Identifying Best Practice in Women’s Football –

Case Study in the European Context

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List of Abbreviations

CAS Court of Arbitration for Sport
CONCACAF Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football
CSR Corporate Social Responsibility
DFB Deutscher Fußball-Bund (German Football Association)
DOSB Deutsche Olympische Sportbund (German Olympic Sports Union)
ECA European Club Association
eCommerce A form of business transaction using electronic systems such as the Internet.
EFD Elitföreningen Damfotboll (Women’s Professional League of Sweden)
EPFL European Professional Leagues
ESPN Entertainment Sports Programming Network
EU European Union
FA Football Association
Facebook A worldwide popular social networking website.
FFC Frauen-Fußball-Club (Women’s Football Club)
FFF Fédération Française de Football (French Football Federation)
FIFA Federation Internationale de Football Association
FIFAPro International Federation of Professional Footballers
KNVB Koninklijke Nederlandse Voetbalbond (Royal Dutch Football Association)
LFC Ladies Football Club
NBA National Basketball Association
NFF Norsk Football Forbund (Football Association of Norway)
NFL National Football League (Professional American Football)
OL Olympique Lyonnais
OLTV Olympique Lyonnais Television
PFA Professional Footballers Association
PR Public Relations
REWE Revisionsverband der Westkauf-Genossenschaften (German Supermarket Chain)
SvFF Svenska Fotbollförbundet (Swedish Football Association)
U-15 Under-15
U-17 Under-17
U-20 Under-20
UEFA Union of European Football Associations
WCL Women’s Champions League
WDR TV Westdeutscher Rundfunk (West German Broadcaster)
WPS Women’s Professional Soccer
WUSA Women’s United Soccer Association
WWC Women’s World Cup
YouTube A video sharing website in which users can either upload or view videos.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 “The future of football is feminine”

As early as the 1990s, Joseph Blatter, now President of FIFA (Federation Internationale de Football Association), declared that the definitive next domain of football’s development was to challenge the gender divide. Following the success of the 1999 Women’s World Cup in the USA, where the final sold out the over 90,000 seat stadium, the Rose Bowl in California, and a cumulative television audience of over 40 million viewers\(^2\), the future for women’s football did indeed seem bright. However, the reality of growing an emerging sport around the globe has come with its challenges. From fighting for space with existing sports, to limited broadcast and sponsorship opportunities, to institutional barriers, and failed professional leagues, women’s football has had its fair share of challenges. The journey to produce a definitive career opportunity for aspiring female footballers, and to translate FIFA World Cup interest into club success has proved difficult.

However, recent developments such as the WPS (Women’s Professional Soccer) in the USA, which has successfully run since 2009, and the inaugural 2009-2010 UEFA (Union of European Football Associations) Women’s Champions League reflects progress at a club level. In addition, there are national leagues in most UEFA countries and even developing countries around the world are increasingly running women’s football leagues\(^3\). Hence, it can be seen that despite the challenges that women’s football has faced there is still a general upward trend. With these developments, there has been a move towards professionalism, however the path towards a clear understanding of what it entails to be a professional women footballer, and the benchmarks of a professional women’s club are still unclear.

As a result, this research project is aimed at profiling top European women’s clubs in the context of their leagues in order to identify best practices, in particular regarding management and administration, and to map the progress to professionalism. From Scandinavia to the Netherlands, Germany, France and England, a cross section of some of the

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\(^1\) Joseph Blatter, FIFA President, in a public address at the 1995 Women’s World Cup in Sweden.


\(^3\) Tatjana Haenni, Head of Women’s Competitions, FIFA, interview by Natalie Smith, tape recording, 3 June, 2010, FIFA Headquarters, Zurich, Switzerland.
most successful teams has been chosen and analysed according to key indicators\textsuperscript{4} to provide a map of best practice.

The requests for research of this nature came from clubs, leagues, national federations and UEFA. This combined with a relative lack of contemporary studies has led the formulation of the research question and area of inquiry. While not being the panacea for the future of women’s football, this project does offer insightful analysis and practical recommendations for the practitioners and managers of women’s club football, especially in the European context.

**Chapter 2: Context and Background**

**2.1 European Women’s Football**

**2.1.1 Brief History of European Women’s Football**

Women’s football in Europe has a history as lengthy as the men’s game, however most often it is mired in societal rejection, both culturally and on the field. Women began playing organized football as early as 1888\textsuperscript{5}, most teams formed by workers of the same factory, such as the most famous example, ‘Dick, Kerr Ladies’. In this early growth of women’s football, “whether [they] were politically motivated, following fashion, or tentative enthusiasts of a sport, the football authorities viewed their involvement as a nuisance”\textsuperscript{6} By 1921, the English FA had banned women from playing on grounds of member clubs.\textsuperscript{7} This attitude towards women’s football permeated most of Europe. Women in France began playing in the late 1800s, early 1900s, but as societal pressure mounted, the women’s game all but disappeared from the media by the 1930s.\textsuperscript{8} In Germany, the Deutscher Fußball-Bund (DFB) discouraged women from playing and, in 1955, banned clubs from forming women’s teams.\textsuperscript{9}

As the cultural change spread across Europe after WWII, there was an increase of women participating in sport, including football, giving rise to the ‘modern history’ of women’s football. Although it highly discouraged women’s football only 15 years earlier, in

\textsuperscript{4} Explained detail in Chapter 3: Methodology.  
\textsuperscript{5} A game in Inverness, Scotland in 1888 appears to be the first recorded women’s football game, Jean Williams, “The Fastest Growing Sport? Women’s Football in England,” *Soccer & Society*, 4, 2/3 (2003): 113
\textsuperscript{6} ibid., p.114.  
\textsuperscript{7} ibid., p.115.  
\textsuperscript{9} ibid., p.131.
1970 the General Assembly of the DFB instructed its Executive Committee to construct guidelines for women’s football and by 1974, the 1st Club championship in Germany was played. Again, it is a similar theme across the major countries of Europe; the national associations reversing their previous institutional discouragement to include the growing participation of women’s football into officially sanctioned leagues. The football association of Denmark first incorporated women’s football in 1972 despite clubs such as BK Femina being formed as early as 1959. The English FA allowed women back on to their fields again in 1971, although did not begin a sanctioned league until 1993. France began league matches in 1973/74. While not all countries banned women from playing such as Norway and Sweden, the growth of women’s football was closely tied to the women’s movement of the 1960s and 70s, and focused on women’s right to participate, dragging the associations toward change.

In the 1980s and 90s, the international institutions increasingly took hold of the women’s game by introducing the official European Championship in 1990, the first World Cup in 1991 and the first Olympic tournament in 1996.

2.1.2 Increase in Women’s Football Participation

While institutions have created structure for the game on a global, and pan-European level, the world has also seen a major growth in participation. In 2006, an estimated 26 million females played football, of whom 4.1 million were registered players. Although that represented only 10 percent of all football players in the world, the trend shows that female participation is on the rise and those ratios are changing towards more participation of females: The number of female players had increased by 19% since 2000 and the number of registered players by 54%. This means that women’s football grew more than twice as much as the male sport (21%) in the same period of time. The number of national teams, an indicator for the worldwide development of the game, has also increased dramatically. Within

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13 ibid.
16 ibid.
only 16 years of the WWC (Women’s World Cup), the number of national teams participating in the preliminary rounds of the tournament has grown from 45 to 119.17

![Chart showing worldwide female participation in football](image)

**Figure 1. Worldwide Female Participation**

Specifically for Europe, currently, there are around 6.5 million females who play football in UEFA-member countries.18 Perhaps as women’s football gains increasing legitimacy, the fact that UEFA is third in percentage of female participants is also a driving factor for UEFA’s increased investment. The federation with the most female players by far is CONCACAF with over 10 million in 2006, and two of the biggest associations (USA and Canada) in terms of participation of females. In addition to that, almost a quarter of all football players in CONCACAF are females, the highest ratio of any federation19.

Also, looking into the statistics of participation within Europe, it is clear there appears to be a historical correlation between participation and success on the national stage. Germany has significantly the highest number of female participants, followed by Sweden, Norway, and Denmark20. While this has previously been a great advantage, federations such as England and the Netherlands increasing promotion and organization of women’s football on an elite level has resulted in improved results despite lower numbers of participants21.

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19 CONMEBOL:12%, OFC:12%, UEFA:10%, AFC: 6%, CAF:3%. Ibid.
20 See Appendix 1.
21 Ibid.
2.1.3 Increase in interest for national competitions

While the 1999 Womens’ World Cup final still holds the record of the largest single audience for a women’s football game and, in fact, of any women’s sporting event, the last finals in China in 2007 were watched by more than 1 million people in the stadia, a new record of cumulative attendance.\(^22\) The German national team was received by a crowd of more than 15,000 people in Frankfurt on their return from winning the tournament in China.\(^23\) While its official form has only existed since 1990, the European Championship has also developed rapidly. The 2005 UEFA Women’s Euro achieved record attendances and television audiences in England.\(^24\) Then in 2009, the tournament hosted in Finland, gained national headlines in numerous countries, including Germany, the Netherlands, and England. Heading into 2013, its popularity continues to rise with two countries seriously competing to host. A normal procedure for men’s football, it was a first for the women’s game in Europe.\(^25\)

On the club side, it is even more recent that competitions have garnered national media attention. In June 2010, the DFB Cup final, Jena versus FCR Duisburg, which was played as a separate event from the men’s final for the first time, was seen in front of a European-record breaking 26,282 fans.\(^26\) And the inaugural UEFA Women’s Champions League final on May 20th, 2010 was watched by over 4 million people watching on TV,\(^27\) with UEFA-president Michel Platini handing over the newly designed trophy to winners 1.FFC Turbine Potsdam of Germany after a tense penalty shoot-out.\(^28\)

2.1.4 International organizations and Women’s Football

FIFA President Blatter’s statement “The future of football is feminine” highlighted a major shift in the institutional view of women’s football. As mentioned previously, the history of

women’s football has been marked by institutional disapproval and, often, out-right bans. However, in the mid-1990s, and even more so, in the last 10 years, institutions have added employees focused entirely on women’s football, included women’s football in official strategy documents, and made public statements affirming the legitimacy of women’s football.

On a global level, FIFA introduced the U-20 Women’s World Cup in 2002 and, in 2008, also organised the first U-17 Women’s World Cup in New Zealand. These international youth tournaments aim to give women’s football increased exposure and credibility on the youth level.\(^{29}\) Beyond hosting tournaments, the stewards of the global game have required national associations to earmark 10% of funding provided by FIFA specifically for women’s football, a reflection of the participation statistics published in 2006.\(^{30}\)

On a European level, UEFA first began officially sanctioned pan-European competitions only in 1990, despite evidence the first trans-national competition was held in Europe in 1957.\(^{31}\) It appears by the UEFA statutes that it has objectives to promote women’s football:

\[\text{a) deal with all questions relating to European football;}\]

\[\text{b) promote football in Europe in a spirit of peace, understanding and fair play, without any discrimination on account of politics, gender, religion, race or any other reason;}\]

\[\text{c) monitor and control the development of every type of football in Europe [...]}\]

\[\text{g) redistribute revenue generated by football in accordance with the principle of solidarity and to support reinvestment in favour of all levels and areas of football, especially the grassroots of the game [...]}.\(^{32}\)


Similarly, UEFA has included gender within its *Respect campaign*, making a marked statement, as an official organization, it does not condone discrimination against women’s football.33

Governmental organizations have also embraced women’s participation in sports, including football. Since the Helsinki Report on Sport in 1999 and the Nice Declaration on Sport in 2000, the European Union officially acknowledges the important role sport plays in many different aspects of life, e.g. health, education, integration and equality. The European Commission White Paper on Sport states, “All residents of the European Union should have access to sport [...and that it is] important to promote an inclusive approach to sport.”34 The United Nations goes one step further and declared sport a right for everyone. “The right to play and to participate in sports have been embodied in United Nations instruments like the Convention on the Rights of the Child and The Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.”35 It is clear through public statements and in some cases financially, institutions have now come to embrace its growth officially. However some may question if these institutions know what works for the development of women’s football.36

As women’s football becomes a higher priority with greater participation and media coverage, national associations and nations as a whole, find added value in having a successful women’s national team. This new pressure for success coupled with the belief a strong national league will garner that success has caused many federations to over-haul their national leagues. One prime example is the Dutch Football Federation, KNVB, who in 2006, moved to a closed league system, explicitly to improve the national game, and thus the national team’s success.37 In the 2009 European Championship, the Netherlands, a country without a strong history in women’s football, advanced to the semi-finals and garnered national press. Similarly, those within the English FA, forming the new Super League in England, have expressed their optimism that the new league will create a better platform for

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36 Discussion on the incorporation of independent women’s football organization into officially sanctioned FAs such as Scotland. Williams, *The Fastest Growing Sport?* 119.
37 Priscilla Janssens, Eredivisie Vrouwen, interview by Sarah Schmitter, Phone Interview, 10, May, 2010.
women’s football development in the country, which will in turn improve the national team’s performance.\textsuperscript{38}

\subsection*{2.1.5 European Women’s Club Football}

While media coverage in Europe grows for the national team competitions, UEFA became painfully aware of the shortcomings of its European club competition, the UEFA Women’s Cup. Those shortcomings were emphasized by the new founding of the WPS in the USA, which promised to be “the best league in the world.”\textsuperscript{39} Realizing its current incarnation of a pan-European club competition was not sufficient, UEFA changed its format and re-branded the competition as the UEFA Women’s Champions League. This can be seen as a clear attempt to keep the most talented players in Europe by promising them a bigger stage for the club game. In the strategic documents of the UEFA WCL the influence of the American league on the re-branding becomes evident:

\begin{quote}
“Following the introduction of the professional league in the USA, Europe is facing a ‘feet drain’, with the migration of many of the best women’s footballers to USA. Any consolidation of the UEFA Women’s Champions League must offer sufficient incentives to players to remain in European clubs. The UEFA Women’s Champions League must be recognised as the most attractive women’s club competition in the world.”\textsuperscript{40}
\end{quote}

The trans-Atlantic competition pushed UEFA towards taking action and strengthening its European club competition. The convergence of participation growth, increased media attention for national team competitions, institutional backing, which all increase cultural legitimacy, has pushed to the forefront a very rapid development in European club women’s football, “as the next step for women’s football”\textsuperscript{41}


\textsuperscript{40} UEFA, Strategic Plan 2009/10 and 2010/11 Competition Strategy, Women’s Champions League, Nyon, 2010.

