

THE WILDCAT

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Durham Women v Crystal Palace
Sunday 11 October 2020, 12pm
FA Women's Championship



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LEE SANDERS

Good afternoon and welcome to today's game against Crystal Palace.

I'd like to extend a warm welcome to Dean Davenport and all the players, staff and officials who have travelled today.

Our last league game against Leicester City ended in a draw and, in any circumstances, if you're leading in injury time then you want to hold on. It's disappointing that we couldn't get the win, but it doesn't count us out of anything. It's early on in the season and points are being dropped all over by everybody now. It's a result that keeps us in there and is a good point to get away from home. We scored two good goals as well, and we'll just keep building game-by-game.

We followed that up with a good performance against Coventry United on Wednesday. We'll always name a strong side in the Continental Cup but, for me personally, this is where the club should be starting to bring in the next generation of players and exposing them to the level of the game that we're at. It's great having these young players involved in training - and they do play in a competitive league in their own right - but this is the next

step for them. That's what Grace, Brooke and Lily were exposed to on Wednesday night and that's how it should be.

We took a bit of time to get into our rhythm against Coventry, but once we found it we were dominant. We got the goals we deserved and there were some well-worked goals as well. I thought Lily Crosthwaite did ever so well when she came on and posed a real threat going forward, and Grace and Brooke have both put in very solid performances too. Overall, it was a good and we'll just take the competition game-by-game and then see where we are.

It was good to see Bridget Galloway and Molly Sharpe get off the mark for the season too. Strikers want to score goals and that's ultimately what they're judged on. The same as defenders and goalkeepers are judged on clean sheets, forward are judged on goals and assists - so it's great to see them off the mark.

A special mention has to go to Beth Hepple, who marked her 150th appearance with a hat-trick on Wednesday. It was fitting for her loyalty, her dedication to training and

the work she puts in, her passion, drive and determination to win that she achieved that. I'm sure she'll keep pushing on and keep producing and adding to that tally of appearances and goals.

Today we welcome Crystal Palace, who could well be our toughest test of the season so far. Their recruitment has been very, very good over the off-season and they've signed some experienced players and some players who are technically very good. Bianca Baptiste looks to have found that spark that she had when Spurs first came into the league, and at the back they obviously have Annabel Johnson who was with ourselves for a number of years.

We'll not be taking Palace lightly in any way, shape or form and we expect a really tough game today.

Thanks once again for your support.

Lee Sanders



SARAH WILSON

Good afternoon and welcome to today's game against Crystal Palace

To come away with a draw from Leicester City last weekend was a good result but, because we conceded so late, it felt like a defeat at the time. We dealt with a lot of pressure from Leicester, but we know the quality they have - so on reflection, it's a massive point for us away from home. We can't be too disappointed about that.

Our team spirit was clear to see in that game. That feels different this year - we've always been together and a fantastic group, but this year we just feel that bit tighter. We know that when you look right and left on the pitch, everyone is going to support you.

We didn't want to roll over after conceding at Leicester - which we may have done in the past against quality opposition - but we threw everything at them, tried to play and did everything we wanted to. We've got a fantastic group who will keep going for as long as it takes.

We followed up that draw with a win over Coventry in midweek. We've been clear on our aims for this season and the league is our focus, but the Continental Cup is a competition where we can try new things, give people game time and work on us.

The Coventry game was a tough one for us. The scoreline feels a bit funny, because the first 20 minutes were scrappy - but credit to the girls as we pulled ourselves back and took the lead before half-time.

That competition may not be our focus, but we're the kind of group that are that competitive that we want to win every single game that we play.

It was great to see Grace, Lily and Brooke make their debuts on Wednesday. Their involvement shows just how strong our pathway is and why it's so important. It was great to get them some game time and they proved exactly what they could do. Grace was fantastic at left-back, and that's a big role to play. Brooke came on and that's another huge position and she

dominated and supported the backline. Lily - her pace is frightening and the last thing a defender wanted to see last thing in the game. It was so well deserved for all three of them, but now the hard work really starts for them as they look to replicate that.

