

DARIO VIDOSIC

Good afternoon everyone and welcome back to Broadfield Stadium

We face another tough opponent today in Aston Villa and I'd like to welcome Robert de Pauw, his staff and players. I see this game as a good benchmark for us in terms of our progress in the last few weeks, against a team with a clear structure and plenty of attacking threats.

It has been a very busy week, with today being our third game in the space of six days. We've also spent about 20 hours on the bus, up and back from Manchester last weekend, and then back on the coach on Tuesday for the game against Birmingham City. We got back in the early hours of Thursday so preparation time for today has been limited, but it's the same for Villa. I think the girls have enjoyed spending time together travelling to the matches and getting to know each other even more. Those close bonds they are forming will be important as the season unfolds and as we go through tough spells, which every team

Looking back to last Sunday, Manchester City have a strong starting XI and deep bench so we knew it would be tough, but apart from the goal we conceded, which we could have done better on, I was pretty happy with the overall performance. In the first half we created some good opportunities but needed to take one to put them under pressure. They did take a

chance when it came along and in the second half City restricted us to few clear openings in front of goal. As with all matches, there was plenty to pick over, with some things we did well and other areas where we need to get

Wednesday's League Cup match at St Andrew's gave me the opportunity to give minutes to players who haven't played much in either of the first two WSL games and try one or two different things tactically. Birmingham set up in a low block and it took us time to break them down, but eventually we scored three good goals and finished the game really strongly.

The League Cup is one of three opportunities for us to win a trophy this season and we will be taking each game seriously. I was pleased with the attitude of the girls.

The last home game against Everton seems a long time ago now, but it goes without saying that it was a fabulous result and performance. As I mentioned then, we need to make Broadfield Stadium a tough place for our visitors and a ground we enjoy playing at and expressing ourselves. That will be the message again today and you can play your part with the same noise and support we had against Everton.

Enjoy the game.



WOMEN'S AND GIRLS' FOOTBALL SEES RECORD GROWTH

The Football Association has provided a final update on the progress made across its women's and girls' game strategy, Inspiring Positive Change (2020–2024)

Originally launched in 2020 with the ambition of building a sustainable future for women's and girls' football, the duration of the strategy has coincided with record levels of growth across the sport, turbocharged by the success of the Lionesses, who have become European champions and World Cup finalists in the same period

In the last four years, the number of women and girls playing football has increased by 56%. Knowing that for most girls their first taste of football comes in the playground or on the school playing fields, **Inspiring Positive Change** set the target of 75% of schools to be offering

girls equal access to football by 2024. That target was met in 2023 and has now been surpassed, with 77% of schools offering equal access.

There has also been a significant increase in the number of women and girls taking up coaching and refereeing. The number of female coaches being developed rose by 88% between 2020 and 2024, while the number of female referees increased by 113%.

The girls' talent pathway has been completely overhauled since the launch of the strategy, with the aim of making the professional game more accessible and inclusive. Seventy-three

Emerging Talent Centres have been established to offer localised, high-quality training environments, which has led to significant increases in players from underrepresented groups (127%) and economically deprived areas (112%) being able to access the pathway.

The duration of the strategy has coincided with exponential growth across the domestic women's leagues and competitions. The Adobe Women's FA Cup Final has sold out Wembley Stadium for the last two seasons. while attendances in the Barclays Women's Super League are up 239% since 2021.

Baroness Sue Campbell,

The FA's Director of Women's Football, said: "It is remarkable what has been achieved in just four years across all levels, with more women and girls stepping forward to play, coach, officiate and participate as fans. But there is still more work to be done for the sport to reach the heights we know it can grow to.

"It is our continued mission to increase diversity and make the women's game an accurate representation of our society. We're seeing an improvement, but we cannot rest on our laurels and we need to ensure every woman and girl, regardless of their background, can access football and enjoy the benefits it brings."

BLUES BEATEN AS LEAGUE CIIP CAMPAIGN BEGINS

Albion made a winning start to their League Cup campaign on Wednesday night after three goals in the last 20 minutes sank Birmingham City at St Andrew's



The Seagulls had struggled to break down their Championship hosts before scoring twice in three minutes thanks to two quality set-pieces.