\textsuperscript{41} Hayward, Interview, 12, May 2010.
2.2 Existing Academic Research on Women’s Football

The existing body of academic research done on women’s football can largely be categorized into two areas of study; one being histories, focusing on the past challenges and struggles of women to participate in football, the other being a feminist discourse and/or political studies approach looking at the current state of women’s football through the feminist perspective or focusing on equality laws such as Title IX in the USA or gender equality laws in Europe.

With the widespread media coverage of the 1999 Women’s World Cup in the United States, it appeared unexpectedly that teams from all over the world could “play like that,” which begged the question of how did these teams develop? With very few histories having been written about women’s football at that stage, researchers focused on discovering and writing the history of the women’s game. With the exception of personal stories of players, the majority of histories focused on an academic discussion of how the game developed in a respective country.

Arguably, the most comprehensive book on women’s football is *Women, Soccer, and Sexual Liberation*, a collection of essays focusing on the challenges women’s football has faced in the past and continues to face in certain countries. Since most of the books that were released at this time are the first histories written about women’s football, they tend to be expansive, covering national team, youth, and club, starting from the 1920s up until the early 2000s. A very common theme is the struggle to gain access to participation, highlighted in Jean Williams’ book, ‘A Game For Rough Girls?’ focusing on the national associations and patriarchal societies active role in suppressing women and girls’ participation in football, and the reluctance to evolve with the youth motivated societal changes of the 1970s and 80s. This similar vein runs through histories of other European nations, such as Brus and

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42 In her interview, Haenni used this exact quote to describe the public’s reaction in Europe to the WWC 1999. Haenni, Interview, 3 June, 2010.
Trangbaek’s history of Danish women’s football, Bourke’s account of the game within Ireland, and Meier’s research on Swiss women’s football.

Change started to come in the 1970s. Pfister emphasized that the success of German women’s football was, in part, assisted by the support within the national association starting in the late 1970s. Likewise, Skille points out the NFF (Norsk Football Forbund or Football Association of Norway) in the early 1970s “had to declare its acceptance of football for girls and women,” opening up opportunities for girls and women to participate in football. It was not an internal push but pressure from societal changes toward equality and the NOC’s mission for ‘sport for all’, which led to this change within the NFF.

Beyond building a history for women’s football, there has been an equal focus of academic studies concerning women’s football written within the scope of feminist discourse. As discussed by Scraton, et. al, there has been more than 20 years of research using mainstream sport, often football, to consider power dynamics and gender relations. They argue the greatest obstacle for the development of women’s football is the close link between football and “conventional stereotypes of hegemonic masculinity.” However, their main focus is simply on access to the sport for women, who eventually attained elite status. Similar areas of discussion and conclusions in relation to women’s participation on a national or regional basis were found in articles from France and England.

A literature review focusing on elite women’s football reveals that academic research is scarce and mostly found within the context of the aforementioned broad histories. Weigelt and Kanoh, give a broad overview of women’s football development specifically in a pan-

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51 Ibid. pg 101.
European context, with a strong emphasis on national associations and their involvement. In terms of elite women’s football on a club level, research has either been conducted at a national level, most often not published, or on the former American professional league, WUSA. Interestingly, Markovits and Hellerman argued, before the WUSA demise, that the “exceptionalism” of American culture would sustain a fully professional women’s football league. However, after the failure of the WUSA, Southall, Nagel, and LeGrande, dissected the marketing strategies and perceptions within the league. They found a confusing blend of exchange theory, strategic philanthropy, and cause marketing, which resulted in lofty expectations without subsequent revenue generation.

There is more recent research being conducted on the marketing and sport business aspect of women’s football. For example, Dr. Herbert Woratschek at University of Bayreuth is currently performing a research project, studying ticket-buying habits for the Women’s World Cup 2011. However, a pan-European research project on European women’s elite club football has yet to be published. The aim of this research paper is to begin, to some degree, to address the void in the body of research conducted on women’s football. To quote, Linda Whitehead in her MBA dissertation, a comparative analysis of top women’s football leagues:

“Future research into club operations would be extremely beneficial perhaps studying what separates the successful clubs, in terms of business practices, from the others in their own country.”

2.3 Professionalism and Women’s Football:

One of the fundamental concepts in the development of this research project was an understanding of being a professional athlete. There is a complex set of interrelations that underpin the understanding of professionalism in sport. Not least, the “amateur” ideals that so

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58 L. Whitehead “Women’s Professional Soccer” (MBA Dissertation, University of Liverpool, 2007)
long defined the practice of sport in a socially acceptable manner, which objected to the presence of the professional athlete.\textsuperscript{59} The concept of being paid to play went against the preferences of the European aristocracy that invented and controlled the growth of sporting activity such as football, cricket, rugby and the Olympic movement. Hence, the definition and understanding of the professional athlete has been complicated and controversial from the outset. Notwithstanding the controversy surrounding the role women in professional sport.

The governing bodies of sport, often reluctantly, embraced professionalism at different times. Sports such as Olympic athletics and rugby union only turned professional in the late 1980’s and 1990’s. While football (or association football/soccer) embraced the professional athlete as early as 1885, a clear, concise and universally accepted definition of professionalism has eluded the football world.

FIFA the world governing body established in 1904, has attempted to do this:

\begin{quote}
“A professional is a player who has a written contract with a club and is paid more for his/her footballing activity than the expenses he/she effectively incurs. All other players are considered amateurs.”\textsuperscript{60}
\end{quote}

While this definition does create a discrete line between professional and amateur, it is essentially over simplistic and many football players, especially those who are at the bottom end of the “professional” football spectrum, do not necessarily subscribe to the definition. This shows a discrepancy between the narrative and the official position. FIFA, itself, has published material that refers to the semi-professional footballer.\textsuperscript{61} Many of the women’s clubs and leagues interviewed in the process of this research project have suggested that while most of their players fulfil FIFA’s definition of a professional, they more commonly refer to their players as semi-professional or amateur:

\begin{quote}
“Frauen-Bundesliga has 12 Clubs that are semi-professional and amateur.”\textsuperscript{62}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{60} FIFA Statues [WWW]. Available from: http://www.fifa.com [Accessed 31/03/2010]
\textsuperscript{62} Willi Hink, DFB. FIFA, National Associations Questionnaire. Conducted 28, May 2004.
“Røa players have between 1-year and 5-year contracts, with differing payment profiles. Players can be considered professionals by the FIFA definition, but ultimately they are ‘semi-professional’ as most are either studying or working in addition to playing football.”

2.3.1 Professional Employment of Women Footballers

In terms of professional employment an individual is expected to possess the requisite skills and/or education, perform a task competently, do so as a manner of obtaining an income rather than as a hobby, and conduct oneself to the standards as would be expected in the job role. Hence, a professional is often contrasted with unskilled, incompetent, and amateur.

UEFA has recognized the EPFL (European Professional Football Leagues) as a representative body for interests of employers of professional footballers. The leagues are essentially made up professional clubs’ representatives in a country who are the direct employers of the athletes. The EPFL essentially uses the FIFA definition of a professional player if questioned, but have formulated their own indicators of “professionalism” such as the sustainability of the league, player union structures and effective commercialization rights as prerequisite criteria to join the EPFL. In addition, recognition by the countries football association is a prerequisite, suggesting political approval for professionalism is necessary in the European sport context. The EPFL has no women’s leagues in its constituency and has no immediate plans to include women’s leagues. In many countries, women’s football is still developing in the areas of sustainability, player unions and effective commercialization that the EPFL identifies as part of its pre-requisites, hence falls well below in terms of the EPFL understanding of professionalism.

2.3.2 Management and Administration of Women’s Football

An indication of the state of professionalism in women’s football can be revealed by who has control/jurisdiction of the administration of the game at a national level, below the control of FIFA and UEFA. Sweden is the only example, from the dataset, where there is a separate legal entity (EFD - Elitföreningen Damfotboll) to run professional women’s football.

63 Ragnar Austad and Harald Nickelsen, Røa IL, interviewed by Creesen Naicker, in-person interview, 12, May 2010, Oslo, Norway.
65 Jair Bertoni, EPFL Head of Cabinet of CEO, personal communication by email, 12, May 2010.
However, even in this example the EFD is essentially beholden to the SvFF (Swedish FA) as its primary funder and governing body. In most countries the highest-level league is run by national football association, whereas the men’s game often has a separate entity to control the league.

For example, in France the women’s league falls under the jurisdiction of Ligue du Football Amateur (LFA) within the FFF (Fédération Française de Football), which controls amateur football, not under an entity that is designed to handle professional football. This is even though France is the European country reported to have some of the highest paid women football players.\textsuperscript{66} The EPFL gave insight into why this may be: “It is related to commercial value.”\textsuperscript{67} If the league does not present an opportunity for commercial interests to be pursued, it will seldom want to, or be able to, gain autonomy. Leagues have traditionally been formed by the initiative of the clubs themselves.

WPS is one of the most developed and professional women’s leagues and showcases many of the best players from around the world in its teams. However, even this league, which is at the forefront of professionalism, has numerous examples of players who have to fulfil addition roles (e.g. youth coaching) in order to supplement their income. There are examples of where coaching is part of a player’s employment contract, essentially meaning that the employee fulfils two roles to justify their salary.\textsuperscript{68} This is an indication of the emerging nature of women’s professional football and that there is a disconnect between what is viewed as the epitome of professionalism and the current reality of the women’s game.

2.3.3 Jurisprudence and Dispute resolution

A review of the development of sport has shown that it has become increasingly an important socio-economic and commercial force, resulting in a greater need for dispute resolution as parties’ attitudes harden and potential losses become more significant.\textsuperscript{69} This need for dispute resolution can be paralleled with the increase in professionalism in sport. This is seen by a high workload of CAS (Court of Arbitration for Sport) cases being consumed by the football

\textsuperscript{66} Haenni, Interview, 3 June, 2010.
\textsuperscript{67} Bertoni, personal communication, 12, May 2010.
\textsuperscript{68} Meredith Rooney, Director of Sky Blue FC Soccer School, personal communication, 30, June 2010.
\textsuperscript{69} Denis Oswald, \textit{Litigation in Sport, Methods of dispute resolution}, May 2010.
world since FIFA’s recognition of the CAS in 2002. If this is used as a reflection of commercialization and professionalism, then women’s football comes in well behind, in terms of there being only one notable case to come before CAS (Olympique Lyonnaise vs UEFA and Fortuna Hjornning, 2010), while men’s football is taking over a third of all CAS’s 200 cases per year.  

2.3.4 European Union

Since the sample for this research project is made up of European clubs, a brief review of relevant EU policies and laws was thought necessary. The development of a European approach to sport, as exemplified by the European Commissions 1999 Helsinki Report and the following Nice declaration, showed that the nature of sport existed beyond national boundaries and regulations. Together with the European Commission White Paper on Sport, it was shown how sport permeated multiple aspects of life; from health and education to competition law and criminal liability; from social inclusion and integration to freedom of movement and the protection of minors.

The European approach is contrasted to the American model where the four main sports operate closed leagues in which professional athletes ply their trade. Hence, if an athlete falls out of the closed league structure in these four sports, the athlete is essentially at most a semi-professional athlete, but most likely an amateur. This makes the definition of professional rather simple in the US model. In contrast, the Independent European Sport Review 2006 shows that European sport is based on a pyramidal structure that involves promotion and relegation, and that both amateur and professional sport is managed by sport associations. This makes the strict definition from amateur to professional somewhat less clear and even more complicated in an emerging sport such as women’s football.

In some cases, it would make sense to refer to EU labour law, which helps to define an employment relationship and hence a definition of a professional athlete as one who

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70 Louise Reilly, *Counsel to the CAS*, 19 May 2010.
performs a sporting role as their main form of employment. However, this creates a situation where many women footballers fulfil the definition of the FIFA professional, but are certainly not in a full-time occupation/employment as labour law would see it.

2.4 Best Practice Model

The fundamental aim of the research project has been to identify best practice in the chosen clubs. Hence a definition and understanding of the term best-practice has been important. It is commonly referred to as a method or process that is believed to be the best possible way to deliver a particular outcome when applied to a specific circumstance. For instance if a company would like to reach a certain target market for their advertising campaign they could use a specific best-practice procedure in attaining such result. In addition, the term can also be defined as the most efficient way of accomplishing a task, based on procedures that have been proven successful over time. Thus, depending on the organization in question, it is possible for them to have their own understanding and definition with regard to best-practice. For the purposes of this research project, the best-proven methodology in each of the chosen areas of analysis is documented as a tool for further development of women’s football.

Some organizations prefer to keep its best-practice as confidential in order to gain certain advantage over its competitors. This is seen, for example, in the way companies handle their financial indicators. A certain company may choose to implement their best-practice by investing significantly on its marketing and sales strategy as it seeks to strengthen its market share whenever possible, while others may opt for a different approach by placing more importance into their human resource in the belief that the workforce is what drives successful operation. From both these perspectives, we can see that best-practice, is not a question of whether a particular process is right or wrong, rather it is defined within its own unique context and according to the organizations strategic objectives.

2.4.1 Sharing Best Practice

In contrast to secrecy, it can be seen that the exchange and sharing of information across different organizations can benefit the collective goals that they may have. Forums and conventions for instance are activities that can help provide organizations the opportunity to discuss and if possible to find a common solution to problems across the industry. It is understood that such activities could foster more benefit to the industry as a whole such as promoting a healthy-competition despite organizations’ competitive nature. As Zoe Schulha, Marketing Manager, of Women’s Football in the English Football Association considers such exchange as

“useful and interesting to hear how other associations are doing particularly in women’s football as it is about raising the profile in general. Although there is competition that exists, this understanding is unanimous.”

In sports, for example, conferences organized by federations benefit its member associations where various topics are discussed to encourage the overall improvement of the sport. The program agenda of UEFA’s 4th Women’s Football Conference, for example, included topics such as the Key Issues encountered during the UEFA European Women’s Championship as well as the Development and Challenges of Women’s Club Football in Europe. Kelly Simmons, Head of the National Football Development at the English Football Association, concluded the conference speaking about the future of Women’s Football suggesting opportunities concerning the overall improvement of Women’s Football. To further stress the importance of such conferences, the English FA, in their reply to FIFA’s National Associations Questionnaire, stated that the,

“FIFA symposium is a good opportunity to share best practice (in order) to drive more investment into women’s football (and) to ensure that the associations develop the game.”

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75 Zoe Schulha, Marketing Manager of Women’s Football, English FA, Interview by Keitaro Aoki, phone interview, 10, June 2010.
Such occasions therefore help provide member associations the platform to express and communicate their understanding of best-practice.

