custodians of primary material and with access to public spaces are the natural home for public engagement of this kind. To further address this, and to acknowledge that the museum is a physical space, as well as represented by a collection, Williams and the National Football Museum held a reunion of women football players, over 2 days on 30 September and 1 October 2018 to mark National Sporting Heritage day.⁷ Over fifty women attended the inaugural event, proving the interest in such social strategies.

Thirdly then, this work addresses the concern of some academics that the public history, as displayed in sporting museums is too uncritical and celebratory. As Jeff Hill has said 'Contrary to what many people seem to believe, there is no fixed content to 'the past. What we remember and study from the past- in other words what we constitute as 'history' is infinitely variable and, what is more contestable.⁸ One of the most important discoveries of documentation in the Ungar collection was material relating to the development of international women's football in the 1970s. The collection contained magazines, newspapers, photographs and rich ephemera sources relating to the 1971 Women's World Championship held in Mexico.

The reunion, the first of its kind in the UK, sought out those active as players, administrators and other related development roles (coaches, strength and conditioning specialists, psychologists, referees) before 1993 when the FA formally took control of women's football. One of the key teams to be reunited was Harry Batt's England team who represented their country, albeit unofficially, at the Women's World Cup in Mexico in 1971. There were also important England players who attended, including Captain Gill Coultard, who has 119 England caps, and Kerry Davies who scored 44 goals in 80 full senior England women's games. Many of the Manchester Corinthians FC team attended, whose eldest member at the reunion was 84 years of age and had been part of the founding of the club in 1949. Of course, the wider reunion will be the focus of future work. However, this work highlights the previously little understood unofficial England women's team to represent the country at the Mexico 1971 Women's World Cup. Importantly, the players themselves were made visible to

one another and a wider audience, via BBC television interviews, radio and business coverage as a result. So using the museum as a physical space, along with the authority of a national collection designation, gave a value to the reunion that other spaces would not have conferred. A civic reception at Manchester's Lord Mayor's office further cemented this public recognition. But why was 1971 so significant?

Held out side the auspices of FIFA only one year after Mexico hosted the men's world cup, this was a key moment in the history of women's football because it proved a large commercial market for women-only tournaments. This built upon a successful Women's World Championship in Italy in 1970 and amplified the business case for women's football as a lucrative draw. The opening games in Mexico were played in front of crowds of 80,000 people. England played against Argentina, and hosts Mexico in the group stages, losing to France in the fifth and sixth place play offs. Using the memories of players at the reunion, some as young as thirteen, and the academic literature on sporting museums, archives and collections, the discussion first outlines what we currently know about the organization of the tournament, and then pulls together a collective biography of the England team. Subsequently, the discussion argues that, because of the historic marginalization of women in written documentation in sporting archives, social strategies, such as reunions, combined with oral history research and social media connectivity can help to develop contemporary collections policies in museums and heritage offers.⁹ This, it is argued, has been marginalized by the current academic literature on sporting museums, and in the emergent literature on sporting memories and working with older populations in therapeutic situations.

The Organisation of the Unofficial Women's World Cups of 1970 and 1971

When FIFA, the world governing body of football, announced that its national associations should take control of the women's game, and that of girls, in 1969 change was slow. However, in 1969 in England the Women's Football Association was formed (WFA) and affiliated to the Football Association (FA) on the same basis as a County FA. However, outside of officially FIFA or FA sanctioned competitions, women's football had become attractive to business interests. During 1969 a Federation of Independent European Female Football (FIEFF), was formed and invited Harry Batt to form an England team, to attend a representative tournament in Turin, during November that year.¹⁰

Striker Sue Lopez was selected along with her other Southampton colleagues, including goalkeeper Sue Buckett, defenders Jill Long and Barbara Birkett, and forward Dot Cassell. Lopez was signed to Roma as a direct result of her higher profile in the Turin event, though to escape the WFA bans that were handed out to both Batt and players associated with him, she was careful to play as a full time amateur. Nevertheless, she remembered Turin as groundbreaking and setting the principles that would later be replicated in Mexico:

It was a thrill to play foreign opponents on some of the best pitches in Italy. All the grounds were excellent and the same ones used by the

professional men's teams. The crowds of 10,000 plus were beyond anything we had experienced. We felt elated to have been part of such an exciting tournament, after the small-scale events in England, to find everything taken more seriously. It was how we imagined that male professional players were treated, with nice hotels, beautiful venues and respect, especially from the press.¹¹

The English team, Lopez reported, shared hotel rooms with the Danish squad, represented by club-side Femina, who beat England 4-3 in their match.¹² England went on to win the third place play off against France, and the hosts Italy beat Denmark in the final. Biographer Hans Krabbe has recently published a collective biography of the Danish team who would go on to win in Mexico in 1971. As a legacy though, this four-team European tournament paved the way for an expanded enterprise, and, with South American participation, the FIEFF name was dropped in favour of a more ambitious organisation called International Federation of Feminin Football (FIFF).

In February 1970, with the creation of the International Federation of Feminin Football (FIFF), an organising committee included Dr Vinicio Lucci, Dr Marco Rambaiddi, Dr Domenico Rambaiddi, Giuseppe Constantino and Claudio Seroco. At the 1970 unofficial women's world cup in Italy, teams from Austria, Denmark, England, Italy, West Germany, Mexico, and Switzerland competed. Mexico received a special invitation to attend, though it remains unclear how, or why, the contacts were made. France had to retire from the tournament and Czechoslovakia also were not able to attend due to visa problems, according to the Mexican press.¹³ On the 7 July Mexico beat Austria 9-0 in Vari, with goals from Alicia Vargas (four), Maria Eugenia Rubio (2), Patricia Hernandez (2), Elsa Huerta. England beat Germany 5-1. The next day, Italy were victorious by two goals to nil over Switzerland in Naples, and Denmark beat Germany 6-1 in Milan. On the tenth of July, Denmark beat England 2-0 in Milan, with Italy defeating Mexico 2-1, with Italian goals by Elena Schiavo. This left England fourth to Mexico after a playoff, with England losing by 2 goals to Mexico's 3. In front of a crowd of 40,000 in Turin, Denmark won the final by 2-0 over the hosts.¹⁴