Today we welcome Crystal Palace and they'll be a very tough team. They have some good players and have made some great signings. No team ever wants to come up here, travel as far as they do, and just roll over - so we know this will be a level we'll need to step-up to. It's always a tough battle with Palace, and they play some good football.

We need to go out and focus on ourselves, work hard and do everything we can to get the three points.

Thanks as always for your brilliant support!

Sarah Wilson



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LEAGUE STATS

01		Liverpool	4	3	1	0	10	2	+8	10
02		Durham	4	2	2	0	7	3	+4	8
03		Sheffield United	3	2	1	0	10	3	+7	7
04		Lewes	3	2	0	1	2	3	-1	6
05		Leicester City	3	1	2	0	7	4	+3	5
06		Crystal Palace	4	1	2	1	9	7	+2	5
07		Charlton Athletic	3	1	1	1	3	6	-3	4
08		Coventry United	3	1	0	2	4	4	0	3
09		Blackburn Rovers Ladies	3	1	0	2	3	6	-3	3
10		London City Lionesses	4	0	1	3	2	7	-5	1
11		London Bees	4	0	0	4	2	14	-12	0

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COVENTRY UNITED  VS  SHEFFIELD UNITED

SUN 11 OCT

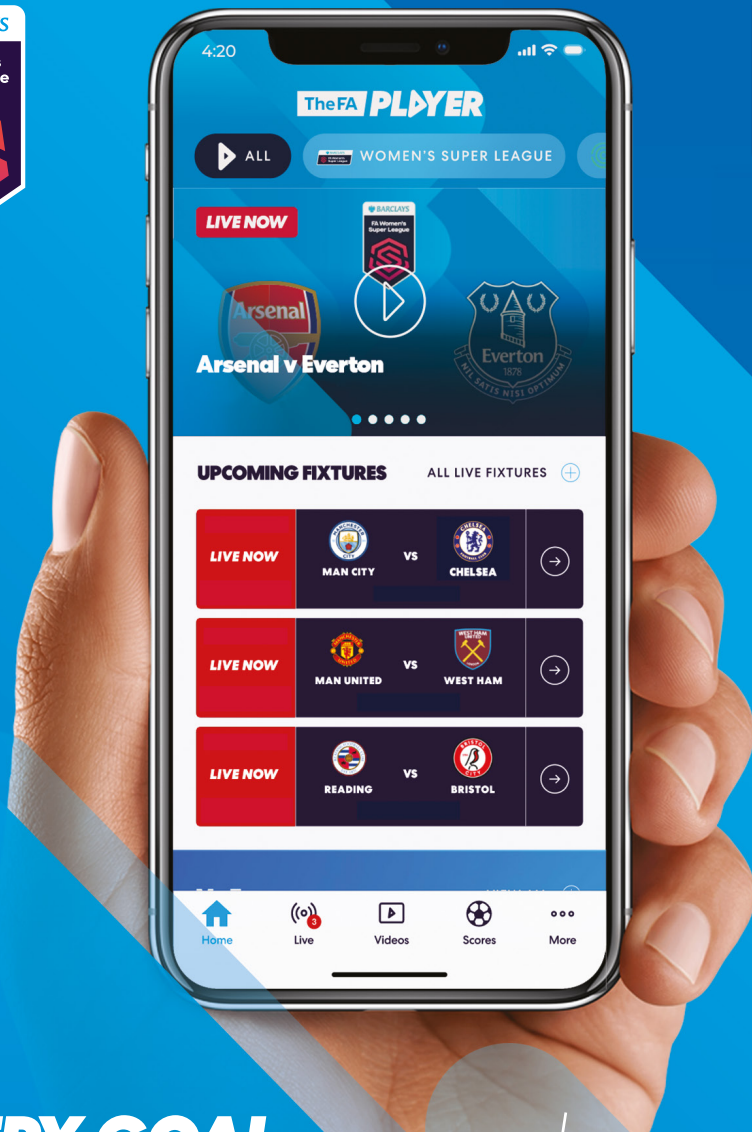
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LAST TIME OUT CRYSTAL PALACE

Coral-Jade Haines' brace inspired Crystal Palace to their first win of the 2020/21 FA Women's Championship campaign, as the Eagles comfortably beat early-season strugglers London Bees 4-1 at the Hive.