To define best-practice within the context of this research, it is important to understand the reasons behind the selection of our football clubs. The clubs were all selected based on their successful qualification in the first edition of UEFA Women’s Champions League 2009/10, a tournament that is considered to be the highest level of club competition in Europe. Hence, by looking at these elite clubs, the researchers believe that certain key indicators such as administration, infrastructure, player development and marketing can be considered best-practice of women’s football within the context of each club’s league.

The limitation of such an approach is that the identified best-practice may not necessarily be applicable across varying contexts, but is true within the context of its league. Therefore the researchers believe that this paper should not be viewed as a comparative study between different football clubs nor is it claimed that implementation of documented strategies will automatically mitigate all challenges that exist. Nevertheless, by presenting the best-practice employed by these football clubs, it is hoped that a better understanding the current situation of women’s football can be gained, and as a result ideas and strategies can be stimulated for further development of women’s football.

Lastly, it is important to note that best-practice is a fluid and evolving concept and continuous development of an organization’s practices is necessary in achieving and maintaining best-practice.

2.5 Club Profiles\textsuperscript{78}

2.5.1 Arsenal Ladies FC (England)

Founded in 1987, Arsenal LFC is a dominant force in English Women’s Football, winning a record of thirty-three trophies in total.\textsuperscript{79} Equally renown at the European level, the club reached twice the semi-finals in between 2002 to 2005, before winning its first UEFA Women’s Cup in 2006/07. Affiliated with Arsenal FC, the club has the necessary backing

\textsuperscript{78} The dates founded refer to the women’s football team unless otherwise stated.

\textsuperscript{79} 12 FA Women's Premier League titles, 10 FA Woman's Cups, 10 Women's Premier League Cups and 1 UEFA Women's Champions League.
and support to administer their various initiatives including an efficient youth development system, as well as infrastructure. Its successful performance both on and off the pitch awarded them a successful position in the upcoming Super League competition scheduled to commence in 2011.

2.5.2 Everton Ladies (England)
The club was founded in 1983, under the name Hoylake WFC, but then adopted its current name since 1995. Their biggest success was during the 1997/98 season, when they were crowned as Women’s Premier League champions. From thereon, they have been consistent title contenders demonstrated by their most recent success at the FA Women’s Cup 2009/10. A subsidiary of Everton FC, they adapt the same nickname The Toffees, and likewise have one of the most successful international youth development programs. Although relatively inexperienced in terms of European competition, its continuous effort to focus on key development areas has been rewarded by the FA having granted a position in the new closed-league system, called the Super League, starting in 2011.

2.5.3 FCR 2001 Duisburg (Germany)
With the full name Fußballclub Rumeln 2001 Duisburg, the club was established in 1977 as part of FC Rumeln-Kaldenhausen, but has then claimed its independence as a women’s only club in 2001. Nicknamed Die Löwinnen (Lionesses), the team currently plays at Frauen-Bundesliga and is considered to be one of the top clubs that represent women’s football in Germany. The team is relatively successful with its most recent triumphs being the UEFA Cup in 2009 and the German Women’s Cup in 2010.

2.5.4 FC Bayern München (Germany)
Perhaps being outshone by popularity of their men’s football team, Die Bayern (the Bavarians) seemed to face a disastrous situation after being relegated from first division in 1992. Fortunately they began to emulate the results of their men’s counterparts, after gaining promotion in 2000, which resulted to a commendable runner-up finish by a marginal difference to eventual champions Turbine Potsdam in 2009. Despite the possibility of being overshadowed by the successes of the men’s team, there exists a notable effort being
implemented to create a distinct identity for the women’s team, such as the presence of its own website to communicate directly to its fans.

2.5.5 1.FFC Turbine Potsdam (Germany)

FFC (Frauen-Fußball-Club) meaning “Women’s Football Club” in German, arguably is the most successful German women’s football club at present. Founded in 1971, the club is a four-time winner of the Frauen-Bundesliga in 2004, 2006, 2009 and 2010 and recently confirmed its second European title by defeating Olympique Lyonnais Féminin. A particular focus on youth development results in a team comprised predominantly of Germans. Hence, the club plays a significant role in strengthening the German national team.

2.5.6 Olympique Lyonnais Féminin (France)

Commonly referred simply as Lyon, the women’s team was formed in 2004 as a section of its men’s team – Olympique Lyonnais. Similar to their male counterpart, the team is a dominant force in the Division 1 Féminine, having won a total of eight division titles,\textsuperscript{80} but surprisingly is yet to win at the European level. The team usually hosts its home games at the 2 500 capacity Plaine des Jeux de Gerland stadium; however, on certain occasions, use the 41 000-seat Stade de Gerland stadium.

2.5.7 AZ Alkmaar (The Netherlands)

Having won the Vrouwen Eredivisie every year since its inauguration in 2007, AZ Alkmaar is undoubtedly the leading club of the Dutch six-club league structure. The club has an existing men’s team with the same name that was founded in 1967, however the women’s team was founded more recently. Despite their domestic success in the closed-league system of the Vrouwen Eredivisie, AZ Alkmaar suffered an early exit in UEFA Competitions.

2.5.8 Umeå IK (Sweden)

Ranked as first in UEFA’s Cumulative Club Coefficient Ranking,\textsuperscript{81} Umeå IK is a multidisciplinary sports clubs, with a well-known women’s football team in Sweden and across Europe. Following the establishment of women’s football in 1985, the club has won


\textsuperscript{81} See Appendix 2.
seven Swedish championships and twice the UEFA Cup in 2003 and 2004. An extremely successful team on the field, the club has hosted notable former players such as the four times FIFA Women's World Player of the Year, Marta (2004-2008).

2.5.9 Røa IL (Norway)
Røa IL is a club that boasts a variety of sport disciplines from gymnastics to skiing, but the success of their “Dynamite Girls” football team is what highlights the club. Though it is still establishing its position in terms of European competition, Røa is popular in their domestic league, winning the Toppserien on four occasions (2004, 2007-2009). In addition, the club has a reputation of showcasing a positive image through their unique approach in engaging with the community. This contributes not only to the public’s awareness, but allows them to retain their key players keeping the human resource element a vital component for their success.

Chapter 3: Methodology
Under this section of the academic work the researchers explain the reasons which induced the application the procedures utilised, choice of categories used for research, motivations for selecting the specific clubs, and in general to give an explanation of the applied epistemological views and ideas.

3.1 Areas of analysis
In this dissertation nine different European women’s football clubs are analyse to identify best practices. Nine key categories of functioning were chosen for analysis:

- administration and human resources
- player development including youth and recruitment
- infrastructure
- finances and ownership

• marketing and media
• sponsorship
• match day
• merchandise
• and community including fan clubs.

These categories were identified by a review of existing literature in the sports industry and by consultation with subject matter experts.83 84 A review of the agendas and programmes of the FIFA and UEFA Women’s Football conferences also influenced the selection of the relevant categories. While not exhaustive, this list does provide a comprehensive insight into important aspects of sports practices at the highest level. It is identified that these categories are vital in the sustainable development of sport in general, not just women’s football.

3.2 Methods and sources

Data gathering involved both qualitative and quantitative methods. Primary data was collected utilising personal interviews, teleconferences, club documents and reports, and email communication85. Secondary data collection and meta-analysis was performed on existing quantitative datasets of UEFA and FIFA. In addition, a review of academic literature about women’s football and sport management was performed.

3.3 Primary Data

In selecting the dataset, a combination of being in the last 16 of UEFA’s Women’s Champions League, with one exception, and domestic success, convenience, accessibility and cooperation, and language were influential in the selection of the primary data set.86

Besides attempting to get a degree of geographical variation in the dataset, a representation of the three main types of ownership/autonomy was important. Independent

84 Vonnez-King, Anne and Katharina Scheel, UEFA Women’s Competitions Department, personal communication, 8, March 2010; Haenni, Interview, 3 June, 2010.
85 See Appendix 3.
86 The exception is the Everton Ladies. Included to give an additional insight into the new Super League in England.
purely women’s clubs are represented by 1.FFC Turbine Potsdam and FCR 2001 Duisburg e.V. Clubs which are multi-coded, community driven and are not attached to a successful men’s team are represented by Umea IK and Røa IL. While women’s teams that are owned and run by a professional men’s club include Olympique Lyonnaise, FC Bayern Munich, Arsenal, and AZ Alkmaar. There is also the combination of open league systems with relegation and promotion, which are contrasted with the closed league systems in England and the Netherlands.

3.4 Secondary Data

The analysis of existing data utilised sources from UEFA and FIFA. The following questionnaires were reviewed:

- UEFA Questionnaire 2004: Women’s Domestic Competitions
- UEFA Women’s Champions League Round of 16 Questionnaire
- FIFA Questionnaire to National Football Associations 2003: The Status of Women’s Football

The responses to the questionnaires not only provided comparable data across the countries in the data set, but also revealed the key indicators that are important to the custodians of women’s football.

3.5 Project timeline

Literature review (September 2009 – January 2010)

Primary and secondary data gathering (February 2010 – May 2010)

Transcription and data analysis (June 2010)

Research report completed (9 July 2010)
Chapter 4: Data Analysis

4.1 Administration and Human Resources

A permeating theme in women’s football is finances, how to raise money and how to spend limited resources. FCR Duisburg’s administration indicated that “to keep that cost under control remains a challenge,” and this has become increasingly difficult.\textsuperscript{87} One expenditure that is sacrificed seems to be the front office, resulting in limited administrative and management resources.

4.1.1 Dedicated Personnel

While the majority of costs continue to be player salaries, Tatjana Haenni, Head of Women’s Competitions at FIFA and president of FC Zurich Frauen, believes a full-time administrator is the key to the growth of a club, including gaining sponsorship, fans and ticket sales which will in turn allow for better paid coaches and players.\textsuperscript{88} Clubs have often started women’s teams without dedicated personnel, or utilized inexperienced volunteers who, while their contributions to the women’s game cannot be minimized, were simply not knowledgeable enough to continue to develop the administration aspect.\textsuperscript{89} One major reason for the English FA requiring clubs to make the women’s team a subsidiary, is to ensure the funding provided by the FA will go to personnel who are part of an existing infrastructure and dedicated to the

\textsuperscript{87} Ronny Jasinski, Financial Manager, FCR Duisburg, interview by Sarah Crumbach and Sarah Schmitter, phone interview, 21, May 2010.

\textsuperscript{88} Haenni, Interview, 3 June, 2010.

\textsuperscript{89} Austad, and Nickelsen, Interview, 12, May 2010. Haenni, Interview, 3 June, 2010.
women’s team. For women’s only clubs in other leagues, the concern is to effectively run a club with, often, only 1 full-time administrative employee or simply dedicated volunteers.

4.1.2 Shared Personnel

While dedicated personnel are ideal, there are many tasks within a club, which would be difficult for one full-time employee to fulfil, as it requires a diverse and highly-specialized set of skills. Each situation is different depending on the club and league structure. However, the most common successful practice to mitigate this issue, regardless of structure, is shared resources or competencies. One example, while no women’s team could afford, nor would it be efficient, to retain their own lawyer, teams who are most successfully integrated into men’s clubs, have the capability of utilizing club resources such as legal advice. Such was the case with Olympique Lyonnais, who was found ineligible to continue in the women’s Champions League in 2009/2010 season. The club lawyers successfully had the penalty reversed by CAS, so they could continue, and eventually play in the Finals. Likewise, the women’s team uses the professional staff of OL Images, a subsidiary of the OL Group who owns the club, for certain games and marketing campaigns, giving added value to the game day experience. Another example is the long-standing history of coaching development within the Arsenal club. Arsenal integrated the women and girls’ coaches into its academy, and coaching education. These examples highlight a successful integration of a women’s team into a larger club where they can develop the team through skilled professionals who would normally be beyond the resources of a women’s team.

However, shared resources are not entirely reserved to the largest men’s clubs in Europe sharing their resources with their women’s teams. The respective national associations have also seen a benefit in consolidating certain activities to the league to alleviate the financial burden of the clubs. To lighten this burden, thus ensuring a more sustainable future, the English FA is taking over certain tasks which require a specifically

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90 Hayward, Interview, 12, May 2010.
92 Natalie Smith, game day observation, OL vs. Umea, April 10th, 2010
skilled professional, such as website design and content management under its own administration. The FA can ensure a quality product across the league and have the cost of skilled personnel be shared by the whole league.

Similar examples occur in the Eredvisie Vrouwen of the Netherlands and the Frauen Bundesliga of Germany. The KNVB specifically restructured the entire women’s football structure with the goal “to give women's football a structural quality injection and to raise the overall sporting level.” Because the federation was the driving force in the creation of the league, including a business plan and strategies for future development, it also assists in many of the tasks most often reserved for the individual clubs. As Germany has become a clear leader in European women’s football, the DFB likewise has lent significant assistance to its clubs. To highlight a specific example, increasingly important in today’s media-driven society, the DFB has begun Internet streaming entire matches as well as weekly highlights of Frauen-Bundesliga matches. The skilled labour to produce live matches for viewing is very specific, and often expensive. Now clubs in the Frauen-Bundesliga have increased media exposure on a global scale, which they would currently be unable to produce on their own.

4.1.3 Decision-makers

Players and administrators give women’s football in Europe its day-to-day life, but high-profile leaders in European football have brought more money and exposure to the women’s game, but also very importantly, a greater legitimacy within the greater European football community. Michel Platini, the voice and leader of UEFA, has added women’s football to the Respect campaign, and the former chairman of the English FA, Lord Triesman, had put women’s football as a major growth area within England. In a country where the federation was adamantly opposed to women playing football until the early 1970s, perhaps the greatest supporter of women’s football has become their president. In a monumental public show of support, the DFB president, Dr. Theo Zwanziger, later shown in a nationally-televised documentary, waited pitch-side to enthusiastically hug the Germany national team players as

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94 Schulha, Interview, 10, June 2010; Hayward, Interview, 12, May 2010.
95 Janssens, Interview, 10, May 2010.
96 Having won the European Championship 5 times in a row, the last two Women’s World Cups, and numerous youth championships.
98 Hayward, Interview, 12, May 2010.
they exit the field after a win during the 2007 Women’s World Cup in China.\textsuperscript{99} The president of Olympique Lyonnais, has stated in articles he believes in the future of women’s football, as “people once believed in women’s tennis.”\textsuperscript{100} He has backed up the statement with the highest club budget for women’s football in Europe. As Haenni stated, while “grassroots will develop on its own, but to make the big steps in the elite side will happen with the decision-makers.”\textsuperscript{101}

\section*{4.2 Player Recruitment and Youth Development}

Youth development can be described as the \textit{Research & Development} department of a club, where grassroots investment is needed in order to sustain growth. In women’s football, this aspect might be even more important with very limited budgets and less global migration of players than in the men’s game. Some of the top clubs still heavily rely on their own youth development. For example, Turbine Potsdam has only one foreign player (from Japan) in their 1st team and over half of FCR Duisburg’s first team are locally developed youth. While very successful on the pitch for many years, Umeå IK’s acquisition of Brazilian star player Marta and other expensive elite players almost ruined the club financially, and has now affected on-field performance. Effective youth development is an important tool to maintain success on the pitch, develop a local following, and invest in the long-term future of the club. These best practices will highlight the possible avenues for this area.