However, neither Lopez nor Buckett travelled in 1970 due to pressure from the FA. The rest of the players were mainly Chiltern Valley and this may have been pragmatic, and, though Batt appears to have looked at other team players it is unclear why Fodens or Manchester Corinthians players were not invited to a trial, as the 1970 squad had some players other than Chiltern Valley. Maybe this was just due to logistics. The England squad were: Paula Rayner, Val Reid, Kath Everitt, Angela King, June Foulke, Joan Briggs, Jill Stockley, Sue Knowles, Trudy McCaffery, Valerie Cheshire, Louise Cross, Dot Cassell, Janice Seymour, Jill Long, Marion Crook and, playing at number 10, striker Barbara Dolling.

After the first unofficial women's world cup in July 1970, a two-day conference, on 5th and 6th December 1970, in the Ambassador's Hotel Torino, Italy, convened the first world congress of the International Federation of Femenin Football (FIFF).¹⁵ The participants were often just referred to by surname but, were led by Jaime de Haro, a dynamic entrepreneur and sports enthusiast. From

the available information to date, other members included Helmuth Goldsmieth of Austria; Korsuize of The Netherlands; Mazzoni of Italy; Harry Batt of England; Hans Gunther Hansen of Germany; Stuby of Switzerland; Fernando Quevedo of Spain; Manelich Quintero of Mexico; Franco Talanco of Martini Rossi International and of the Organising Committee of the Second World Championship of Femenin Football from Mexico. Also assisting was Madame Geoffrey of France.

The Directors of the Mexico congress included Dr Lucci, who was the president, the vice president, Mr Zamparelli; Professor Marisa Bachet; Dr Piero Boero; Dr Ferraro; Dr Saraco; Mr Rambauddi; Mrs Canceron, and the Secretary Mr Alfredo di Stadio. Professor Efrain Perez, and Manelich Quintera also joined the central committee, accountancy was led by Gustavo Rubio Alcalde and renowned sports journalist Raoul Sanchez Hidalgo provided media advice, along with Teodoro Cario and Juan Garcia Vasquez. It would seem that Germany, Spain and Switzerland were also prepared to host the tournament, but were not selected in favour of Mexico. The discussion also centred on the effects of altitude, and medical opinion was helped by a visit made by the Italian side to Mexico in October 1970 to assess the degree of public interest in women's football. The Italian players had no clear side effects, and the two friendly games drew crowds of 30,000 and 70,000 respectively, so proved a viable commercial market. This was a carefully arranged business enterprise, with developments made as a result of the early test matches.

After choosing Mexico as hosts, FIFF agreed to give four Europe berths and two South American places to the Finals, essentially leaving one spot available alongside the hosts. Eleven European countries applied for the elimination competition: Austria, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, England, France, Italy, The Netherlands, West Germany, Sweden and Switzerland. In South America, Brazil, Chile and Peru applied for funds to the qualifiers. Denmark eliminated Switzerland 5-0 to qualify, France despatched The Netherlands 4-0 and England equalled this score, to end Austria's hopes. France qualified automatically as Czechoslovakia again suffered from visa problems. Argentina went to Mexico of the other interested South America nations, after defeating Costa Rica to qualify. The Aztec stadium Mexico City, and the Jalisco Stadium Guadalajara were obtained as the sites of the games.

Following the use of an official mascot, World Cup Willie, in a world cup for the first time in the men's World Cup in England 1966, thereafter, sporting tournaments of all kinds used a mascot to promote their event, including unofficially at the 1968 Winter Olympics in Grenoble.¹⁶ However, Mexico played a key role in promoting mascots as emblems of various tournaments: there was an unofficial dove and jaguar mascot at the 1968 Mexico Olympic Games, and Juanito, a little boy in football boots and a sombrero, for the FIFA men's World Cup tournament of 1970. Following these recent innovations in selling football tournaments, even to those who could not enter the stadia in person, the mascot for the unofficial Women's World Cup in Mexico in 1971 would be Xochitl, or flower. This was widely used and merchandise included ticket stubs, enamel pin

badges, penants, paper collectibles, and merchandise endorsed by the diet and soft drinks industries, as well as Martini and Rosso.

The FIFF tournament trophy 'Angel de Oro' or the Angel of Gold, was also sponsored by Martini and Rosso. There was an elaborate Opening Ceremony led by the Band of The City of Mexico, and followed by several others bands and speeches. Festivities went on through the tournament: firework displays were ignited, groups of children from local schools and colleges processed, groups of motor cyclists from the Department of Transport performed, songs were sung in traditional costume and recitals performed on regional instruments. The closing ceremony was no less lavish, led principally by Tony Aguilar and his horse, accompanied by dancers, gymnasts, and a lit by a host of torches. The cheapest seats, Azul Popular, were \$30 Mexican, the next category Amarilla were \$100 Mexican, the discerning could sit in covered Verde seats for \$200 Mexican and the well to do could enjoy Naranja hospitality for \$330.¹⁷

Group A, played between 15 and 22 August in Mexico City comprised Argentina, England and Mexico. The players for Argentina were: Martha Soler, Carmen Brucoli, Ofelia Feito, Teresa Suárez, Zumilda Troncoso, Zulma Gómez, Eva Senbezis, Angélica Cardozo, Bety García, Elba Selvo, Bianca Brucoli, Dora Gutiérrez, Mariá Esther Ponce, Mariá Fiorelli, Virginia Cattaneo, Mariá Bowes and Virginia Andrada.¹⁸ The England squad were: Louise Cross, Trudy McCaffery, Jill Stockley, Leah Caleb, Paula Rayner, Valerie Cheshire, Jean Breckon, Carol Wilson, Lilian Harris, Janice Barton, Christine Lockwood, Yvonne Farr, Marlene Collins, Gillian Sayell, Maureen Dawson and trainer Pat Dunn. As well as Harry and June Batt, their on Keith was the England team mascot. Mexico was represented by: Yolanda Ramírez Gutiérrez, Elvira Aracen Sánchez, Irma Chávez Barrera, Martha Coronado Díaz, Bertha Orduña Padierna, Paula Pérez, Rebecca Lara Pérez Tejada, Mariá de la Luz Cruz Martínez, Guadalupe Tovar Ugalde, Elsa Huerta Mendez, Sandra Tapia Montoya, Irma Mancilla, Alicia Vargas, Mariá Hernández Montoya, Patricia Hernández Montoya, Teresa Aguilar Alvarado, Silvia Zaragoza Herrera, Mariá Eugenia Rubio Ríos, Erendira Rangel and Esther Mora.