Skipper Guro Bergsvand broke the deadlock on 71 minutes with a close-range header from Marisa Olislagers' inswinging

corner, and a superb free-kick from outside the box by Maisie Symonds doubled the lead. Substitute Fran Kirby got Albion's third four minutes from time, connecting with a low Madison Haley cross, to put further gloss on the scoreline.

AMEX TO HOST TWO **WSL FIXTURES**

Two of our WSL fixtures this year will be staged at the Amex Stadium.

We will host Manchester United there on Saturday 19 October, kick-off 12.30pm, likewise West Ham United on Saturday 16 November, kickoff 12.30pm, subject to broadcast selections.

Dario Vidosic said, "It's brilliant news that we're going to be able to play two high-profile matches at the Amex.

"As everyone knows, the club's long-term ambition is to have our own stadium in Brighton and we are making progress towards that.

"So it will be great to have the opportunity to play two games at the Amex, especially for the new players who have come into the squad who will get to experience it for the first time.

"We look forward to hopefully welcoming a big crowd to the Amex and to making lots of great memories for our fans."

Manchester United tickets are priced at: Adult: £12 65+/U18: £6 Lounge access: £25

Group pricing and family tickets from £6 per person (excluding lounge access) Women's first-team season ticket holders: Refer-a-friend ticket available (1x free standard adult ticket for a guest without a purchase history) MyAlbion+ members and men's firstteam season ticket holders: 2-for-1 tickets available on standard adult tickets

West Ham United tickets are priced at: Adult: £12 65+/U18: £6 Lounge access: £25

Group pricing and family tickets from £6 per person (excluding lounge access)

Please note: fixture date/time and onsale dates not yet confirmed.

SUBSIDISED TRAVEL TO PALACE

A reminder that we're pleased to be offering subsidised coach travel to our WSL away game at Crystal Palace.

We face the Eagles at the VBS Community Stadium, Sutton, on Sunday 13 October, kick-off 2pm.

MATCH TICKETS

Adult: £17 | Junior: £6

SUBSIDISED COACH TRAVEL

Adult: £15 | Junior: £10

Both tickets and coach travel are available at

tickets.brightonandhovealbion.com



4 ALBION

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Goalkeeper Sophie Baggaley reflects on the start of the season and is confident that there's plenty more to come...

Let's start with Manchester City last week, Sophie. What was your take on the game?

We were disappointed not to come away with anything from the game. In the first half we played well, but then we conceded right before halftime, which isn't what we wanted. In that first half we took the game to City a bit; we showed what we can do in this league and hopefully there are positives to take forward. We just want to show that we can play our style against anyone. We're not afraid to come up against anyone and we'll try to play our way.

And there's still plenty of time for improvement, right?

If you see where we've come from, from the first day of pre-season to now, the jump's massive. So, give it another month, give it another two months and I'm excited to see where we could go. The team's changed quite a bit, with so many signings through the door in the summer, so it takes time, but they've settled in really well. I also think Dario (Vidosic) coming in at the same time as them has helped because it's the same message for everyone. In fact, we're all learning and the group's really

good on and off the pitch, which

You've had Hannah Poulter coming in, a talented young goalkeeper, so have you taken her under your

You can see she's got a load of potential, and she brings energy, day in and day out. We get on really well and we just try to push each other and improve each other – as we all do. Hannah's been a very welcomed addition to the group and she's a funny girl as well, so that's nice.



What's it been like working with the new gaffer?

It's been really good. Dario's come in, shown us how he wants to play, and we've really tried to take that on board. Obviously, that takes time, but as I said, the amount we've improved in a short space of time is really good. He's very demanding, but in a good way, and he's got really good football knowledge, which is obviously what you want from your head coach. Sometimes he joins in with training and shows us how to do it! He makes it look so easy and we're all really excited to be working with him.

How's it working out with Chris Roberts as his assistant?