\subsection*{4.2.1 Best Practice 1: Cooperation with Schools}

One best practice model is the cooperation between Turbine Potsdam and local schools. Since 1996, Turbine Potsdam has maintained a partnership with the Sport School Potsdam Friedrich Ludwig Jahn.\textsuperscript{102} Each year a maximum of 12 new players join the school as

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{99} Documentary film: the Germany women’s national football team during the 2007 Women’s World Cup. \textit{Die Besten Frauen der Welt}. Documentary film, 2008.
\item \textsuperscript{101} Haenni, Interview, 3 June, 2010.
\item \textsuperscript{102} 1997 the DOSB and the NOC awarded the school as “Elite school of Sport”; 2006 the DFB awarded the school as “Elite school of football”
\end{itemize}
identified players with talent. There are around 100 youth football players, between 7 to 17 years old, playing for the seven youth teams of the club. The connection is clearly strong, as the Turbine Potsdam U15 and U17 youth teams are completely composed of players from the Sport School Potsdam. This kind of cooperation can be highlighted by the success of Turbine Potsdam players in the youth national teams. So far over 15 players from Turbine Potsdam development system have participated in international tournaments for Germany. Also, just domestically, a testament to the youth development is the recent championship at the U17 level, as well as 8 U17s from last year joining the full women’s 2nd team.

4.2.2 Best Practice 2: Dutch System of Satellite Clubs

While clubs like Turbine Potsdam utilize developments outside of football by their National Olympic Committee, the Dutch have a different but effective system. Each Eredivisie Vrouwen club is linked to a Hoofdklasse club (2nd division club) and acts as a so-called "Satellietclub". In this cooperation, the second division club acts as the amateur, youth and development section of the Eredivisie club, but not a financial burden to the Eredivisie club. Despite being two different clubs, players are registered for both clubs simultaneously, thus can freely move between teams. This gives youth players the opportunity to play at the highest level at any time in a season, and struggling first team players valuable match play. The unique closed league system is what really allows this type of youth development. The egalitarian attitude of the Dutch league, such as player exchanges after each season to maintain a balanced league, lends itself to full cooperation between the Eredivisie Vrouwen club and its 2nd division partner without fear of relegation or player poaching.

4.2.3 Best Practice 3: Youth Academies

While Turbine Potsdam cooperates with local sports schools, and Eredivisie Vrouwen with local clubs, teams part of a larger men’s club often look inwardly for a youth development

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103 Apart from school education these students attend up to nine football-training sessions per week.
105 6 players for the 2007 European Championship U19 National team. 4 currently play for the U23 Youth National Team, 5 for the U20 National Team. This does not take into account players on the full national team
107 Janssens, Interview, 10, May 2010.
108 Marleen Molenaar, AZ Alkmaar Women's Team Manager, interview by Sarah Schmitter, phone interview, 14, June 2010.
structure. An excellent example is Olympique Lyonnais and their integration of female youth teams into their academy system. Olympique Lyonnais has a 5.5 million euro a year training academy. While it does not divulge the exact portion spent on female youth development, it does explicitly state in the financial statements that the youth academy services both genders. Likewise, additional resources such as academic tutors are also available and utilized by the female youth teams.\textsuperscript{109} Similarly, as one of the first in England,\textsuperscript{110} Arsenal Ladies Academy uses the men’s training facility for its on-field training, and also receives outside support through the English FA. In 1997, The Football Association launched a Talent Development Plan for Women's Football, as part of The FA Charter for Quality. The Plan aimed to provide a sound structure for the development of elite talent in the female game. Arsenal LFC now runs one of these Centres of Excellence, and has incorporated it into their youth development.\textsuperscript{111}

4.2.4 The Political Factor

Women’s football, like all sports, does not exist in a vacuum but is greatly impacted on by the social and political context. Scandinavia, in particular, has a strong governmental influence. The NFF made a decision to focus on creating facilities for young people to play football by building mini artificial football pitches all over Norway. While just this fact may not directly translate into more access for girls, combined with the Norwegian focus on gender equality, it has created the right environment for young girls to be encouraged to participate in sport. This has resulted in one of the highest participation rates in the world, with almost a third of all registered football players in Norway being female.\textsuperscript{112} Equality laws in Norway have also resulted in it being mandatory for organizations such as the NFF to have female representatives on various boards and decision making bodies, resulting in a greater female focus. Governmental actions have directly influenced the opportunities given to girls

\textsuperscript{112} Skille, “Norway”, 522.
and women to participate in organized sport, creating a strong youth development in women’s football.\textsuperscript{113}

4.2.5 Projects with time frame

A current trend in youth development is time-stamped projects, giving a time frame for project completion, creating urgency for development. Turbine Potsdam established a project called “Team 2011,” surely related to Germany hosting the Women’s World Cup in 2011. This team is composed of twelve of the most talented Turbine Potsdam youth players, ranging from age 14 to 17. These players train once a week under the first team’s coach and get financial, academic and professional support. The intention of this specific project is to increase their chances for the National Team and success in the Frauen-Bundesliga.\textsuperscript{114} Forerunners in these types of youth projects, the EFD, together with the SvFF, started as early as 2000, a three-year women’s football project, called “Damenprojektiten”, for development. Currently, the EFD is currently operating a programme called “Talent 2013” focusing on the 2013 European Championships, aimed at youth development. The programme provides the clubs with access to funding if they comply with EFD requirements. Additionally, the SvFF conducts numerous junior programmes, coach education, and training camps.\textsuperscript{115}

4.3 Infrastructure

Infrastructure is a necessity for teams, from changing rooms and field space, to front office and space for administration. On the one hand, the infrastructure fulfils basic functions for the club for their daily football-related business. On the other hand it can be an asset clubs can use for different purposes. In recent years, it has become clear, that owning their stadium is a key driver for revenue growth in professional football.\textsuperscript{116} Owning a stadium allows the club to generate more than just gate receipts: income from parking, food and beverage, hospitality, banners, naming rights plus renting the facilities for conferences or concerts make

\textsuperscript{113}Heidi Støre, Norsk Fotball Forbund, interview by Creesen Naicker, 2, June 2010.
\textsuperscript{115} Linda Wijkström, Elitföreningen Damfotboll (EFD), interview by Creesen Naicker, 21, May 2010.
\textsuperscript{116} Gancikoff, Nicholas (January 2010) Sports Investment Group: Stadium Development, presentation, SDA Bocconi.
up a huge portion of many football clubs’ income. Additionally, a stadium can also be a fixed asset used to leverage on loans.

4.3.1 Training facilities

Unfortunately, very few clubs analyzed own their stadium fully or can benefit from the above-mentioned sources of revenue. However, for training, as with the youth teams, many of the women’s teams within larger clubs, also have access to the exceptional professional training facilities. For example, the women of Olympique Lyonnais have access to the brand new 4.4 million Euro training centre of the club. The Bayern München women train at the clubs’ headquarters at Säbenerstraße as well as the Olympic training centre.

Concerning the training grounds, most clubs have their own training facilities, but also use alternatives. 1.FFC Turbine Potsdam train at the Olympia base in Potsdam, which is an elite training centre financed by the ministry of interior affairs, who are responsible for sport in Germany. Røa IL often train on a shared field due to demand for the artificial grass surface, and if an upcoming match is on grass, then the club searches for alternative venues, however this proves to be very challenging. There are still many obstacles in arranging accurate training and playing facilities, especially for independent clubs.

4.3.2 Match Facilities for Associated Clubs

Many of the teams within larger clubs are allowed to play in the main professional stadium on certain occasions but rarely play there. It simply wouldn’t make financial sense with the current league attendances. Everton Ladies, Arsenal Ladies, Olympique Lyonnais, and Bayern Munich all play their league home games at different venues than the professional men’s team. While the men’s stadium is often in the city centre, the women play in suburban, out of the way stadiums, holding an average of 3,000 spectators. While space is limited in many urban areas, the Olympique Lyonnais utilizes a stadium adjacent to the larger stadium, which in the future may assist in increasing fan attendance.

4.3.3 Private-Public partnerships for infrastructure creation

The example of the FCR 01 Duisburg is a typical scenario of a successful women’s club struggling to expand their infrastructure and seize the opportunity to generate more revenue.
The club has to pay a rental fee on their home ground,\textsuperscript{117} although they were able to break even with ticket sales. Nonetheless, not having a club-owned or run stadium makes it extremely difficult for the club to develop the additional revenue streams coming from match day. Currently, there is no income for the club from parking, catering, or sponsorship banners. Additionally, there is a considerable difference in attendance for European matches, requiring the team to rent much larger stadium, such as for the 2009 UEFA Cup Final\textsuperscript{118} and in 2010, due to UEFA regulations on floodlighting, the Champions League matches were forced to be played at a completely different stadium.\textsuperscript{119} Not having a stable venue causes a disconnect for fans and lacks the atmosphere of a true “home” stadium.

The club is currently looking into options for getting their own stadium. Mainly, there are two options: the first to develop the club’s training ground into a stadium. While technically feasible, the budget for this development is 7-10 million Euros, which the club cannot finance. FCR Duisburg believes, their second option is the Sportpark Wedau, a 10 000 seat stadium owned by the city. Formerly used by Eintracht Dusburg, it is now used purely for athletics training. The club is currently in negotiations with the municipality. With minimal additional development\textsuperscript{120} and being a ‘clean’ stadium from a marketing perspective,\textsuperscript{121} the stadium would appear to be a great source of income for the club, as sponsorship could include items such as stadium signage and catering opportunities. While this appears to be an ideal situation, there are political issues with the municipality, including its previous agreements concerning hosting athletics training. However if these could be resolved during the current negotiation, the additional income that could be generated for the club is estimated to be 150,000-200,000 Euros annually.\textsuperscript{122}

While teams with an affiliation to a larger club tend to benefit from the infrastructure in place, other clubs struggle to generate more than a marginal revenue stream from their facilities. Highlighting FCR Duisburg’s attempts at creating a home stadium, women’s clubs

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{117} FCR Duisburg 2001 play their home games at the PCC-stadium of FC Homburg with a capacity of 3,000.
  \item \textsuperscript{118} The club rented 31,500 Duisburger MSV-Arena, which they almost filled (28,112).
  \item \textsuperscript{119} The Champions League matches were played in Oberhausen Stadion Rheinenergie, 21,000 capacity, which met the newly introduced UEFA standards for the Women’s Champions League.
  \item \textsuperscript{120} The stadium currently has available parking and VIP boxes, however FCR Duisburg would look into additionally seating to be built.
  \item \textsuperscript{121} A “clean” stadium meaning it currently has no sponsorship banners or signs.
  \item \textsuperscript{122} Jasinski, Interview, 21, May 2010.
\end{itemize}
could benefit from a municipality-club agreement to fund their own stadium, and giving their fans a place to call home. As noted, teams under the ownership of men’s clubs, often play in shared stadiums, so this may be a possibility for these teams as well. The city would have a stable and prestigious tenant in the stadium, while the club could benefit from the better facilities and improved possibilities for income generation.

4.4 Finances and Ownership

In sporting organizations, there are many different types of organizations, each with its unique challenges and opportunities. One type of structure, the association, is the most common type for sports clubs, but it does hinder commercial investment into the club. However, this structure is beneficial for teams who incorporate a larger community effort and want to be protected from the decisions of owners who are not compelled to consult the member/fans in any way. Some states give additional tax and rates benefits to associations. In addition, some leagues such as the Toppserien in Norway insist on clubs being an association. A co-operative has the similar benefits of an association, however its “one man, one vote” could prove to lack the efficiency of decision making that is necessary. The third structure is the corporation, which is a commercial entity based on transferable ownership. This allows for owner investment and sometimes, easier access to finance for capital-intensive projects. In an industry that seldom shows a profit, the ownership model does not offer a serious return on investment except for the potential capital gain in future selling of the club, hence owning a football club is more of a status symbol than a shrewd financial investment.

In the same way there are many structures in other sports, the finances and ownership vary greatly in European women’s club football, which makes them almost incomparable. One item to note as well is the large discrepancy between the top clubs and those developing around Europe. Budgets within the clubs analyzed range from Olympique Lyonnais Feminine listing in their financial statement in 2008 a budget of 2.8 million Euros, to the average Dutch budget, including AZ Alkmaar, at 150,000 Euros. There are two most common structures,

123 In an association, one cannot distribute dividends.
full ownership by a larger club, which is either an association or a corporation, whose primary role is to run a men’s team, and “stand-alone” clubs, whose main purpose is to run a women’s team, and most often structured as an association. However, within both of these structures, best practices can be found, which maximize the possibilities of either option.

With what can be referred to as stand-alone or women’s-only clubs, the primary concern is finding resources, as they do not have the yearly funding coming from a large revenue-generating commercial-oriented club. Those who have found the most long-term sustained success have combined diversified revenue-generation and measured growth based on revenue not player acquisition. Teams such as FCR Duisburg decided to become a women’s only club precisely because there was insufficient support from their adjoined men’s club. Now depending on the year, their budget has been exceeding 1 million Euros, split between sponsorship deals, subsidies from the DFB and UEFA, and match day revenue. Likewise, Umeå IK, despite recently going through hard financial times, have been able to stay afloat through the economic recession with a combination of sponsorship, funding from the EFD/SvFF, and a small amount from match day revenue. While it may be difficult for a club located in a sparsely-populated area of Sweden to increase its match day revenue, clubs such as 1. FFC Turbine Potsdam and FCR Duisburg, may benefit from an increase in match day revenue through their locations in heavily populated areas.