In Group B, played between 18 and 22 August in Guadalajara, the French team were: Marie Luise Butzing, Monique Hilaire, Regine Pourveux, Marie Bernadette Thomas, Nicole Mangas, Chantal Serre, Colette Guyard, Aline Meyer, Marie Christine Tschopp, Betty Goret, Michele Monier, Ghislane Royer, Claudine Die, Maryse Lesieur, Joselyne Henry, Joselyne Ratignier, Armelle Binard, and managed by Pierre and Christiane Geoffroy, who also ran the Stade de Reims female teams in Epernay. The Denmark line-up was Ann Andreasen, Susanne Augustesen, Annette Frederiksen, Ingrid Hansen, Helen Hansen, Solveig Hansen, Bente Jensen, Mona Lisa Jensen, Marianne Kamp, Birte Kjems, Lis Lene Nielsen, Lone Grete Nielsen. Asta Vig Nielsen, Lis Westberg Pedersen, Inger Pedersen, Lena Schelfe, Kristiane Jensen, Jorgen Andreasen and Inge Kristensen. The Italian side comprised: Wilma Schetti, Anna Stopar, Mariá Fabris, Paola Cardia, Manuela Pinardi, Elena Schiavo, Silvana Mammaia, Manola Conter, Maurizia Ciceri, Claudia Avon, Elisabetta Vignotto, Derna Isoline, Daniela Sogliani, Aurora

Giubertoni, Rosetta Cunzolo, Mariá Rosaria Castelli and Carmela Varone, managed and coached by Giuseppe Cavicchi, Piero Boero, Andrea Patomo and Giuseppe Cosetina.

England were defeated in each of their games, scoring a single goal. But they played in front of crowds of 80,000 and were no less popular as a losing team. Denmark defeated Argentina 5-0 in the semi finals. France had a goalless tournament and Mexico defeated Italy 2-1 in the semi finals, to meet Denmark in the Final. The star players included Elena Schiavo, the captain of Italy, who played her club football at Astro, and her compatriots Wilma Seghetti (Verona), Manuela Pinardi (Parma), Maurizia Ciceri, Claudia Averì and Maria Castelli (Real Torino). Unsurprisingly though, perhaps the most famous star in 1971 was Alicia 'Pele' Vargas for Mexico, along with Carmen Alacanter Silvia Zaragozza, Maria Eugenia Rubio, Irma Mancilla and Erendira Rangel. The Mexican players, especially Vargas, have spoken about the pressure they felt to win on home soil.¹⁹ But it was not to be As Denmark won over the hosts in the Final, fifteen year old Susanne Augustesen scored a hat trick, in a 3-0 victory. She then went on to a professional career in Italy.

The England players, having travelled by Aeronaves airlines, via New York were the first to arrive in Mexico. Carol Wilson, the captain and a defender, as in Italy, was aged 19 and popular also with the press, along with the England star forward Janice Barton. What is striking, is how young most of the England team were: Lilian Harris the goalkeeper 19; defender Evonne Farr was 19; midfielders, Christine Lockwood was aged 15, Trudy McCaffery was 17, Marlene Collins 20; forwards Leah Caleb and Gillian Sayle were 14, Paula Rayner was 16, as was Lois Cross. The eldest player was twenty-four. Being a Beatles fan singled out McCaffery for attention, and Jean Brecken, who lost a finger in an accident with a goalnet, was also popular with the press. But what were the experiences of the youngest of the England players, and how do they now view their experiences?

A Collective Biography of Three Youngest England '71 team Players

Leah Caleb: oral history interview

My parents were May and Dermot Caleb and my older siblings, Mary and Derry. I was born in April 1958 in Dublin, Ireland and came to Luton, England in 1961 aged 3. My parents throughout my life were always very supportive of my sporting interests. My football connection started at Hitchin Road Infants School. The playground was rather small and the boys always played football. Rather than stand watching, many of the girls joined in. I quickly realised I enjoyed playing and at such a young age could compete with the boys so it was a natural progression to continue playing. At my next school, St Matthews Junior School, my headmaster tried to get the Local Authority to agree for me to play in the boy's school football team. Unfortunately as was the case at that time, football was not 'for girls' and they would not agree for me to play. Hours were spent in the garden practicing keeping the ball up, dribbling all becoming part of my

natural sporting psyche. I developed my football growing up at school in the playground and in the park with the boys. Alongside my football I did other sports, hockey, netball, swimming, cross-country, athletics all being an important part of my early and later life.

My mother was made aware of a women's football club and at the age of eleven I joined Chiltern Valley Ladies Football Club in Luton. Chiltern Valley was a successful team and managed by Harry and June Batt who, following a discussion with my parents, chose me, at the age of thirteen, for the Sicily and Mexico 71 England squads.

Sicily hosted the preliminaries in June 1971 to qualify for the Women's World Cup in Mexico, both exciting, but two very different experiences. We travelled on an overnight train to Sicily and were taken by coach to our destinations which entailed a triangular trip to, Trapani, Catania and Syracuse. Both events were sponsored by Martini Rossi. We qualified for the World Cup.