Dario's got the way he wants to play, while Chris knows the league a bit better, so obviously they work off each other. I worked with Chris before at Bristol City and I really enjoyed my time with him then, so I think it's a good match. They work well together.

So it's Villa today, another team that's made changes on the pitch and in the dugout...

They look good, but I think we have also improved, so it should be an interesting game. We need to carry on playing the way we want to play, take the game to them and hopefully take the three points.

There have been lots of draws so far this season in the WSL, which suggests there's competitiveness throughout the division...

That makes the league more exciting because you don't know what the results are going to be. Look at us against Man City, look at Villa at Chelsea a couple of weeks ago, where they could have equalised at the end. It's exciting and no one knows where they're going to be come Christmas. Hopefully from our point of view we can climb the table and go on to finish in a good place.

The fans have a big part to play as well, right?

We want a stadium that the opposition fear to visit. For our last home game, it was really nice having all those fans there. As a player, we'd been waiting all that time from preseason without fans and then you get there on matchday against Everton and they're great. I'm sure they'll play a big part this season and hopefully they'll keep coming out and supporting us.





SERSON TICKETS

11 WOMEN'S SUPER LEAGUE GAMES

CUP FIXTURES UP TO & INCLUDING

QUARTER FINALS

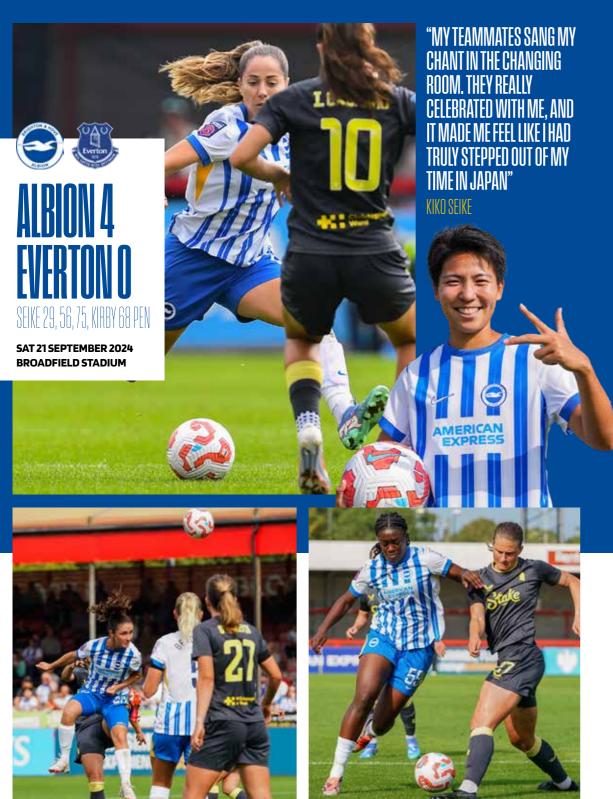
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"EVENTHOUGH WE WON THE GAME 4-0 YOU COULD SEE WHERE WE STILL NEED TO IMPROVE, BUT THAT'S THE MOST EXCITING THING ABOUT THIS GROUP - WE KNOW WE CAN GO TO ANOTHER LEVEL"







It's been all change at Villa with a new manager at the helm

It was the end of an era at the close of last season with manager Carla Ward calling time on her spell as Villa manager after three years in the hot seat. "Managing a great club like Aston Villa has been a

full-throttle job and I have always given the role 100 per cent dedication," she

"However, I now believe it is the right time for me to prioritise the other important things – such

as my daughter and the rest of my family life." And so the search began for a new boss, with Robert de Pauw the standout candidate, having spent the past

couple of seasons at

German side Bayer Leverkusen. The 43-yearold Dutchman was appointed at the end of June and he was straight to work strengthening his side, with defender Paula Tomas arriving from



Spanish side Levante. Former Albion favourite Katie Robinson was next through the door and she was followed by Liverpool duo Miri Taylor and Missy Bo Kearns, Sabrina

D'Angelo (Arsenal), Chasity Grant (Ajax) and Gabi Nunes (Levante). Jill Baijings has also arrived from Bayern Munich on a season-long loan.