Siobhan Wilson put Palace in front with a superb free-kick in the game's opening stages, before Haines opened her account for the day with a spectacular set-piece of her own.

Bianca Baptiste made it 3-0 shortly after the break and Haines added gloss to the scoreline from the penalty spot, and although Melisa Filis grabbed a consolation late on, the Bees remain pointless at the foot of the table.

KEY MOMENTS

It was a fast start in North London, and the visitors were the first to get their noses in front through Wilson's incredible free-kick effort from the corner of the box.

The former Malaga star caught out home

stopper Sarah Quantrill with a looping left-footed effort to put the Bees on the back foot with only four minutes on the clock.

Wilson continued to cause the home side problems defensively, and Baptiste soon got in on the act, skipping past two defenders before shooting wide in the 16th minute.

Their constant pressure finally told as Palace proved their prowess from set-pieces for the second time of the afternoon, this time Haines netting with a stunning right-footed strike from 20 yards.

Despite finding themselves 2-0 down with less than 20 minutes played, Lee Burch's Bees couldn't be accused of lying down and they gradually worked their way into the game.

Amelia Hazard was among the biggest threats to the visiting backline, but Crystal Palace demonstrated great resilience in the face of the home side's intelligence

and aggression and took a two-goal advantage into the break.

And Bees' hopes of salvaging anything from the game were all but ended just 35 seconds into the second half, Baptiste showcasing her ability to evade a defender and unleash a brilliant curling effort from a tight angle that sailed past Quantrill.

Three became four less than half-an-hour later when a clumsy challenge from substitute Hayley West gave Haines the chance to slot in her second from 12 yards, and while Filis notched late on, Palace held on to a handsome win.

Crystal Palace (3-5-2): Chloe Morgan, Annabel Johnson, Leeta Rutherford, Ffion Morgan, Lizzie Waldie, Leigh Nicol, Hannah Churchill, Cherelle Khassal, Coral-Jade Haines, Siobhan Wilson, Bianca Baptiste

Substitutes: Georgia Clifford for Wilson 67, Aoife Hurley for Nicol 67, Amber Gaylor for Baptiste 72, Amy Taylor for Khassal 79



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WE'VE MET BEFORE CRYSTAL PALACE

Durham Women picked up their second win of the 2019/20 FA Women's Championship campaign – courtesy of a dramatic late winner.

Sarah Robson bundled home in the depths of added time to hand the Wildcats the three points, after Lisa Robertson's stunning long-range strike had cancelled out Ashleigh Goddard's opener.

Lee Sanders made just three changes from the side that beat Leicester, with Hannah Reid, Abby Holmes and Molly Sharpe all handed starts.

And the hosts began brightly, with Robson prodding a corner just wide in the opening stages.

But have grown into the game, Palace took the lead when Goddard reacted quickest to nod home from close range after Sarah Wilson had hacked an effort off the line.

Were it then not for a timely interception

from Becky Salicki, Palace could have a second – with the centre back blocking a near-certain goal from Goddard after she surged into the area.

From then on though it was pretty much one-way traffic, with Durham peppering the Palace goal in search of a leveller.

Iris Achterhof and Sharpe came close to a leveller, but couldn't find a way past Lucy Gillett.

After the break though, the Wildcats pulled level thanks to a moment of brilliance from Robertson who found the top corner with a curling effort from 25 yards.