For a thirteen year old girl the Mexico trip was life changing, an experience beyond comprehension. Crowds up to 100,000 in the Aztec Stadium watched this Women's World Cup. We did not win the tournament but the interest in us, both as individuals and as a squad, alongside the warmth of the Mexican people towards us, was incredible. The Mexico experience included, my first long haul flight; staying at the Hotel Royal Plaza; TV experiences; autograph requests; police escorts to games; evening engagements; attending a reception at the British Ambassador's residency for a cocktail evening; theatre; going to the Piccadilly Pub and, during the daytime, visiting *The Herald* Newspaper offices; a Toy Department Store; sightseeing trips to the Teotihuacan Pyramids; going to the Xochimilco canals and during several of these events, sometimes being serenaded by the Mariachi musicians. After training we were taken to a Sports Club to relax enjoying swimming and tennis. So much of this was captured in the daily newspapers, these now being an important part of our memorabilia. This was such a surreal time with many treasured memories. I was sometimes referred to as Xochitl (flower) which was the name of the tournament mascot; I assume this was due to my youth and long dark hair. To play in the Aztec Stadium, where the year before the men's World Cup had been played, in itself was unbelievable. England men and Pele had walked through the same tunnel and played on the same turf! It was such an honour and a privilege.

On returning from Mexico there was a short period when the WFA banned us from playing and Harry and June Batt were ostracised. Chiltern Valley Ladies Football Club eventually folded. Christine Lockwood and I continued to play football with the boys in the park and then with Valerie Cheshire joined Luton Daytels Ladies Football Club in 1972 where my passion for playing football continued until I finished playing in 1991. Now revisiting my football career and recognising my achievements within the sport has been extremely rewarding. Having played competitive football all over Britain with four very successful clubs, winning 50 plus trophies in 11 and 5-a-side leagues and tournaments and also making lifelong friends demonstrates the strength of ladies football as a team sport. There was no financial support during this time and our passion for football was funded by the players themselves. The clubs I have played for: Chiltern Valley Ladies 1969-1972; Luton Daytels Ladies 1972-1978; Aylesbury Ladies 1978-1983 (reuniting me with Gill Sayell from the Mexico '71 squad), and Biggleswade Utd Ladies 1983-1989.

I feel Harry and June Batt should be recognised for their contribution to Women's football not only in England but abroad taking teams to Italy, Sicily and Mexico. These are historic milestones. My parents always supported my sporting passion and gave their blessing for me to play football abroad in 1971 at such a young age, first Sicily followed by the Women's World Cup in Mexico, for which I am eternally grateful.



Leah Caleb photograph taken in the Aztec Stadium a few days before the start of the tournament. Individuals from Left to Right:

Back row:

Keith Batt (Mascot), June Batt (Assistant Manager), Players - Marlene Collins, Lilian Harris (GK) Evonne Farr, Jean Breckon, Carol Wilson (Capt), Christine Lockwood, Jill Stockley, Pat Dunn (Trainer & Chaperone), Harry Batt (Manager)

Front Row:

Players - Valerie Cheshire, Louise Cross, Gillian Sayell, Paula Rayner, Janice Barton, Trudy McCaffery, Leah Caleb

Press cuttings about the England team from Leah Caleb's scrapbook



Chris Lockwood: oral history interview

I was born on a Tuesday 17th April 1956 in Bolton upon Dearne, Yorkshire. My Nan and Grandad had a farm so I had just the most fantastic childhood. Although

my sisters were not into sport, my cousins were all boys who, like myself, loved football. We used to play football and cricket in the farmyard with my uncles usually with a burst plastic ball or a cut up piece of wood and a bald tennis ball!

My family moved south to Luton in the early 1960s as my Dad got a job at Vauxhall Motors. My Mum and Dad were not really into sport, although Dad and I loved watching wrestling on ITV Sport and he occasionally took me to watch Luton Town play. I carried on loving playing football. I was always up waiting for my Dad to come home from night shift and I would be at the infant and junior school gates with my ball waiting for the caretaker to unlock the gate so I could play on the football pitch. Likewise at the end of school, me and the boys who played were there until the headmaster, Mr Best, left and locked the gate.

When I went to senior school I was not allowed to play football and was often banned from P.E. for kicking the ball. Once school was finished it was up to the local sports ground to play football with the lads. We were always there and, when dark, we played under the lamppost.

One day a girl at school asked me if I wanted to join a girls' football team. I didn't even know there were any other girls that played football. I turned up and joined but I was the only one who could really play so we joined a league and I went in goal just to keep the score down really.

I could actually play almost any position but although I was quite a natural goalkeeper, I hated it really. Chiltern Valley Ladies found out about me and after a bit of a rift eventually my club let me go. Chiltern Valley had really fantastic players and I felt very honoured to play for them. I was quite shy at that time and my first game was in goal at a five a side tournament in Buckingham. While I was sitting about, knowing nobody, a skinny little girl with a ponytail came up to me and said 'Do you want a kick about?' That girl was Leah Caleb who became a teammate for club and country and a lifelong friend. We also won the tournament!

I managed to get games on the pitch as well as in goal and I was very happy to be playing alongside such a great team. We often won the league championship, and also various cups and tournaments. Sundays were just fantastic with great football, camaraderie and visits to different parts of the country.

Chiltern Valley manager Harry Batt was a very astute man and very supportive of the game. He had contacts within the international circuit. He had taken a team abroad before I had joined. In 1971, when I was fifteen years of age, Harry and his wife June asked my parents if I could represent England unofficial team in Sicily for the World Cup Qualifiers. My parents agreed and I went there for about three weeks, where we qualified. Upon returning Harry and June told my parents the Italians were interested in me playing goalkeeper semi professionally. I was too young and I remember I wasn't really bothered about it, maybe as I wasn't comfortable with being a goalkeeper.

Later in the year I was picked for the England unofficial squad for 1971 Women's World Cup in Mexico City, by which time I was playing up front but also back up goalkeeper, if required.