With so many changes and a new manager to boot, it will inevitably take time for the side to gel and they couldn't have asked for a harder start to the WSL season with a trip to champions Chelsea. A solitary Johanna Rytting Kaneryd goal was all that separated the sides, and Villa went into last Sunday's home game against Tottenham no

CLUB CONNECTION

Katie Robinson joined the Albion from Bristol City in July 2020 and, after a long-term

knee injury, she emerged as a regular in her final two seasons in Sussex. In total, she made 69 appearances for the Seagulls, scoring ten goals, and became a full England international in the process.

Making her Lionesses' debut against Norway in November 2022, she now has five caps to her name.



5

clubs managed by Robert de Pauw, including Bayer Leverkusen, FC Twente and NEC Nijmegen U23s

51

years ago the club was formed as Solihull FC. changing their name to Aston Villa in 1996

2019 saw Villa win promotion to the WSL, entering the top flight of women's football for the first time since 2004

doubt full of confidence. In what proved to be a thriller at the Villa, an Eveliina Summanen first-half penalty for the visitors was cancelled out by Adriana Leon's 78thminute equaliser. Rachel Daly then scored what appeared to be the winner for Villa two minutes from time, only for Beth England to score six minutes into injury time.

"We definitely deserved more from the game but that's football," said

goals converted in the penalty shoot-out as Villa beat Leeds United on spot kicks to win the 2013 Premier League Cup

defeats

times the club has won the FA Women's Premier League Northern Division

points picked up in the WSL table last season. with seven wins and 12

defender Lucy Parker. "Sometimes it doesn't go your way and sometimes you don't finish chances that you probably should

"We dominated the game in large spells, we created many chances, but the final third, especially in the first-half, it wasn't really clicking.

"But we did well to stick together and the goals came eventually, but it's a shame that we couldn't see it out."

34 ALBION

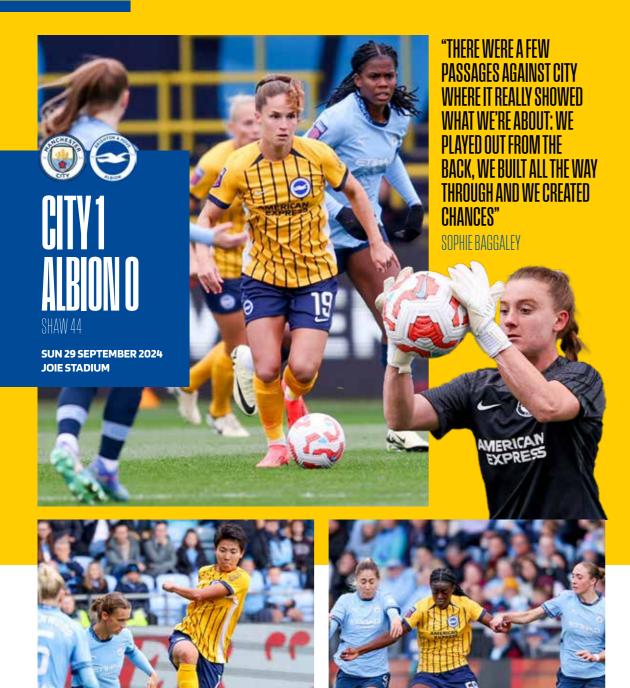






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"I'VE LEARNT SO MUCH ALREADY"

Rachel McLauchlan signed from Rangers in July and while these are still early days, she is clearly enjoying her new life on the south coast

How's your time been at Brighton since you joined in the summer, Rachel?

I've really enjoyed my time so far. All of the girls and staff have been so welcoming, which has made settling in a lot easier. From the moment I met everyone I felt really at ease; the girls were all really friendly, which was so nice when coming into a new team. I've made a couple of close Dutch friends. Marit Auee and Marisa Olislagers. We can at times struggle with a language barrier, but I'm teaching them some Scottish words, so we are getting there!

How was pre-season with the team? Did that give you an opportunity to gel with the girls off the pitch?