Sharpe then saw a volley blocked, with Achterhof then looping a shot over the bar from close range.

But just as if the game looked to be petering out, a deep free-kick was nodded across goal by Becky Salicki for Robson to force home – as pandemonium ensued

both in the stands and on the pitch.

Late Palace penalty shouts were turned down, as Durham completed a memorable fightback.

Durham XI: Reid, Hill, Wilson (Christon), Salicki, Holmes, Robertson, Robson, Sharpe (Manders), Bell (Atkinson), Gears, Achterhof

Durham subs not used: Borthwick

Attendance: 512



ONE TO WATCH BIANCA BAPTISTE

Bianca Baptiste previously played for Arsenal, QPR and, after nine seasons, departed Tottenham Hotspur; a club where the striker finished as top goalscorer for in 2017.

Bianca also scored at White Hart Lane during a hugely successful season which saw the Lilywhites win the quadruple.



ONE TO WATCH ANNABEL JOHNSON

Johnson spent two-and-a-half years at Durham, becoming a firm favourite among teammates and supporters after a string of committed displays.

After a season with London Bees, Johnson made the move to the Eagles in the summer of 2019.

Following the departure of Freya Holdaway at the end of the 2019/20 season, Johnson was named captain.

SQUAD CHECK

Chloe Morgan

Goalkeeper

Former Spurs stopper who joined Palace over the summer.

Leigh Nicol

Midfielder

Experienced despite her relatively young age, most recently at Charlton Athletic.

Amber Stobbs

Forward

Tricky striker - who scored against the Wildcats at Hayes Lane last season.

Amber Gaylor

Midfielder

Joined Palace from London City last season.

Kate Natkiel

Forward

Recently with Brighton in the WSL, Natkiel has bags of tricks and is a real attacking threat.

Lizzie Waldie

Defender

Young defender who has built-up a strong partnership with Annabel Johnson.

Cherelle Khassal

Forward

Has been in fine form this season and is one to watch this afternoon.

Siobhan Wilson

Forward

Scored a fine free-kick at London Bees last weekend.

Andria Georgiou

Midfielder

Brings some experience and quality to the centre of the park.

Leeta Rutherford

Defender

Former Lewes player, who can play in defence or midfield.

Ashleigh Goddard

Midfielder

Scored in the North East last season and is certainly a threat in forward areas.

Ffion Morgan

Defender

Flying full-back who swapped Coventry for Palace over the summer.

Hannah Churchill

Midfielder

Formerly of Charlton Athletic, a regular in the Palace engine room.

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JOHN MIDDLETON

Greetings from The Turret!

Been a busy but pretty successful week for our team. You can look at the results and the milestones achieved and give the praise that is rightly due but others will definitely do that so, in this platform, I'll turn my attention elsewhere.

Wednesday night was a big night for four other players, which I'm sure brought great pleasure to Lee, Steph and the backroom staff, arguably as much as the result.

There were three impressive debutants, illustrating the structure and progression opportunities within the club. They also showed that the future is in great hands.

The fourth was in the form of Rachel

Lee who returned after 18 months recovering from injury.

"Shorty", together with Lauren Briggs who, of course, has also just returned from a long-term injury, put in a good shift. It was great to see them both marshalling the midfield well. I'm Lee and Steph are beginning to foresee selection headaches with the increasing strength in depth!

Thank you for all your kind comments about the Live Streaming! The team have really enjoyed doing it. Wednesday was interesting for me with a mask, woolly hat, glasses steaming up and floodlights but, apart from Molly's goal (which seemed to fool everyone!) it went ok.

Fingers-crossed we'll be able to continue while needed; and then carry on with Durham Hospitals Radio coverage whatever the future holds.

A third test to finish the week then. I always enjoy the visit of Crystal Palace, reminding me of old haunts, but I hope that another win will be the cherry on the top of a good eight days!