Upon arrival in Mexico, it was instant stardom. We were in the newspaper every day, invited to many functions at Embassies and theatres, and guests on TV. We were staying in a beautiful hotel with people waiting outside for autographs. We had police escorts to the training ground and games at the Aztec Stadium. The

crowds were 80,000 and 100,000. Our group games were against Argentina and Mexico in which we lost both matches.

Upon returning to England I recall we played for a while with Chiltern Valley but Harry and the club were to be banned by the WFA. So the team disbanded. Leah and I eventually joined Luton Daytels. I also started work in computer systems at Vauxhall Motors.

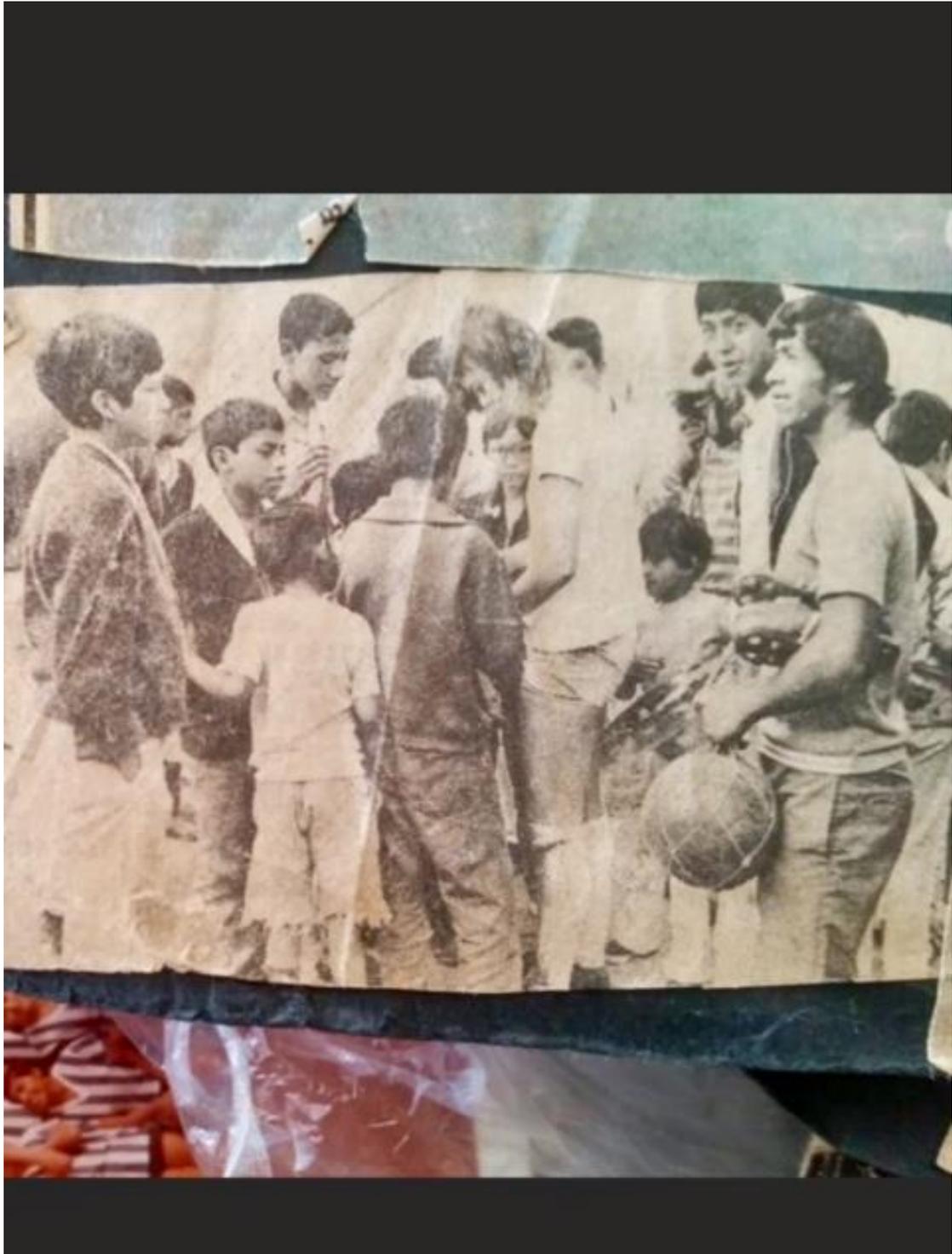
For some time I had been carrying an injury in my left knee. It wouldn't take much for it to start bleeding and it was always painful and there was a burning sensation. I had been to the doctor who said it was scar tissue and I should stop playing such a rough game! The Ex chairman of Chiltern Valley, Mr Impey, took me for a second opinion at Manor House Hospital in London. It turned out I had an ulcer embedded in my knee. I had an operation and was told I was not going to play again. I was heartbroken. The specialist agreed with me that if I didn't play at all for a year he would see how things were. It was a very long year! Thankfully David Bowie had come into my life.

I returned back to football after the all-clear and still could play to a high standard. After a while Tina Oliver, Leah and I signed for Aylesbury United where Leah and I reunited with Gill Sayell from the unofficial England squad. I was now playing central back in front of a sweeper which suited me very well by then. Aylesbury were a very successful team and we had many great achievements.

After a few years I eventually gave up playing in my late 20s. I was by then doing twelve-hour shifts on Unix support team and often wasn't turning up for training so it all went to pot really. In my career, I was Team Leader for unix based computer production systems for Vauxhall Motors and IBC Vehicles in Luton. It was IT support and also front line support in the offices and factory. I worked there for 39 years but with transitions from VM to EDS to Hewlett Packard.

Yes, I regret packing up so early but that's how it was. I would always say to anyone play as long as you can, as football is fantastic. As Leah, Gill and I have recently got together again to reminisce it is interesting to know all three of us were at different schools. I asked Leah and Gill if their school announced their achievement when they returned from Mexico. Their answer was the same as mine - 'no'.