Yeah, absolutely. I think going away to Spain for ten days really helped us all gel together. It was nice to get to know the girls away from the pitch and find out different things about everyone. We have a really good group here and it was nice to spend time with everyone. Overall, pre-season was

really positive in both the games and off the pitch.

What's life in Brighton been like? What have you been up to outside of football?

I've really liked my time in the city so far, but I feel I've still got so much more to explore. Most of my spare time has been filled with finding new coffee spots so far!

What would you say are the main differences between the WSL and the Scottish Women's Premier

I think the biggest difference is the competitiveness in both the squads and in the league. It's so exciting knowing each weekend is going to be a tough game and you are going to get challenged, which is something you don't have as much in the Scottish league.

Dario Vidosic is also new to the club and the league, so what's the time been like with him?

I've really enjoyed working for Dario so far. He has so much knowledge of the

game and I feel like I've learnt so much already. I'm looking forward to that continuing over the

Does that present a new opportunity for all the girls to start afresh with the new head coach instead of iust the new signings?

Absolutely. There were obviously a few new signings this summer and then a new coaching staff, which made pre-season a really exciting time. Everyone worked so hard and I felt that it was a fresh start for all players, not just us who had signed. I have previously worked with Chris (Roberts) when we were both in Scotland at Hibs, so it was also nice to have a coach that I had worked well with before.

How would you describe Dario's style of play?

Dario is looking for us to be a very possessionbased football team: he wants us to be able to control the game and to be brave with our play! It is a really exciting style of play and one I think we will do well in.

It was really special; I was very happy to do so. Being able to share the pitch with the girls was great and hopefully we can carry on performing like we have done recently.



Cup Final in May. She has also

been a regular in the Scotland

national team in recent years,

international debut in 2016.

winning 17 caps since making her

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Wednesday 2

Saturday 5

Sunday 13 Saturday 19

NOVEMBER

Sunday 3

Sunday 10

Sunday 24

DECEMBER

Saturday 16

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Manchester City

ASTON VILLA

Crystal Palace

Birmingham City (LC)

MANCHESTER UNITED



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W4-0

L0-1

W3-0



L. Impey

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LEICESTER CITY 2.00pm

12.30pm

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3.00pm

Arsenal 2.00pm WEST HAM UNITED 12.30pm LEICESTER CITY (LC) 2.00pm

Sunday 8 Chelsea BRISTOL CITY (LC) Wednesday 11 **TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR** Sunday 15

JANUARY Sunday 19 Liverpool 2.00pm Manchester United 12.00noon Sunday 26

FEBRUARY CRYSTAL PALACE 2.00pm Sunday 2 West Ham United 3.00pm Sunday 16

MARCH CHELSEA 2.00pm Sunday 2 Sunday 16 Tottenham Hotspur 3.00pm Sunday 23 Leicester City 3.00pm **MANCHESTER CITY** 2.00pm Sunday 30

APRIL Sunday 20 LIVERPOOL 2.00pm 2.00pm Sunday 27 Everton

ARSENAL 2.00pm Sunday 4 Sunday 11 Aston Villa 2.00pm



WELCOME TO TODAY'S MASCOTS

Max Elder Toby Northcott Sophie Northcott Jessica Patterson **Murphie Harper Anya Joannidees**

Cerys Tullett-Jackson **Amber Brown Eloise Chiles Imogen Evans** Jasmine Allaway

Programme **PRODUCTION**

Head of media Paul Camillin **Publications editor** Luke Nicoli **Proofreader** Jade Craddock **Photographer** Paul Hazlewood **Design** Alchemy Contributors Heather Miller, Bruce Talbot

24 | ALBION



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l Chelsea	2	2	0	0	8	0	+8	6	
2 Manchester United	2	2	0	0	4	0	+4	6	
3 Tottenham Hotspur	2	-1	-1	0	6	2	+4	4	
4 Arsenal	2	-1	1	0	3	2	+1	4	
5 Manchester City	2	-1	-1	0	3	2	+1	4	
6 BRIGHTON & HOVE ALBION	2	-1	0	-1	4	-1	+3	3	
7 Liverpool	2	0	2	0	2	2	0	2	
B ASTON VILLA	2	0	-1	-1	2	3	-1	-1	
9 Leicester City	2	0	1	1	-1	2	-1	-1	
10 West Ham United	2	0	-1	-1	-1	4	-3	-1	
I1 Everton	2	0	0	2	0	5	-5	0	
12 Crystal Palace	2	0	0	2	0	-11	-11	0	