The majority of independent clubs are associations, however they are split between those connected to multi-sport club and those focused specifically on a women’s football team. One example of this is Røa IL, which is one of many Scandinavian women’s teams that are part of a larger multi-sport club. However, the team remains a separate legal entity. So while it maintains a brand identity linked to the community through being the Røa women’s football team, there are positives, such as greater financial autonomy, to maintaining a separate legal organization. Also considered stand-alone clubs, Turbine Potsdam and FCR Duisburg are structured as associations with registered members. While certainly not to the scale of FC Barcelona with its over 170,000 members, FCR Duisburg has 322 members, and

126 Jasinski, Interview, 21, May 2010.
127 Britta Åkerlund, Umeå IK, interview by Creesen Naicker, 10, June 2010.
128 Austad, and Nickelsen, Interview, 12, May 2010
Turbine Potsdam, 350, lending opportunity for future growth from the community, not just business interest through sponsorship.\textsuperscript{129}

It is apparent how women’s only clubs have taken ownership of their own development, but teams under the ownership of men’s clubs have also taken steps to become something beyond a corporate social responsibility project. These clubs have seen the stability of financing from a men’s club as an opportunity to take ownership of its own development through pro-activity as well as putting proper safeguards in place to ensure its future. It is no surprise with a history of clubs like Fulham and Charlton Athletic, who made big promises to women’s football and then reneged, the English FA has required a change of structure for clubs entering the Super League in 2011. Each club will be required to make the women’s team a legal subsidiary. Since the English FA will be funding an estimated 43\% of the annual budget, according to their expenditure model, they see this structure is imperative to maintain transparency from the clubs, and ensure the money will be used solely for the women’s team.\textsuperscript{130} Similarly, although not a legal subsidiary, the women’s team of Bayern Munich has “complete autonomy” with the exception of final approval on major decisions by the Bayern Munich board, according to the women’s team coordinator.\textsuperscript{131} This also gives those who are knowledgeable concerning women’s football specific issues, ownership to make decisions on all aspects of the team.

These finance and ownership structures are the most common, however there is an additional interesting point in women’s football, which could be expanded or developed further. Within the theme of financial sustainability, the EFD has created an economic license. In addition to protecting clubs from incurring excessive debt, it also has measures in place to help put ‘first aid’ plans in effect to assist clubs who might have financial difficulty.\textsuperscript{132} This appears to be the only one of its kind within European women’s football, and something in development on the men’s side, a possible solution to deal with the recent increase in expenditures within the women’s game.

\textsuperscript{131} Karen Danner, Women’s Coordinator, Bayern München, interview by Sarah Crumbach and Sarah Schmitter, phone interview, 29, March 2010.
\textsuperscript{132} Wijkström, Interview, 21, May 2010.
Only one or two clubs or federations, of those researched, did not mention concern over the recent growth of spending needed to be competitive with European women’s club football or highlight sustainability as an important topic. This indicates the importance of finances currently within women’s club football. However, while they expressed concern, the most successful clubs were those who actively sought development, instead of acceptance of the status quo or historical precedence.

4.5 Marketing and Media

4.5.1 Sports Marketing

Sport marketing has established itself as a major industry, proven by the rising interest in sports sponsoring. Especially for big enterprises the image transfer and the enhancement of the degree of brand awareness through the engagement in popular sports is a useful instrument. Sport marketing has become a priority for the clubs as well. Creating brand awareness is becoming increasingly important, but also challenging in a rapidly evolving sports industry. A review of literature suggests two distinct categories, marketing of sport and marketing through sport. The overall aim is to build up a brand, to raise the brand awareness or to transfer an image.

4.5.2 Marketing and Media in Women’s Football

The largest audience for a women’s football game in Europe reached 26,282 spectators at the 2010 DFB Cup Final and the Women’s Champions League final was seen by over 4 million television viewers. Despite these respectable numbers, the spectator size in women’s football averages only about 600, and few games are televised. As men’s football gains millions in broadcasting rights to show their games, the women’s game is not shown at all, or given for free to the broadcasters in order to create awareness. Despite these

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133 Defined as the commercialisation of a sport or an athlete by applying result-oriented techniques of economic science and communication or media adoption with the intention to satisfy customer needs.

134 Defined as the commercialisation of goods and services packages with the use of sport as a communication platform.


137 Molenaar, Interview, 14, June 2010.
challenges, clubs and their leagues have been able to develop some marketing, including recent developments in social media.

4.5.3 Marketing Strategy Formulations

Instead of ad hoc marketing and relying on media outlets, women’s football has begun to strategize a marketing plan. The approach of the KNVB and, most recently, the English FA, could be deemed a best practice and broadly applicable. Before creating Eredivisie Vrouwen’s current format, the KNVB began with a business plan to develop national women’s football.138 Similarly, the English FA has conducted market research and developed a strategic plan for its Super League.139 So far, they are following the principles defined by Gerd Nufer and André Bühler. Their message underlines that sports marketing is not just a modification of the general form of marketing, but should be seen as a very special – almost independent – type of marketing.140

4.5.4 Radio and Television Presence

Television, being an expensive form of media to produce broadcasts or exploit for advertisement, is mostly utilized by teams within men’s clubs. Olympique Lyonnais broadcasts on their private channel, OLTV, the Women’s Champions League games and includes the team in other club-created content.141 Bayern Munich, as well, capitalizes on its commercially orientated men’s team. Their private channel will include the women’s team in reports from time-to-time.142 Exceptionally, FCR Duisburg, as quite a small organisation in comparison, has developed a strong connection to local radio and television, and is broadcasted regularly by the regional WDR TV and radio. Beyond these clubs, television presence is most often a league-wide negotiation, with the 2011 Super League to be televised on ESPN, and the Damellsvenkan nationally televised in Sweden. As Tessa Hayward stressed in her interview, the English FA feels television is a must to developing the league’s national profile.143

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138 Janssens, Interview, 10, May 2010.
139 Hayward, Interview, 12, May 2010.
142 Danner, Interview, 29, March 2010.
143 Hayward, Interview, 12, May 2010.
4.5.5 Print Media Presence

Another potentially expensive form of marketing, despite its effectiveness is print media. Turbine Potsdam deems such print media a priority, and distributes “Die Turbine” with a print run up to 1,000 copies at every game. Further on they produce a 150-page magazine “Turbine Saisonheft” at the beginning of every new season. However the majority of clubs are more similar to AZ Alkmaar. The club has marketing strategies, which will indirectly increase revenue through increased exposure. However, they have prioritized their time to attracting more sponsorship, a direct revenue stream.

4.5.6 Internet Presence

Increasingly, women’s teams see a dynamic Internet presence as the most affordable avenue for increasing brand awareness, as well as reaching an important demographic, the youth. The leagues are using their resources to host live streaming of important games, including regular highlights segments on DFB TV and The English FA TV. Beyond leagues, Olympique Lyonnais is an important study for teams within a larger men’s club. They have fully integrated the team in their website news articles, weekly online highlight shows, photo galleries, and online merchandise shop. This greatly increases the brand awareness for the Olympique Lyonnais women’s team, and increases the team’s legitimacy to its men’s team fans.

For women’s-only clubs, the best practices have been exploiting new media platforms to gain exposure for the team. Since February 2009 Turbine Potsdam, as the first Bundesliga club, is operating a YouTube channel by the name of “Turbine TV.” FCR Duisburg, Umeå IK and Turbine Potsdam use Facebook, with the later on Twitter as well, to engage with fans with regular news updates and discussion boards. Turbine Potsdam also uses the Internet

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145 Molenaar, Interview, 14, June 2010.
146 Schulha, Interview, 10, June 2010.
for broadcasting, with Internet radio channel “Babelsberg Hitradio” reporting live every game.

4.5.7 Marketing and Media Conclusions

Using print and television to marketing women’s football on a club level can be costly. Until the sport gains popularity such that the interest will garner broadcaster-produced content, like the men’s game, women’s clubs are beginning to see the potential in internet platforms, linking into the global fan base for women’s football. As well, while not fully developed, clubs are also using social media platforms to create a community for the fans, albeit online, to engage with each other and the team. Also, as seen there is potential in creating a strong regional partnership to connect with local fans through regional television and radio.

4.6 Sponsorship

4.6.1 Types and Importance of Sponsorship Revenue

Sponsorship is a vital revenue stream for athletes, clubs, federations and sporting events on all levels, all over the world. There are three particular aspects of sponsorship including building brand equity, patronage, and exclusivity. The first is a company’s effort to link their brand with the brand identity of the team, and based off the companies decision to expand consumers’ awareness of their brand through sport. Patronage on the other hand is closely linked to Corporate Social Responsibility, or CSR:

“Whilst pure sport sponsorship can often be based on hard nosed marketing and business decisions, any CSR investment is based more on how a business can improve the communities in which it operates.”

And lastly, exclusivity is the standard procedure to enhance brand recognition for the sponsor. Effective sponsorship brings together sponsors and organisations that have similar brand values and target groups. Those partnerships tend to have mutually beneficial effects. In order to achieve that, it is important to know or define target groups and brand values of

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the sporting entity. This is why it is crucial to have a sponsorship strategy. Women’s football is no exception.

4.6.2 Sponsorship in European Women’s Football

Sponsorship is increasing in women’s football on the whole, and for all of the interviewed clubs, sponsorship is one of the main sources of income. E.g. for Umea IK, sponsorship income represents 50% of all revenues. For FCR 01 Duisburg, it is also the biggest source of income, before DFB-subsidies and gate receipts. Based on the collected data and interviews, there seem to be two successful models. The first one is what will be called the ‘Integrated Sponsorship Model’, which is relevant for women’s teams that are part of a big brand club. The second one is the ‘Women’s Club Sponsorship Model’, which is more relevant for strong brands of pure women’s clubs.

4.6.3 Integrated Sponsorship Model

Many clubs in European women’s football are under the ownership or linked with a men’s club. In this case, it is often the flagship of the club, which is used to attract the best and most generous sponsors for the entire club because of the higher brand value. For example Arsenal LFC, Everton Ladies, Bayern München women, Olympique Lyonnais women all have exactly the same sponsors as the professional men’s teams. Consequently, the women’s team (and other departments of the club) simply become part of the sponsorship deal. There are benefits and challenges to the integrated model, and Tatjana Haenni argued in her interview, her club was seeking a women’s only team sponsor, and that all clubs should do so to lessen the reliance on the men’s team and, more importantly, differentiate the “product” of women’s football in the consumer’s mind. However, Karen Danner, women’s coordinator of Bayern Munich would disagree and stated, “The club is our main sponsor. This means we

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150 Elisa Bortoluzzi Dubach and Hansrudolf Frey, eds. Sponsoring: Der Leitfaden für die Praxis (Haupt Verlag: Bern, 2007), 111.
151 DFB acquired 3 new sponsors for premium category of the women’s national team, and already having a 750,000 Euro main sponsorship. TESCO supermarkets have successfully sponsored women’s football in England, and E.ON, specifically the women’s FA Cup. DFB (2009) Der DFB reduziert die Zahl seiner Sponsoren [WWW]. Available from: http://www.handelsblatt.com/magazin/fussball/der-dfb-reduziert-die-zahl-seiner-sponsoren;2266558 [Accessed 29/06/2010].
152 Jasinski, Interview, 21, May 2010.
154 Haenni, Interview, 3 June, 2010.
have financial stability and don’t have to worry about finding sponsorship in a difficult market, especially for women’s football.” Her argument is that the sponsorship model gives the women’s team financial stability, and the pull-factor from an already established strong brand-identity of the overall club. Also, they do not have to spend precious human resource to find sponsors themselves.

4.6.4 Women’s Club Sponsorship model

As discussed, the two other common structures for a women’s football team is the stand-alone club and those associated by brand, but not legal identity with a multi-sport club. With their structure, these clubs must procure their own sponsorship. With the example of Turbine Potsdam, they have used what some clubs see as a challenge, as an opportunity to go after regional companies and emerging brands, as well as create meaningful partnerships to reduce costs. They have divided the sponsorship categories clearly into one main sponsor who is the shirt sponsor, 5 premium sponsors who get visibility on the banners in the stadium, and one kit supplier. Further more they have created different partnership categories: automotive transport (2), media (1), hotel (3), airline (1), sporting goods (1), legal counselling (1), office technology (1). These categories can almost be created almost at will and help to differentiate product categories for sponsors.

Apart from customary sponsorship, Turbine Potsdam also have a development association/sponsoring society (“Förderkreis”). The members of that club are small and medium sized companies from the region. Together with these companies, Turbine Potsdam develops individual deals tailored to the company’s resources and needs. Gaining the status of a member of the development society gives the company the right to use the “Förderkreis”-logo in their advertisement (showing the connection to Turbine Potsdam), the access to the VIP area at matches, invitations to sponsorship meetings and access to the business network of Turbine Potsdam. All those benefits are an attractive offer for smaller companies, because it gives them the chance to use the image of the club and do some regional networking for a lower price than an official sponsorship.

In this way, the club has been able to make sponsorship the main source of revenue and compete at the highest level with teams with much greater brand awareness such as Arsenal and Olympique Lyonnais. Turbine Potsdam have successfully segmented
sponsorship categories to attract regional and some national sponsors and have created a system where smaller companies get the opportunity to build a connection with the club in a way that is affordable as well as beneficial for them. It is important to note, that those are not to be considered donations because the companies do obtain direct and indirect benefits from the co-operation. This is an important aspect that is sometimes lacking in other clubs.

4.6.5 Importance of Sponsorship Strategy

Some clubs researched have gained short-term benefit from getting as many piece-meal sponsorships as possible. However, for the long-term financial health of the team, the most successful have developed clear sponsorship strategies and concepts, systems and categories that will cater to different needs of different sponsors, to avoid cluttering as well as diffusion of brand. They have put themselves into the shoes of potential sponsors and develop their systems in cooperation with the sponsor. Only when the sponsors see the return on investment will they be willing to engage on a long-term basis.

4.7 Match day

It is important to fully understand best practice within the match day context. In order to do this, attendance figures of the selected clubs and leagues were analyzed in relation to the ticketing scheme. Table 1 illustrates the various prices per club for a single match, referring to only regular season matches.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Club Match Day Ticket Prices – Regular Season</th>
<th>Single Match</th>
<th>Season ticket</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arsenal LFC</td>
<td>£3 (approx. €3,6)</td>
<td>£20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everton Ladies</td>
<td>£2-£3 (btwn €2,4–3,6)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olympique Lyonnais</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCR Duisburg</td>
<td>€8 - 12</td>
<td>€80 - 110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC Bayern Munich</td>
<td>€4 - 6</td>
<td>N/A*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turbine Potsdam</td>
<td>€4 - 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AZ Alkmaar</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roa IL</td>
<td>50 NOK (€ 6, 50)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umeå IK</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Season ticket holders of men’s team can attend for free
As one can derive from the table, ticket prices are relatively inexpensive across clubs with the most expensive being FCR Duisburg. English clubs are priced slightly lower in comparison to others, yet all remain quite reasonable. AZ Alkmaar, takes unique approach by allowing its fans to attend matches without any cost. Marleen Molenaar, Manager of the AZ Alkmaar women’s team, explained the club’s philosophy is to have as many spectators as possible and that charging an admission price would hinder attendance. However such beliefs are difficult to prove, especially when the common marketing school of thought concerning free admission is that it devalues the event creating a lower demand.155

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Club/League</th>
<th>Spectator Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.FFC Turbine Potsdam</td>
<td>1,437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCR 2001 Duisburg</td>
<td>1,299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damallsvenskan</td>
<td>603*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC Bayern Munich</td>
<td>394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AZ Alkmaar</td>
<td>300 to 800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roa IL</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D1 Féminine (France)</td>
<td>200**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English FA</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Average number from 2001 to 2010.
** Data obtained from UEFA 5th Conference on Women’s Football

The data shown in Table 2 presumes that Frauen-Bundesliga, represented by the attendance figures of 1.FFC Turbine Potsdam and FCR 2001 Duisburg, would have the highest number of spectators present per game, while both clubs from England tend to have the lowest figure in match attendance of their league. Of course such discrepancy could be attributed to several factors and therefore would be difficult to single out one particular reason. However, it is important to mention that despite the relative low cost in ticket price, the attendance figures still tend to be comparatively low across women’s football in general.