I wouldn't swap my experience for anything as it was so unique and will never be repeated again. I do, however, wish that Harry Batt's knowledge and contacts could have been utilised upon our return to have paved the way for women's football.



Chris Lockwood signing autographs courtesy of the Mexican player Erin X from her scrapbook.

Gill Sayell: oral history interview

My immediate family were my parents, Bob and Popsy, two sisters and four brothers. There are seven of us, including myself. Dad worked as a self employed plasterer, and later was a proprietor of a fishing tackle shop called 'Coarse Angler' in Aylesbury town centre. He is living in Menorca aged 90 years, where

he has been for the last 30 years. Mum worked evenings cleaning until we were older, and then was a Lab technician in a bakery named DCA. I grew up on a council estate, one of the oldest estates in Aylesbury called Southcourt. It was a great place, and we knew all the families around locally. We lived and I was born in Elm Green, which as the name suggests there was a large 'green' that all the houses surrounded, so was a perfect place to practice my football. There were always kick-about arranged with the other kids.

Football did play quite a big part of our family life. My Dad played and captained a local village team. All of my brothers played locally for various Aylesbury teams. I have two older sisters, and two older brothers, and then it's me, and two younger brothers. I did support Chelsea when I was younger, and was No7 Charlie Cooke! My elder brother supports Arsenal as I do now. Two of my brothers support Newcastle Utd, and my eldest sister supports West Ham, so there was always a bit of banter going on. The only hobbies I had were all sport related, but football was always top of the list! As long as I can remember I have always played football. I was very much a Tom Boy and having four brothers there was always a ball and a brother to kick a ball about with! Sport has always been a big part of my life and if there was any team or sport I would be there, but football was always my first love.

I first joined a boys football team called the 'Cougars; 1965 / 1966 aged nine or ten. They all called me Billy as girls were not allowed to play then. There were no girls teams around that I knew of, so just to be able to play was all I wanted to do. It soon became apparent I was a girl, and the opposing boys didn't want to play against me as I was better than them!

My sister in law lived in Thame, and knew of a women's football team there, Thame Ladies. My parents were very instrumental in my playing career, and at the age of twelve helped me join and play for the reserve side, Thame Wanderers. They would drive me the ten miles each way for training on a Tuesday, and playing matches home and away on Sunday. This was typical of my parents as they supported all of us, if we showed an interest in something. My brother, Dave, was mainly into boxing, which, as with me, involved Dad driving us to training a few times a week, and also to boxing matches and football matches, wherever they may be. Mum did not drive, but was none the less involved and enthusiastic as Dad. Dad also bought, and drove, the team coach for the Aylesbury Ladies football team. He also got onto the Board of Directors at Aylesbury Utd FC, so we could use their pitch for training and home games!

After a season playing for the reserves I was promoted to the first team, and was the youngest player in the squad. We were one of the top teams in the country at this time. It was while I was playing for Thame LFC I was picked to play for Harry Batt in an unofficial England team. I was fourteen years old! I played in the Women's World Cup in Mexico City 1971. The things I remember most of Mexico 71 were, the crowds, the hospitality, the Aztec stadium and the excitement of this massive occasion. We had television appearances, a cocktail party at the British Embassy and so many more events. I was in awe of it all.

The games were physical, and fast-paced as you would expect. We did not fair too well on the pitch, but we did gain a lot of respect from the other teams and supporters. What an experience for a 14 year old school girl! The crowds were amazing, topping 100,000, something I don't think had or has been seen since in women's football. I don't really remember too much about the games

unfortunately as it all seems so surreal now. I played outside right in my younger playing days.

After Mexico I carried on playing for Thame Ladies, and we became one of the top teams in the country. In 1976, I, along with many of the Thame team, started Aylesbury Ladies, of which my Dad was manager. We were also very successful and attracted players from a wide area.

I had some time out from playing In 86/87 to have my daughter, who was born in February 1987, and by July 1987 I pulled on my first Arsenal shirt with my daughter sitting on the touchline! In 1987 one of our players was working at Arsenal FC and was told they wanted to start a women's football team there, she suggested Aylesbury and that's how it all started. My parents were moving to Menorca so my Dad said it would be a fantastic opportunity for us all that Arsenal would be taking up the mantle. This is how Arsenal Women's Football Club were founded. I think my football skills and knowledge were taken to another level while playing under coach Vic Akers. He changed my position to centre back, and I loved it. I was a good reader of the game so that position suited me perfectly. This is where I finished my playing career at the age of 36.

I finished my football career in 1993 age 36 years. I did manage the Arsenal reserve side for a season, but found it quite frustrating as all I wanted to do was play! I did a bit of coaching, on and off, with youth club teams. I moved to Eire in 2007 and in 2008 was involved with the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) in a programme called Soccer Sisters, in Donegal Town. The scheme was to increase the number of girls playing football from the ages of 7 - 12 years. There was a great turnout of enthusiastic girls, which was great to see.

I am proud of my football career, and I like to think I was one of the pioneers for the game it is today. We had to face a lot of adversity towards women/ girls playing football, but we were determined, and pushed forward in doing a sport we all loved.

And looking back? I was so fortunate to have kept my memorabilia, and also how it survived. My brother recently told me he took my Martini Rossi kit bag to use as his football bag, unbeknown to me! I have moved houses and countries over the years so how it stayed intact is quite amazing! My memories are a little sketchy as I was only 14 years old. I do remember going on a TV programme called *24 Hours*, and this was as soon as we arrived.

The training sessions were usually 7- 7.30 am and we were bussed there and back with a police escort. At training there were crowds watching us, even though it was early in the morning. I can remember being in the changing rooms of the Aztec Stadium, and then walking up the steps and walking out onto the pitch, breathtaking! The noise of the crowds was deafening!