TOMORROW Manchester City v West Ham United Arsenal v Everton Tottenham Hotspur v Liverpool Leicester City v Crystal Palace



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	APP	GLS	APP	GLS	APP	GLS	
2 Maria Thorisdottir	2	-	-	-	-	-	
3 Poppy Pattinson	2	-	- 1	-	-	-	
5 Guro Bergsvand	2	-	- 1	- 1	-	-	
6 Vicky Losada	2	-	-	-	-	-	
7 Aisha Masaka	-	-	-(1)	-	-	-	
8 Pauline Bremer	2	-	-(1)	-	-	-	
9 Nikita Parris	-(2)	-	- 1	-	-	-	
10 Jelena Cankovic	-(1)	-	- 1	-	-	-	
11 Kiko Seike	2	3	- 1	-	-	-	
14 Fran Kirby	2	- 1	-(1)	- 1	-	-	
16 Jorelyn Carabali	2	-	-(1)	-	-	-	
17 Bex Rayner	-	-	-	-	-	-	
18 Maisie Symonds	-(2)	-	- 1	- 1	-	-	
19 Marisa Olislagers	2	-	-(1)	-	-	-	
20 Bruna Vilamala	2	-	-	-	-	-	
21 Madison Haley	-(2)	-	- 1	-	-	-	
22 Dejana Stefanovic		-	-	-	-	-	
23 Marit Auee		-	- 1	-	-	-	
25 Hannah Poulter		-	-	-	-	-	
27 Rachel McLauchlan	-(1)	-	- 1	-	-	-	
28 Melina Loeck		-	1	-	-	-	
32 Sophie Baggaley	2	-	-	-	-	-	
33 Charlize Rule	-	-	-	-	-	-	
EO Michelle Agreemeng	(0)		- 1				



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ALBION



HEAD COACH: DARIO VIDOSIC

2 MARIA THORISDOTTIR 3 POPPY PATTINSON **5 GURO BERGSVAND 6 VICKY LOSADA** 7 AISHA MASAKA **8 PAULINE BREMER** 9 NIKITA PARRIS 10 JELENA CANKOVIC 11 KIKO SEIKE 14 FRAN KIRBY 16 JORELYN CARABALI 17 BEX RAYNER 18 MAISIE SYMONDS 19 MARISA OLISLAGERS 20 BRUNA VILAMALA 21 MADISON HALEY 22 DEJANA STEFANOVIC 23 MARIT AUEE 25 HANNAH POULTER 27 RACHEL MCLAUCHLAN 28 MELINA LOECK 32 SOPHIE BAGGALEY 33 CHARLIZE RULE 59 MICHELLE AGYEMANG



VILLA

MANAGER: ROBERT DE PAUW

1SABRINA D'ANGELO 2 SARAH MAYLING 3 PAULA TOMAS **4 ANNA PATTEN 5 LUCY STANIFORTH 6 RACHEL CORSIE 7 MISSY BO KEARNS 8 JORDAN NOBBS** 9 RACHEL DALY 10 KFNZA DALI 11 KATIE ROBINSON 14 DANIELLE TURNER 15 LUCY PARKER 16 NOELLE MARITZ 17 EBONY SALMON 18 GEORGIA MULLETT 19 ADRIANA LEON 20 KIRSTY HANSON 21 ANNA LEAT 22 JILL BAIJINGS 23 CHASITY GRANT 25 MIRI TAYLOR 28 GABI NUNES 33 MAYUMI PACHECO 35 SOPHIA POOR

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MANCHESTER UNITED

WOMEN'S SUPER LEAGUE SATURDAY 19 OCTOBER | 12.30PM AMERICAN EXPRESS STADIUM