Table 3 sheds a considerably different angle with regard to the attendance figure based on available data gathered across the leagues.

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We can clearly see that there is a significant increase in terms of spectator attendance depending on the competition format. Zoe Schulha, Marketing Manager of Women’s Football, English FA, believes despite the discouraging attendance in league matches, the Women’s FA Cup final accounts up to 25,000 in stadium attendance in addition to an estimated 2 million television viewers across the country.¹⁵⁶

Presumably, it is the marketing strategy of the FA for the Cup Final, which contributes to the large increase in attendance. The amount of television coverage in terms of major sponsor support and overall advertising campaign surrounding the event is unparalleled in the regular season of the Women’s Premier League. Therefore, the challenge is how to emulate and communicate this particular experience together with the launch of the new Super League 2011. These findings are being taken seriously by the English FA. The Super League administration is in ongoing discussions concerning match day fan experience, including extraneous activities surrounding the game itself, such as having a family barbeque, music entertainment and children oriented activities. It is an opportunity to create a unique space for Super League within the football landscape of England, and engage spectators in the game day experience.

Finally, the performance of the national team has been linked to the attendance at club matches. As Linda Wijkström, of the EFD, explained the Swedish team won silver in FIFA Women’s World Cup 2003 and this resulted in the highest ever attendance figures during the following 2004/2005 season.¹⁵⁷ Although such direct relationship between national team success and league attendance is difficult to prove, many in Europe believe success in the Women’s World Cup 2011 will affect the domestic league.¹⁵⁸

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¹⁵⁶ Schulha, Interview, 10, June 2010.
¹⁵⁷ Wijkström, Interview, 21, May 2010.
¹⁵⁸ Danner, Interview, 29, March 2010.
While it may require additional game day staff and planning, the proposals by the English FA, festival-type game day experiences during Cup finals in Germany or during the League Championship in The Netherlands are vital to developing a larger fan base. In three game day experiences, it was observed there was no merchandise sold on-site or additional activities to engage fans.\textsuperscript{159} However, perhaps as the leagues begin to implement these match day strategies, it will filter into the clubs plans as well, or even be influenced by the 2011 Women’s World Cup being hosted in Europe.

\section*{4.8 Merchandise}

According to Hartmut Zastrow, Executive Director of SPORT+MARKT, the significant factors behind successful merchandising are sporting success, the size of the domestic market, the number of domestic and international club fans and professional merchandising structures.\textsuperscript{160} In terms of generating revenue, merchandise sales for most women’s football clubs does not account for any significant percentage of their annual financials. This could be attributed to various factors, such as lack of general interest by the public or merchandising deemed an unnecessary investment by club itself. This paper will discuss the current best-practice to highlight the potential. It is important to note, many clubs researched were reluctant to provide detailed financials due to confidentiality, and therefore some discussion will be based on anecdotal evidence from interviews and merchandising initiatives, such as integration into media platforms.

\subsection*{4.8.1 Media Platforms for Merchandise Promotion}

Clubs and leagues have begun to see the value of creating an online merchandise platform, to gain additional revenue through any fans outside its regional fan base. Following this perspective, Arsenal Ladies FC has an admirable platform to accommodate their fans making

\begin{footnotes}
\item[\textsuperscript{159}] Natalie Smith, game day experience, Arsenal LFC, May 12, 2010 and Olympique Lyonnais, April 10, 2010, Creesen Naicker, Roa IL, April 14\textsuperscript{th}, 2010
\end{footnotes}
merchandise available through their website.\textsuperscript{161} Related to Arsenal LFC, the English FA has taken note, and are considering a few merchandising projects for the Super League in 2011, including selling merchandise for the entire league online. The idea is not only to further increase the awareness level of the participating clubs, but to raise the overall league profile and image given that the league itself is a new product. An option considered, for example, is to post an interactive advertisement on various football related websites so that it could automatically direct the user to the Super League website. This could enable the FA to reach out to more potential customers with relative ease without necessarily promoting the Super League website extensively by itself. While the Super League is considering such projects, Turbine Potsdam has already fully engaged in eCommerce with an interactive online merchandise store, and its own URL, turbine-fanshop.de. While exact figures weren’t available, this type of accessibility to merchandise strongly linked to the team, gives fans an easy opportunity to identify with team through branded items. It is no surprise, despite being a small portion of their revenue, Umeå IK considers merchandising as an important division with dedicated personnel.

4.8.2 Item Variety and Brand Strength

Providing a variety of items will benefit the club in the future as women’s football continues to grow and the club, as a merchant, will be ahead of consumer’s wants. Despite being associated with a prominent international men’s club, including name, uniform, and youth academy, the Arsenal LFC still offer a wide variety ranging from calendars, mugs, scarf, key rings, and beanie cap, with their specific Arsenal Ladies logo printed. This is an important distinction as having its own logo allows Arsenal LFC to differentiate their merchandise products from their men’s counterpart – Arsenal FC. Women’s only clubs clearly see the opportunity to create a strong women’s team specific brand. Turbine Potsdam and FCR Duisburg 2001 both administer fan shops offering around 50 merchandise articles. Turbine Potsdam, in particular has an exclusive market to explore, given their recent triumph in both the Women’s Champions League 2009/2010 and Frauen-Bundesliga. Exploiting that success,

\textsuperscript{161} It is however, not entirely online. Fans are asked to fill out a downloadable form and are requested to send it to a specific mailing address to complete their purchase. Arsenal Ladies Merchandise, [WWW]. Available from: http://www.arsenal.com/155/unhoused-import-pages/buy-arsenal-ladies-merchandise [Accessed 06/25/2010]
a best seller in their online store is the Turbine-Shirt DOUBLE 2010. Following in the footsteps of many sporting clubs, Turbine Potsdam has leveraged their sporting success into direct revenue.

4.8.3 Merchandising Within a Men’s Club

There is a grey area that exists in defining what could be considered as women’s football merchandise. For teams existing within a larger club, especially with a highly commercialised men’s team, it proves to be difficult to identify merchandise branded for the women’s team. For example, some clubs sell their replica jerseys, which are identical for the men’s and women’s teams. This option does, however, provide opportunity for fans to customize the jersey to their favourite female player versus male player. There is room to provide the women’s team an opportunity to build its own brand and identify its players with the club merchandise. Olympique Lyonnais uses only players from its current squad for the merchandise catalogue. It serves a dual purpose, indentifying the merchandise with the women’s team for their fans, but also creates greater awareness of the players and team amongst fans of the Olympique Lyonnais men’s team.

4.8.4 Importance of Merchandising

While many dismiss merchandising as an expendable activity for developing women’s teams, merchandising should not be seen merely as profit seeking activity. For most supporters purchasing a particular item helps build a connection to the club they support. It should be noted the two teams playing at the 2010 UEFA Women’s Champions League final, Turbine Potsdam and Olympique Lyonnais, have strong merchandising plans. Albeit a different approach, one on variety and leveraging of success, the other full integration into the club’s catalogue, both are at the forefront of merchandising for women’s teams in Europe, including ease of purchasing and online promotion.

4.9 Community

Women’s football in Europe has had a long history of strong connections with the grassroots and community involvement. However, as they begin to grow and professionalise, it is key

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162 ibid.
that the clubs continue this relationship. It is important to explore a link between the community and the burgeoning commercial activities of the club. A few community opportunities and best practices found in the research include the following.

4.9.1 Holiday camps

Turbine Potsdam offers regularly taking place football holiday camps, of around 5 days for children from 6 – 12 years old.\textsuperscript{163} Camps such as these are extremely beneficial for the club in terms of revenue, gaining fan loyalty at a young age, and raising brand awareness in the local community. Additionally, these camps could also be beneficial to exchange experiences between different clubs on a regional as well as national level.

4.9.2 Football schools

In Germany, the DFB has introduced the concept of “Elite football schools for girls.” There are currently five certified Elite football schools for girls existing: Ahrweiler, Potsdam, Jena, Freiburg and Saarbrücken. These schools are aimed to better train young players and help them to combine their education with high performance sport. The DFB gives out a certificate to schools that fulfil their 18 criteria and supports each elite school with 30,000 Euros per year. In the upcoming two years, there are plans to double the number of certified schools.\textsuperscript{164} Clubs can capitalize on this DFB development by encouraging a partnership between the schools and the women’s team, much like what occurs in Potsdam, developing a relationship with these young players and their families.

A similar project occurs in England. The English Super League conducted studies to investigate families with 9-12 years old girls.\textsuperscript{165} This demographic investigation delivered some useful information to inform the marketing approach. This helps to form a better understanding of the target group potential, which the FA theorised are football interested girls and their families. This helps the FA structure the running of the Super League, as well as the Centres of Excellence and various grassroots initiatives like FA Skills, where there will be a strong connection between the future Super League clubs and schools.

\textsuperscript{164} DFB - Deutscher Fußball-Bund e.V. [WWW]. Available from: http://www.dfb.de/ [Accessed 31/05/2010].
\textsuperscript{165} Hayward, Interview, 12, May 2010.
4.9.3 Fan clubs

Fan clubs bring together the community with a vested interest in the club, and gives these fans a stronger sense of identity in relation to the team. Examples of fan clubs, include FCR 2001 Duisburg, FC Bayern Munich, Turbine Potsdam and Everton Ladies. Turbine Potsdam has two established fan clubs “Turbineadler”, founded in 2004 and “Turbinfans e.V.” founded in 2008. The Turbineadler even produce their own fan club magazine named “Schreiadler.” Building relationships between the team and the fan club are important, like in 2006 when the former Turbine Potsdam team captain, Ariane Hengst, dedicated the player number 12 jersey to the fan club as the “twelfth player of the team.” The number of fans is very limited at this point, but they still bring added value for connection between the club and the community.

4.9.4 Athletes in Public

A benefit to lower profile athletes, is the club’s ability to easily bring them into the community to raise awareness of the club. For example, Røa IL, on occasion, sends their team players to help people pack their shopping bags at one of their sponsor’s stores. It is a feel-good type community involvement, and benefits local awareness and interaction. The only additional opportunity not yet taken with this event is creating a PR campaign surrounding the good will gesture, which would reach a wider audience than those few physically present.

Along that vein, the county of Lower Saxony in Germany has run a campaign of social integration for girls through football at primary schools. While currently no individual women’s club is involved, it could also be an opportunity for a team to forge ties with a potentially multi-cultural fan base.

There is a lot of room for social engagement and initiatives, which clubs can continue to develop. A bigger cooperation with local schools and public establishments could lead to a

166 ibid.
168 ibid.
169 Austad, and Nickelsen, Interview, 12, May 2010
growing healthy relationship between clubs and communities. A quality community program can in the end grow revenue streams and create deep emotional connections between the fans and their club.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

5.1 Independent vs. Integrated clubs

From the analysis it becomes clear that the legal and organisational structure has a big impact on how a club is run. This creates hugely different scenarios for clubs. While teams that are integrated within a professional men’s club benefit from financial stability and resources and facilities of the club, they are not able to take many strategic management decisions that directly influence the running of the women’s team. They are for example bound to the sponsorship deals of the overall club and cannot develop their own strategic approach. These are the unique issues dealt with by clubs like Olympique Lyonnais, Bayern Munich, Arsenal Ladies and Everton Ladies. On the other hand, independent all-female clubs like FCR Duisburg 2001 and Turbine Potsdam can obviously develop their own marketing, branding and financial strategies to their specific target groups and are generally more flexible in their decisions. However, it can be extremely difficult to attract sponsorship and political support for some clubs, as they are simply not as well-known as the bigger clubs in the business. So while the independent clubs can develop more specific and targeted brands, they face difficult times when the sporting goals are missed or sponsors pull out. The integrated clubs enjoy the security of a guaranteed support mechanism that usually results in lesser independence in decision-making. No matter what legal and administrative form the club has, it also has to deal with the very different environments of the national federations and leagues.

5.2 Closed vs. Open Leagues

The creation of the Dutch league and the new English ‘Super League’ show an interesting trend. Certain football federations and clubs are starting to see the benefits of the closed league system. The traditional European league system in football has been, for a long time, that of the open league system with relegation and promotion. Nearly all leagues in Europe, amateur as well as professional, function this way. The system is designed to make the
highest level of sport accessible to anyone team or club that is good enough. Even teams with the most impressive winning records continuously have to prove their worth by taking up the challenges of new teams in order to keep their status. However, there is no rule that prescribes this system. The counterpart of the open leagues is the closed system, which is practised widely in American top leagues like the NBA and NFL, but also in global sports like Formula 1. The main advantage of a closed league without relegation or promotion is the stability on many levels. Firstly, it guarantees the participation of a team, making it much easier to plan finances. Sponsors will have the guarantee that a club will belong to the top league irrespective of the sporting results. This encourages long-term thinking and planning and enables clubs to plan more strategically rather than for mere survival from season to season. While the Dutch league has the goal to raise the overall level of women’s football of the country and provide a high-level training platform for the national team players, the English ‘Super League’ will have sustainability as the key value of their enterprise. The English FA has taken a lot of inspiration from the American WPS and additionally moved the season to the summer.\(^\text{171}\) Also, the Dutch practice a player-swapping system at the end of each season that is aimed at keeping the sporting balance as complete as possible. This is a way to keep the competition interesting and challenging for all teams every season as well as raise the overall sporting level.