We had quite a lot of free time, which we spent swimming and generally chilling out. I remember going to an Advocat factory, and a newspaper office, a large toy shop, and a floating flower market on the canal boats. We were guests at the house of the owner of our hotel, which was amazing. We went swimming in their pool and had a buffet lunch. We went to a cocktail party at the British Embassy and were invited to an 'English' pub. We were invited to a Theatre to see a play called *Sleuth*.

I kept my memorabilia as I was proud of what I had been part of. I didn't realise until I started going through it that I had so much. I did get it out and look at it from time to time and it is quite precious to me. It's amazing it managed to stay

intact as I have moved many times over the years, but I'm so glad I have. My family were a major part of every aspect of my football career, and I know I wouldn't have achieved as much as I did without their help and support. It was their life too! I do have many paper cuttings and photographs which I hope tell my football story.

Conclusion

This article has presented oral histories as a redress to the lack of knowledge about a forgotten England team. As the oral histories evidence, the excitement of Mexico was lost upon return for almost fifty years. So the work sought to begin to address that lacuna in our knowledge, and to demonstrate that sporting museums can be important sites of recuperation, and the promotion of gender diversity. The authors have deliberately left the player testimonies as the individuals have given them in order not to edit, alter or analyse a story that, ultimately belongs to the individuals concerned. These kinds of player testimonies are still vital methodologies then, in addressing gaps in our knowledge of women's experiences of football. They add to the contemporary collections of museums in ways that objects and artefacts cannot, because the evidence of lived experience cannot be replicated, albeit these memories relate to events almost fifty years ago.

In spite, or perhaps because, of the acclaim that followed the 1971 unofficial women's world cup in Mexico itself, the players returned to a resounding lack of recognition for their efforts. As the player testimony indicates, the schools who had agreed that young women could go to Mexico for a month at the beginning of an academic year, were seemingly embarrassed by the athletic distinction that the England players had bestowed upon their institutions. Given that this is within living memory, it perhaps reflects how influential the 1921 'ban' on women's football was, even in 1971.

Certainly, as the player testimony indicates, Harry Batt and the Chiltern Valley club were 'banned' by the WFA from its activities. The WFA was in a precarious position, with regard to its diplomatic situation mediating between the women's football community and the Football Association. Patricia Gregory, who was a stalwart of the WFA at the time, remembers that the main funding comprising:

In the accounts of 1971-72 the £665 grant is listed as Department of the Environment Grant. From 1972-73 it is called the Sports Council grant (955). You could check when the CCPR became the Sports Council as I am not sure of the transition date. What I do remember is that we had to be careful not to jeopardise the grants which we got because we could only govern amateur players...The FA didn't initially give us any money - there is money listed in 1975/76 as Admin and Coaching grant from The FA. I imagine at that time they might have stipulated that we only govern amateur players.

There were also plans to launch the inaugural England women's team, with trials to select best players, although from the individuals I have spoken to there remains disagreement about how nationally spread, and inclusive, these events were. So, although Harry Batt's England did not necessarily reflect the strength

in depth of women's football at the time, particularly from Fodens or Manchester Corinthians, a partly self-funded and partly FIFF-funded England squad were very proud pioneers for their country. Also given that a proposed unofficial women's world cup to be hosted in England in 1972 or 1973, supported by Bobby Moore, Geoff Hurst and Martin Peters were given short shrift because of the commercial nature of the enterprise, the WFA appear to have been conservative progressives, rather more akin to the FA than FIFF, and perhaps not surprisingly so. But the amateur nature of women's football was reinforced by such decisions, as was the glacial rate of change.

It is also important to remember that the 1969-1971 tournaments took place at a time of real social division about gender equity, enshrined in the problematic legislation of the 1970 Equal Pay Act, Sex Discrimination Act in 1975 and the establishment of the Equal Opportunities Commission in 1976, defining and promoting inter sectional politics more obviously in everyday life. The widening Women's Liberation Movement from 1970 onwards, and statutory campaigns around workers' rights, and maternity and abortion rights embittered the 1970s particularly in terms of gender relations. Most women interviewed for this project would not necessarily identify as feminists, but do identify as pioneers, and the relationship between these linguistic and semantic distinctions remains to be explored.

As a result of this event, the National Football Museum was able to collect new material from this period of the women's game. This material, some of which has since been put on public display, is contributing to our understanding of the development of the international women's game, particularly in relation to the scale of international football played by English women, independently of FA or WFA support in this period between 1945 and 1971. Certainly, there remains a clear research agenda around the memories and experiences of the remainder of the squad, and particularly the older England players who, as young women in their twenties would have socialized differently than the teenagers in the team.

The Museum's focus on combining personal memorabilia, official documentation and oral history of events still within living memory but largely un-recognised is helping to shape a revised approach to collecting, interpretation and display. The physical evidence of women's participation in football exists in people's homes, in their basements and attics. It is the responsibility of organisations like the National Football Museum to collect, protect and display this material. The National Football Museum is committed to equality and from 2019 the Museum will make a commitment to 50% representation of women's football involvement in football across all of its areas of work.

If this is one further topic of consideration, a second is the element of international reciprocity here. Denmark won the tournament in Mexico, as they had a previous unofficial World Cup in Italy. Now, through the work of Ildefonso Apelanz, a feminist academic working at Albany University in New York state, has met several women in Argentina who identify themselves as 'Las Pioneras (The Pioneers)' as they began playing football back in the 50's. Among them, is

Betty Garcia, and other players who participated in Mexico 1971. This large group of women are leading a movement to uncover and bring forward the history of women's football in Argentina. Lucila Sandoval is leading these efforts to group, document, and reunite the players. Three weeks ago Lucila contacted and gathered 4 players from 1971 and reached out to a Mexican player from that world cup. So there is a possibility of a larger reunion, possibly also incorporating France, Italy and Denmark.

The reunion that has already taken place in Manchester of the England players itself shows the potential of such occasions to compare memories of individuals, at different life stages, but also across teams and over time. As the Sporting Memories project has shown, there is often an assumption that sporting memories will help inactive men over the age of fifty-five.²⁰ However, the gendered aspects of, firstly, inactivity, secondly, using sporting reminiscence to engage older people in activities to counter the effects of dementia, loneliness and social isolation require reconsideration in themselves. As the words of those who attended this reunion indicate, there are female lifelong friendships and peer-support groups waiting to be uncovered in more sporting and leisure contexts. This is a neglected and potentially rich source of new information, and also relates to the role of sporting museums as agents of social change, as this article has evidenced. As the memorabilia donated to the National Football Museum from the reunion has also shown, social strategies can also provide new material for contemporary collections that archives and museum would not otherwise be able to source.

Perhaps it is entirely to be expected that in the early days of women's football's absorption by established governing bodies that some factions with different perspectives should emerge. This remains the case today, when confidence in the FA's handling of England women (as with the men's) remains contested in the mainstream and social media. Arguably, this antipathy to women's football remains largely the case today both in Mexico and the UK where, on the one hand a local activist, Marbella Ibarra, who used women's football in underprivileged communities and established a professional women's club, was recently killed in what appears to be a hate crime.²¹ It is unclear whether Ibarra's death may, or may not, be related to her football activities. Certainly, the Mexican national women's team has suffered by being led by one coach from 1998 to 2016, Leonardo Cuéllar Rivera, regardless of results. His son has also coached at under 17 and under 20 levels for the women's teams. Recently, the BBC reported a story of a young Welsh woman subject to gender-based and homophobic abuse for wanting to play football at school, and this aspect of the narrative has changed little since the early 1970s, with family support key to a wider societal antipathy.²²

¹ Jean Williams *Globalising Women's Football: Europe, Migration and Professionalisation 1971-2011* Bern: Peter Lang, 2013; Jennifer Doyle *Feminist Art and Women's Soccer* in Daniel Haxall (ed.) *Picturing the Beautiful Game: A History of Soccer in Visual Culture and Art* London: Bloomsbury, 2019 pp. 135-155.

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- ² Gwendolyn Oxenham *Under the Lights and in the Dark: Untold Stories of Women's Soccer* London: Icon Books Ltd, 2017.
- ³ Kate Turner 'Introducing Professor Jean Williams' *Unlocking the Hidden Histories of Women's Football* National Football Museum <https://unlockingthehiddenhistory.wordpress.com/2017/12/05/introducing-jean-williams-academic-lead/> accessed 4 October 2018.
- ⁴ Jean Williams 'Standing on Honeyball's Shoulders: A History of Independent Women's Football Clubs in England' in Brenda Elsey and Stan Pugliese (eds.) *Football and the Boundaries of History: Critical Studies in Soccer* London: Palgrave Macmillan 2017 pp. 227-245.
- ⁵ Kevin Moore 'Foreword' in Murray G. Phillips (ed.) *Representing the Sporting Past in Museums and Halls of Fame* London: Routledge 2012 pp. xi-xv.
- ⁶ Claire Brewster and Keith Brewster 'A lesson in football wisdom'? Coverage of the unofficial women's World Cup of 1971 in the Mexican press' National Football Museum 8 March 2018.
- ⁷ The National Football Museum 'Help Shed Light On The Hidden History of Women's Football' <http://www.nationalfootballmuseum.com/news/help-shed-light-hidden-history-womens-football/> accessed 4 October 2018.
- ⁸ Jeff Hill 'Sport, History and Imagined Pasts' in Jeffrey Hill, Kevin Moore and Jason Wood (eds) *Sport, History and Heritage: Studies in Public Representation* Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2012 p. 9.
- ⁹ Jean Williams 'The Indianapolis 500: Making the Pilgrimage to the "Yard of Bricks"' in Jeffrey Hill, Kevin Moore and Jason Wood (eds.) *Sport, History and Heritage: Studies in Public Representation* Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2012 pp. 247-262.
- ¹⁰ Sue Lopez *Women on the Ball: A Guide to Women's Football* London: Scarlet Press, 1997 pp. 42-3.
- ¹¹ Sue Lopez *Women on the Ball* p. 43.
- ¹² Hans Krabbe *Den Glemte Triumf* Copenhagen: Bogen er støttet af 3F's Medie og Kulturfond, 2018 p. 10.
- ¹³ Chris Lockwood *Notebook Translation of Mexican Newspapers Covering the 1971 Tournament* Unpublished: Private Collection of Chris Lockwood p. 9.
- ¹⁴ Chris Lockwood *Notebook Translation of Mexican Newspapers Covering the 1971 Tournament* Unpublished: Private Collection of Chris Lockwood p. 9.
- ¹⁵ Chris Lockwood *Notebook Translation of Mexican Newspapers Covering the 1971 Tournament* Unpublished: Private Collection of Chris Lockwood p. 4.
- ¹⁶ Jean Williams 'Over 100,000 Posters - the Unprecedented Commercialism of the 1966 World Cup in England' in Daniel Haxall (ed.) *Picturing the Beautiful Game : A History of Soccer in Visual Culture and Art* New York, London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2018 pp. 211-231.
- ¹⁷ *Calendario de Juegos Il Campeonato Mundial De Futbol Feminil del 15 de Agosto al 5 de Septiembre* Mexico City, National Football Museum.
- ¹⁸ *Calendario de Juegos Il Campeonato Mundial De Futbol Feminil del 15 de Agosto al 5 de Septiembre* Mexico City, National Football Museum.
- ¹⁹ Cecilia Gallos WhatsApp interview with the author 15 December 2018.
- ²⁰ Sporting Memories 'See Our Projects, Sport England' <https://www.sportingmemoriesnetwork.com/see-our-projects-sport-england> accessed 19 November 2018.

²¹ Nina Lakhani 'Pioneer of women's football in Mexico is latest victim of Tijuana violence' *The Guardian*

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/oct/21/mexico-marbella-ibarra-murder-women-football> accessed 22 October 2018.

²² Kate Morgan 'Gender stereotypes: Teen called lesbian for playing football' *BBC News* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-46074539> accessed 5 November 2018.