5.3 Sustainability, Growth and Financial Planning

In all the clubs and leagues that were interviewed, there is a big emphasis on sustainability. Maybe knowing that the financial set-up of a women’s team is often very fragile or the fact that the game is essentially still amateur or at most semi-professional in Europe, the emphasis of clubs and women’s teams is often put on mere survival and planning for the next season. While sustainability naturally is a good way to run any club or business, it can, on some level, hinder development and growth. Possibly, the example of Umeå IK, who nearly went bankrupt over the acquisition of too many star players, might still be in the minds of many club managers. But ultimately, if the clubs want to develop, there has to be more than just preserving the status quo on the agenda.

\(^{171}\) Schulha, Interview, 10, June 2010.
5.4 Growing costs for clubs, staying competitive and the UEFA WCL

A further challenge linked to finances is the growing costs for clubs to compete at the highest level. The rise of player’s wages and other costs, mentioned by many interviewees, put an even greater importance on exploring new sources of revenue. In order to stay competitive on a national, European and even global level, clubs are forced to compete in terms of wages and other benefits for players and coaches, as well as facilities and general environment. The ‘feet-drain’ mentioned by UEFA, which describes the player-migration towards the WPS, is a trend that clubs and leagues have to deal with. UEFA has tried to help stop and even reverse that trend by giving the European club competition more importance, by re-branding it and lifting it to a new level of importance. Although many stakeholders in the clubs are appreciative of this fact, there has also been some criticism that financial support from UEFA is often not sufficient. Subsidies of 20,000 Euros per stage often do not even cover travelling expenses that occur to the teams, while they also have to cover the board and lodging of UEFA officials at the home game and transport for the visitors.\textsuperscript{172} Also, by moving the final of the Cup to a neutral ground, UEFA has effectively taken a unique opportunity away from the finalists to have a one-off event that is both commercially beneficial and a strong brand-building opportunity in the home market. Although the finalists both get a fixed premium, it becomes more difficult and costly for fans to see their team, as they usually are not willing or able to travel far. This has a negative effect on attendance and atmosphere in the stadium.

5.5 Low league attendance and problems in the marketing mix

A problem that all leagues have in common is the relatively low average attendance. While national team games and cup matches can attract crowds that easily go up to thousands and also ten thousands, the regular league attendance averages below 1,000.\textsuperscript{173} This issue is one of the most difficult to solve, because it means winning over regular customers. When looking at the leagues, there might be a lack of strategy or simply the wrong ‘marketing mix’. There is the element of timing: in many European countries, the league is played at the same time as the various men’s leagues, as well as other sports. The question is whether there is any good reason for it other than holding on to the ‘tradition’. The new English Super League

\textsuperscript{172} UEFA 2010-2011 UEFA Women’s Champions League Regulations, Nyon, 2010: 29.
has taken a bold step by moving the league to the summer. It is still to be tested and proven, but with league attendances even of the biggest teams being so low, there is hardly anything to lose. Another issue in the marketing mix seems to be the place/venue. Too often, especially with integrated teams like Arsenal LFC or Bayern Munich, the venues for the matches are far outside the city and very hard to access by public transport. This might be a factor that discourages interested parties in attending league matches. Furthermore, the lack of a real ‘home ground’ is a problem for many teams that hinders them to exploit match day revenues like naming rights, banners, parking, hospitality, and catering. Lastly, the issue of pricing is a difficult one. When demand is low, prices must be low - this logic seems to be widely applied in women’s football. In the Dutch and English league, this means that league matches are free. Bayern Munich tries to attract holders of season tickets for the men’s professional team by granting them free entry to the women’s home matches, without considering that they might be in direct competition with each other. At the same time, they do not even offer a season ticket for the women’s team. These examples show that even in the top teams, the pricing strategy is not very developed.

5.6 Clear strategies and diversification of revenue streams

The aforementioned issues highlight the fact that there is a lot of room for improvement in the marketing of the leagues. There seem to be no clear long-term strategy in place, which will guide the club’s actions. Another issue is that many of them struggle to diversify their revenue streams. In the case of FCR Duisburg, there is a strong desire towards getting a new home ground in order to make match day a bigger source of income. From Turbine Potsdam, there is a big push in diversifying the range of merchandise on their online shop. Arsenal LFC offers holiday camps for girls. All these are alternative sources of revenue that can help a club’s development but are often not feasible for lack of human resources and/or investment.

5.7 Lack of expertise and inter-club communication

The lack of resources and expertise is a great obstacle for the development of clubs and leagues. There are often only one or two full-time employees that have to manage the entire business of the club, from player’s contracts and promotion campaigns to budget planning.
Without taking anything away from those all-rounders, it means that there is a lot of improvising and guess-work going on in the every-day business of a football club, especially in independent women’s clubs who do not have the back-up of a professional club expertise. Without the time and expertise to plan far ahead, it is maybe not surprising that there is no extensive co-operation or even communication on the European level. The only international communication takes place when teams play in the European competitions and those contacts are brief, not on a regular basis and often only related to sport and organisational issues. Clubs have a direct link to their federations, who run the leagues, but among themselves, there is still a lot of room for improvement. In Germany and France, clubs are not organised, meaning they do not have regular meetings of club representatives to exchange ideas or discuss common issues. In the Dutch League, clubs closely co-operate, due to the fact that it is a closed league and they exchange players at the end of the season. The Swedish league has the semi-independent EFD to promote the league. There is a lot of room for improving communication between clubs on a national as well as European level, which could be beneficial in terms of knowledge sharing.

5.8 Huge discrepancy between the top and bottom

One of the main characteristics of the game is that there is a large discrepancy, both in sporting and economic terms. On the sporting side, there are only a few teams that make it regularly to the final rounds of European competition. Even in the final rounds of the UEFA WCL, there are results like 8:2 in the round of 16 or a 10:0 aggregate win of Potsdam over Røa IL. This shows the huge gap that still exists on a sporting level. Equally, the economic gap between a few at the top and the rest is huge. While the game, even at the highest level, is still largely amateur, even the top clubs can only be called semi-professional at most, with many players still being students or following at least part-time jobs. With room for improvement, new ideas and input is generally welcomed, and many clubs and federations are interested in sharing experience. Eredivisie manager Priscilla Jansen stated in her interview: “Everyone is dealing with similar issues, whether it is marketing, sponsorship

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relations or media rights.”\textsuperscript{175} So whether it is national or international exchange, there is room for dialogue.

5.10 Grassroots, community and schools

Like any popular sport in Europe, women’s football depends on the organisational pyramid, which has grassroots and youth as its base. In Europe, clubs have found different ways of developing this aspect. Some, like Arsenal and Lyon, invest into private academies. Others, like Potsdam and the DFB in general, facilitate partnership with public institutions like schools (by certifying official football schools) and the Olympic training centres. Also, the organising of holiday camps and tournaments for girls are grass root activities that are aimed at both raising interest in the sport, seeking talent as well as getting involved in the community. Especially the co-operation with the community and public bodies can be a major component of positioning the club socially, politically and economically in a region.

\textsuperscript{175} Janssens, Interview, 10, May 2010.
Chapter 6: Recommendations

The following recommendations are aimed at the main stakeholders of European women’s club football: the clubs themselves, national leagues and federations, UEFA and also the political institutions. They are meant to give ideas on how those stakeholders can contribute to support and push forward the development and professionalization of women’s football clubs.

6.1 Enhanced use of the Marketing-mix

From a sports marketing point of view and after having analysed different European women’s football leagues and their associated clubs, it was noticed that the overall marketing mix, if there is any, with the elements of product, price, place and promotion, is not effectively applied.\textsuperscript{176}

6.1.1 Product: Differentiation and development of new marketing concepts

The product “women’s football” could be differentiated by introducing a new marketing concept with moving the football league season to the summer period and selling women’s football as “the summer sport”, like the English FA has done with their Super League.\textsuperscript{177} With this differentiating action women’s football will turn into a more attractive event to attend, as there are fewer sports events taking place during the summer months and hence a lower level of competition. Moreover, this concept also “helps players to prepare and peak for international matches and tournaments, as a summer league aligns better with the international competition cycle.”\textsuperscript{178} Hence placing the national women’s football season in the summer period will be of high benefit to almost all stakeholders.

6.1.2 Price: Develop pricing strategy

The match day ticket prices of women’s football league games are too inexpensive, as analysed in the match day section. In theory the marketing mix element ‘price’ is determined by factors such as competition, costs, product identity and the customer’s perceived value of

\textsuperscript{178} ibid.
the product.\textsuperscript{179} Prices for women’s football league games should be set according to these factors. There is a lot of competition within the different European leagues, clubs face a lot of costs operating the women’s football game and sell a performance, which must be perceived as a high value product by its customers. Raising the prices for league game tickets is not only necessary to recover costs but also to avert a negative psychological effect that can be perceived as: “this product can’t have any value because it is that cheap.” Thus, a minimum entry fee should always apply, even if only for the guardian who take their children.

\textbf{6.1.3 Place: Find attractive and accessible venues}

For many investigated clubs, the location of where home games are played is creating a serious issue as attendance figures show. Men’s clubs with integrated women’s football teams should see the necessity of giving the possibility to their women’s teams, to use a bigger, centralised placed stadium to hold their matches. League games held in isolated places outside the city keep spectators from attending matches and impede the growing of the sport. Women’s only clubs are highly dependent on public-private partnerships. Public funding is highly valuable to stand alone women’s teams in terms of stadiums and facilities, and should be supported more.

\textbf{6.1.4 Promotion: Implement endorsement and advertising campaigns}

Despite ongoing activities in women’s football since the mid 70’s, the results of marketing promotion in women’s football are, when compared to the history of sports marketing, still relatively underdeveloped. Analysing the review of sports marketing, aforementioned in the marketing and media section, there are two main elements missing:

Firstly, on the way to success it seems essential to develop endorsement campaigns of individual athletes. In a second step it would be necessary to do so for some successful teams. Presently, the public general knowledge about the investigated clubs is minimal. There have been limited campaigns to deepen the knowledge of the main actors in women’s football. Clubs with a reasonable marketing budget should prepare campaigns of this character, to leverage their athletes and slowly develop their degree of popularity.

Secondly, advertising is a highly effective marketing tool. Female football players could be marketed in a way that highlights attributes such being healthy, active, ambitious, successful, competitive, mentally strong, feminine, communicative, and trustworthy. These

\textsuperscript{179} Cavusgil, \textit{Advances in International Marketing}, 2000.
values could be utilised by companies for the promotion of various different products that have these values as part of their portfolio or to a similar target audience as women’s football.

Examples for products and categories are numerous: cosmetics & personal hygiene, sports clothing & apparel, health products, supermarkets, nutrition, fashion, mobile phones & communication, watches, jewellery, cars, amongst others. An example of successful advertising using female athletes is German tennis player Steffi Graf advertising for the food company Dr. Oetker GmbH. Professional sports teams have also been successfully utilised in advertising. The German women’s national team has been part of an advertising campaign for the German business group REWE, being the official team premium partner. Such individuals and teams showcase how athletes can be utilised in marketing campaigns.

6.2 Utilise new media as young and cost effective tool

The clubs analysed showed some successful usage of social networks such as Facebook and twitter as well as video-sharing websites, such as YouTube, however this could be used more widely. These new forms of media, with a viral nature of divulgement, are the future of social exchange as already uncountable users are part of this trend. The social network website Facebook, being one of the biggest social networks worldwide, already counts for almost half a billion users. Women’s teams like FC Bayern Munich, FCR Duisburg and Turbine Potsdam already employ this form of new media, but member figures show that there is room for improvement. Other teams are advised to make use of this new, less costly, form of media, as it is a good way to attract a young target audience, and attract new supporters.

6.3 Diversification of revenue streams:

6.3.1 Offer holiday camps

Overall, the revenue streams of women’s football clubs should be diversified. Holiday camps to attract more young potential players by offering days of football experience and a chance to meet a women’s team star player could be a way to expand revenues. Turbine Potsdam is

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offering holiday camps on a regular basis to 6-12 year olds and Arsenal LFC offers summer holiday soccer schools of two days to 7-14 years old.\textsuperscript{183} Many successful examples of this kind can also be found in men’s football, with FC Bayern Munich, VfB Stuttgart 1893 e.V. and Manchester United.\textsuperscript{184 185 186}

6.3.2 Improve match day experience

The actual match day experience, being at a usual league game or a cup final, could be exploited in a more efficient way. Ideas for this kind of diversification are to turn the match day into a broader experience by offering site events for children and their families. The German city Cologne, gave a good example when hosting the DFB women cup final in May of this year, by turning the match day into a “family football fest.”\textsuperscript{187} The event included an array of additional programmes including music concerts and charity football games with different well-known sport characters, which brought added value to the spectators’ game day experience.

6.3.3 Develop merchandise range

Merchandise as a revenue stream offers a lot of room for exploitation. Turbine Potsdam and Arsenal LFC, more or less being the only women’s football clubs offering a broad range of merchandise products on their own website,\textsuperscript{188} show how this stream can be utilised. Turbine Potsdam is operating a good idea of selling their recent triumph within merchandise items. Other clubs could take this example to enlarge their merchandise range, attract buyers and find ways to create demand for their products. It should be kept in mind that effective merchandising is not only a revenue stream but also a form of brand building and identification with fans of the club.

6.4 Knowledge and resource sharing:

6.4.1 Establish information exchange on a national and international level

The study did show that exchange between clubs within Europe has room for improvement. There are just two examples of some independent information exchange between Norway and the UK, and between the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark.\textsuperscript{189} The Dutch league states that an information exchange between European women’s football clubs would be of high value and should be supported.\textsuperscript{190} The manager of the Dutch league club AZ Alkmaar though explains that their first priority is to develop the national league before focusing on international exchange.\textsuperscript{191} The outreach of information exchange between leagues and clubs seems in most cases to find its boundaries on a national level. A good solution to this problem could be an online platform for knowledge sharing that is accessible to all clubs, similar to the EPFL platform for its members.

6.4.2 Share resources

Besides the need for knowledge sharing, clubs are advised to share resources and personnel, like the women’s teams tied to a men’s club FC Bayern Munich, Arsenal, Olympique Lyonnais as well as AZ Alkmaar do. Such clubs have the possibility to make use of the club’s structure and valuable resources.\textsuperscript{192} However stand-alone women’s clubs, who cannot make use of this alternative, could benefit from sharing expertise and resources with their respective football associations. The English FA, the KNVB, the NFF and the EFD provided good examples.\textsuperscript{193} Instead of the women’s teams having to employ part-time personnel for specific areas of management, the football association can offer professional administrative help across the league with costs to be shared.\textsuperscript{194}

6.4.3 Organise seminars on management competencies

UEFA, as well as National football federations, can contribute to the aforementioned initiatives by offering seminars on management competencies for clubs. Getting experts to teach basic and advanced management skills on different topics would be helpful for and highly appreciated by the clubs.

\textsuperscript{189} Janssens, Interview, 10, May 2010; Åkerlund, Interview, 10, June 2010. Austad and Nickelsen, Interview, 12, May 2010.
\textsuperscript{190} Janssens, Interview, 10, May 2010.
\textsuperscript{191} Molenaar, Interview, 14, June 2010.
\textsuperscript{192} See Chapter 2.1 Administration and Human Resources, Shared Personnel
\textsuperscript{193} ibid.
\textsuperscript{194} ibid.
6.5 Organisation between clubs on national and international level: Club Association

In addition to all recommendations mentioned, there is a need for more organisation between clubs on a national and international level. Many common issues of the clubs could be discussed and brought forward to the relevant bodies with a united voice far more effectively. The clubs should think of forming a national club association or even an association on European level like men’s football did with the ECA. This could help to improve collaboration and create a collective voice of women’s football clubs, to represent the club’s opinions in front of national football federations, UEFA, FIFA, and political institutions. This club association could also be a tool to interact with the European Social Dialogue Committee for professional football. This platform discusses issues between employers and employees on a European level, with members such as the EPFL, the ECA, the FIFPro Europe and UEFA themselves. UEFA should think of making female football a new priority in this committee and to bring forward topics to the European stage in order to develop on a wider level. Furthermore, there is no player’s union for female football players in Europe, like there is the PFA in England or the FIFPro for professional male footballers. This is also an area that should be considered in order to give better protection and stability to players.

6.6 Public - private partnerships

Public funding is of high importance to women’s only clubs, in terms of stadiums, facilities as well as sponsorship. A recent trend in many European countries has been to use sport as a tool in different areas, e.g. health, education and social integration. This development is also supported by the European Commission:

“*The public benefit of better health and well-being, education, social integration and democracy is the rationale for public support to the sports sector. Equal opportunities and open access to sporting activities can only be guaranteed through public involvement. While some sports organisations are*

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There is a sizable amount of EU sport supporting programmes concerning sport infrastructure, health promotion and sport & environment. Clubs should actively look for opportunities to access those budgets and design programs to qualify for public funds. This will help them to stabilise their financial situation as well as get more involved in the community. The DOSB (German Olympic Sports Union) provides an EU support brochure as a practical guideline, presenting an overview of the different support programmes and giving advice for the implementation of an EU project. Sport England with the support of UK Sport is also investing “national lottery and exchequer funding in organisations and projects that will grow and sustain participation in grassroots sport and create opportunities for people to excel at their chosen sport”. Clubs should make use of the support and expertise of national bodies that can assist in accessing state aid.

Chapter 7: Final Thoughts

From the research, it becomes clear European women’s club football is in an exciting time of growth and re-evaluation of the status quo. The league structures in The Netherlands and England are radically thinking outside the box of traditional European football to create a new context specifically for women’s football in their countries. The introduction of the UEFA Women’s Champions League provides a new stage for increasing awareness of club football in Europe, and increased importance in a pan-European identity for women’s teams. It also tries to establish a balance to the trans-Atlantic competition from North America in order to retain/attract the best players in the world. The goal is clearly “to be the best”. The stakeholders of European women’s club football, clubs, associations, leagues, and UEFA, have defined development on a club level as the next big challenge for the sport’s growth. Although this research was able to identify several best practices in the different areas of club management, there is still an overall feeling of disconnect between the standard of management and the rapid on-field developments. It will be a major challenge for clubs, associations and UEFA to close that gap. The process of professionalisation can only be a

balanced development if the players on the pitch are supported by expert personnel off the pitch. The clubs cannot achieve this alone, it will be a cooperation between international bodies, both in sport and political, national associations, leagues, and clubs. Clubs need the tools, expertise and - still - financial aid to develop their structures. There are different ways in which development could be facilitated, through new leagues, better organisation and dedication of staff. In any case, solution should be tailored to the different realities of clubs and leagues, keeping in mind the pan-European exchange. The diversity of Europe could be an asset in so many ways when bringing together various ideas and concepts. This rich and diverse knowledge should be harnessed and shared. There are many challenges to club development in European women’s football, however if approached properly, the rich and diverse knowledge within Europe could bring about UEFA’s goal of being “the most attractive club competition in the world.”
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71


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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – FIFA Big Count 2006, FIFA Communications Division, Information Services, 31.05.2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Big Count 2006</th>
<th>Big Count 2000</th>
<th>+/–</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Players</strong></td>
<td>265</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>+9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male players</td>
<td>238.6</td>
<td>220.5</td>
<td>+8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female players</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>+19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Players, registered</strong></td>
<td>38</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>+24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male players, registered</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>+21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female players, registered</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>+54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Players, not registered</strong></td>
<td>226</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>+7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male players, not registered</td>
<td>204.4</td>
<td>192.2</td>
<td>+6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female players, not registered</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>+14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Youth</strong></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>+7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male players, youth</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>+18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female players, youth</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>+32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Persons involved in football</strong></td>
<td>270</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>+9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Players</td>
<td>264.6</td>
<td>242.4</td>
<td>+9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Referees</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>+17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officials</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>+17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(in 1000s)

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professionals (male)</strong></td>
<td>110</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Futsal &amp; Beach Soccer</strong></td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clubs</strong></td>
<td>301</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teams</strong></td>
<td>1,752</td>
<td>1,548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YOUTH TOTAL in 1000s</td>
<td>MALE YOUTH in 1000s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>3,307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>GER</td>
<td>2,082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>BRA</td>
<td>1,847</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>RSA</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>FRA</td>
<td>1,934</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<td>820</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>CAN</td>
<td>716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>UKR</td>
<td>659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>JPN</td>
<td>629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>ITA</td>
<td>537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>NED</td>
<td>510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>ESP</td>
<td>419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>CHN</td>
<td>383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>CHI</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>SWE</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>IND</td>
<td>314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>AUS</td>
<td>307</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>ARG</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>AUT</td>
<td>222</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLAYERS REGISTERED in 1000s</th>
<th>MALE REGISTERED in 1000s</th>
<th>FEMALE REGISTERED in 1000s</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>GER Deutscher Fußball-Bund</td>
<td>5,399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>USA US Soccer Federation</td>
<td>4,187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>BRA Confederação Brasileira de Futebol</td>
<td>2,142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>FRA Fédération française de Football</td>
<td>1,706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>ITA Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio</td>
<td>1,514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>ENG The Football Association</td>
<td>1,466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>RSA South African Football Association</td>
<td>1,469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>NED Koninklijke Nederlandse Voetbalbond</td>
<td>1,139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>JPN Japan Football Association</td>
<td>1,045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>CAN The Canadian Soccer Association</td>
<td>856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>RUS Football Union of Russia</td>
<td>847</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>CHN Chinese Football Association</td>
<td>711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>UKR Football Federation of Ukraine</td>
<td>692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>CZE Football Association of Czech Republic</td>
<td>680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>POL Polska Federacja Piłki Nożnej</td>
<td>657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>ESP Real Federación Española de Fútbol</td>
<td>653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>AUT Österreichischer Fußball-Bund</td>
<td>396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>SWE Svenska Fotbollförbundet</td>
<td>353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>CHI Federación de Fútbol de Chile</td>
<td>418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>IRI IR Iran Football Federation</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RFA Communications Division, Information Services, 31.05.2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Players</th>
<th>AFC</th>
<th>CAF</th>
<th>CONCACAF</th>
<th>CONMEBOL</th>
<th>OFC</th>
<th>UEFA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>264,552</td>
<td>85,176</td>
<td>46,300</td>
<td>43,109</td>
<td>27,778</td>
<td>542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>25,065</td>
<td>5,102</td>
<td>1,361</td>
<td>10,038</td>
<td>3,074</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Referees, Officials | 5,058 | 673 | 630 | 1133 | 168 | 32 | 2,422 |

Total involved in Football | 289,610 | 85,849 | 46,930 | 44,242 | 27,946 | 573 | 64,089 |

RFA Communications Division, Information Services, 31.05.2007
### Appendix 2 - 2010/11 UEFA club rankings - Cumulative Club Coefficient 2006-2010

**UEFA WOMEN'S CHAMPIONS LEAGUE 2010/11**

Cumulative Club Coefficient Ranking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>Club Name</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Club Coefficient 2005/06</th>
<th>Club Coefficient 2006/07</th>
<th>Club Coefficient 2007/08</th>
<th>Club Coefficient 2008/09</th>
<th>Club Coefficient 2009/10</th>
<th>Total Club Coefficient</th>
<th>10% National Association Coefficient</th>
<th>Club Coefficient + 10% National Association Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Unna 1K</td>
<td>SWI</td>
<td>18.000</td>
<td>15.000</td>
<td>11.000</td>
<td>16.000</td>
<td>60.000</td>
<td>34.750</td>
<td>94.750</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1. FFC Frankfurt</td>
<td>GER</td>
<td>17.000</td>
<td>9.000</td>
<td>10.000</td>
<td>5.000</td>
<td>46.000</td>
<td>35.033</td>
<td>64.323</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Olympique Lyon</td>
<td>FRA</td>
<td>15.000</td>
<td>13.000</td>
<td>21.000</td>
<td>46.000</td>
<td>31.560</td>
<td>66.560</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1. FFC Turbine Potsdam</td>
<td>GER</td>
<td>14.000</td>
<td>8.000</td>
<td>22.000</td>
<td>44.000</td>
<td>26.033</td>
<td>75.323</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Arsenal Ladies FC</td>
<td>ENG</td>
<td>6.000</td>
<td>7.000</td>
<td>7.000</td>
<td>13.000</td>
<td>52.000</td>
<td>23.500</td>
<td>75.500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>FC 2001, Duisburg</td>
<td>GER</td>
<td>19.000</td>
<td>19.000</td>
<td>38.000</td>
<td>36.000</td>
<td>72.033</td>
<td>72.033</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Montpellier Hérault SC</td>
<td>FRA</td>
<td>16.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Zvartna-2005</td>
<td>RUS</td>
<td>20.000</td>
<td>10.000</td>
<td>30.000</td>
<td>24.250</td>
<td>54.250</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Brondby IF</td>
<td>DEN</td>
<td>7.000</td>
<td>9.000</td>
<td>8.000</td>
<td>5.000</td>
<td>7.000</td>
<td>36.000</td>
<td>17.750</td>
<td>53.750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>FC &quot;Rojas&quot;</td>
<td>RUS</td>
<td>5.000</td>
<td>10.000</td>
<td>9.000</td>
<td>24.000</td>
<td>24.250</td>
<td>48.250</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Djurgården /Avažić</td>
<td>SWI</td>
<td>13.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>34.750</td>
<td>47.750</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>FC Bayern München</td>
<td>GER</td>
<td>9.000</td>
<td>9.000</td>
<td>35.333</td>
<td>44.333</td>
<td>35.333</td>
<td>44.333</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Linlóngos TC</td>
<td>SWI</td>
<td>5.000</td>
<td>9.000</td>
<td>34.750</td>
<td>42.750</td>
<td>34.750</td>
<td>42.750</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>CF Bardolino Verona</td>
<td>ITA</td>
<td>2.500</td>
<td>12.000</td>
<td>5.000</td>
<td>5.000</td>
<td>24.500</td>
<td>15.750</td>
<td>40.250</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Valur Reykjavik</td>
<td>ISL</td>
<td>8.000</td>
<td>5.000</td>
<td>5.000</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>21.000</td>
<td>14.500</td>
<td>35.500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Everton</td>
<td>ENG</td>
<td>5.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10.000</td>
<td>23.500</td>
<td>33.500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Available from:**
http://www.uefa.com/MultimediaFiles/.../01/49/.../1498012_DOWNLOAD.pdf
Appendix 3 - Initial contact email to Associations and Clubs

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are a research group who are aiming to highlight the best practices in women’s football in some of the top European football clubs. As such, we are requesting your participation in gathering information on your league as part of our data-set.

The project is focused on findings regarding best practices in some of the top women's football clubs in Europe. The analysis of these best practices is aimed to provide deeper insight into the motivations and strategies of the key successes that have been identified in the chosen clubs. In order to contextualise the environments that the clubs function within, we are requesting some background information on the league structure and operation.

The project will not aim to be a comparative study between the clubs (or leagues) but to outline the relevant successes in certain aspects of functioning. It is believed that illustrating the best practices in the development of the women’s game will be valuable for the development of the game.

We are committed to providing feedback to the research participants and extending personal invitations to a presentation of our research project.

We would appreciate being able to have a telephonic interview, email responses, and/or receiving relevant documents (whatever is most convenient) from representatives of your league.

Thank you in advance for your feedback. We look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,
Appendix 3.1 - Sample Questionnaire to Clubs:

**Interview Questions Clubs**

**Human Resources**
How many players do you have?
How many players do you pay?
Would you consider your players amateur/semi-professional/fully professional?
Do you have full time coaches, if yes: how many?
How many employees do you have? In which departments?

**Infrastructure**
Where do you play your home games?
Where do you train?
Do you have inhouse medical facilities?

**Finances and Ownership**
Is the women’s team connected to a bigger sport organisation (club)?
What is the annual budget for the women’s team?
What are the main revenue streams for the women’s team?

What is the decision making process?

-----------------------------------------------

**Marketing and PR**
Who is your target group?
Do you have designated personnel for the Marketing and PR strategy? (PR-Officer, Marketing, Sponsorship Officer, any other)
Do you engage any third party consultancy?
Do you receive any revenue from merchandise? Is there any specific merchandise for the women’s team?

**Sponsorship**
Who are your sponsors?
For what duration are sponsorship contracts negotiated?

Apart from financial support, are there any other ways in which the sponsors offer assistance? What obligations do you have to your sponsors?

**Match Day**
How many matches do you play in a season?
What is the price range for tickets?

What is your average attendance? How many season ticket holders do you have?
Do you offer any entertainment on match day before or after the match? (performances, family fun etc.)

How many people are working on match-day (such as volunteers, etc.)?
**Community**
Is there a Fan club?
If yes: How many members does it have? What is their role/involvement?

Do you have any involvement with the local community such as schools, charities, hospitals and/or others?

-----------------------------------------------

**Player Recruitment**
How do you recruit your players (i.e. international transfer)? Any recruitment policy?

How many different nationalities does your team comprise of?

How do you rate your youth development and academy program? What do you see are its strength and opportunity areas?

**European context**
How do you see the club in terms of European context? Is there a strategy to compete/succeed on the European level?

Are the contacts/partnerships/information exchange with other European clubs? Do you think it is important?

How do you see the role of UEFA? What do you think about the new format of the Women’s Champions League?