Enjoy the game and let's hear the "Wildcat Roar"!

John

@JADMiddy



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A photograph of two female soccer players in blue jerseys celebrating on a field. One player is in the foreground, bent over with her head down, while the other player is behind her, embracing her from the side. The background is a blurred green field and white fence.

FEATURE INTERVIEW

Plenty has been made of Durham Women's togetherness this season, and at the heart of that is Becky Salicki - the team joker who has helped bring the Wildcats ever closer...

It was understandable that, on the eve of the first game of the season at the Liverpool, there were a few nerves in the Durham Women camp.

But Becky Salicki quickly set about eliminating them.

With the help of club staff, the defender set about preparing a video for the squad to relax their minds - the contents of which will naturally remain under lock and key.

It obviously did the trick given our late heroics at Prenton Park, and this is nothing new for Salicki - who is often joker in chief behind the scenes at Maiden Castle.

And it's a role that sees her organising activities on our long away trips - the most recent of which saw new signings Bridget Galloway and Mollie Lambert asked to perform a duet.

"It's just a bit of a laugh and it gets everyone bonding," explains Salicki.

"It's what always happens on away games, really. We have a really good opportunity to get together as a team and gel.

"We do that ten times a season, so no wonder our togetherness is so strong."

That togetherness has been evident in the opening weeks of the season, with Durham continuing to defy the odds against full-time professional teams.

That in itself is nothing new, but Salicki believes that the togetherness has reached new

levels this term.

"I've said it a few times, it feels differently this year for us," she said.

"We've always been a close-knit family, but this year feels even tighter.

"Everyone is fighting for each other - we're celebrating tackles, corners and offsides, and that's how it is this year.

"We're all getting on really, really well together this year and I just think it's the start of something really good."

With four games of the season already played, the Wildcats remain unbeaten in the FA Women's Championship - although that record will be seriously tested against Crystal Palace today.

And while happy with that start to the season, Salicki believes there is still even more to come from Lee Sanders' side in the coming weeks.

"It's a really good start.

"We've had some hard games, not that any games will be easy this year, but we've been really pleased with our performances.

"We know we can perform a bit better too."

Another key factor in the opening games has been Durham's defensive record, with only three goals conceded and two clean sheets already banked.

That, says Salicki, is testament to the desire of the entire

squad.

"It's really good - and it's not just the keeper and defence that should be pleased with that, it's the whole team.

"The work everyone is doing from back to front is brilliant and a clean sheet is something for the whole team, not just the back five."

The Wildcats will once again play in front of a near-empty Maiden Castle today, but thousands of fans will be following on social media and streams.

And it's their support which is driving Durham on in their quest for results.

"It's really frustrating not to have fans here, but it's for the best at the minute.

"Everyone has to do their part and there's a bigger picture going on.

"But hopefully we can keep getting results - and we'll be doing it for the fans."

You can follow live updates from every Durham Women game on durhamwfc.co.uk or on our official Twitter page, @DurhamWFC.

Becky Salicki is available to sponsor for the 2020/21 season. Email maddy.wood@durhamwfc.co.uk for more details.



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LAST TIME OUT

Beth Hepple's hat-trick on her 150th appearance helped Durham Women to victory in their FA Women's Continental Tyres Cup opener.

Hepple's treble was added to by strikes from Molly Sharpe and Bridget Galloway as the Wildcats overcame a determined Coventry United.

Both teams made a host of changes for the Group A opener, with Durham handing a debut to young defender Grace Ayre.

And the vast number of changes in both teams perhaps led to the disjointed start which saw neither team able to really stamp their authority on the game – Emily Roberts having the best chance of the opening ten minutes as she curled into the arms of Sue Wood.

But it was the visitors who struck first, pouncing quickly after a poor clearance to allow Helen Dermody to fire home from range.

Durham quickly looked to retaliate, with Sharpe firing over following a flowing move and Galloway seeing an effort well-held by Wood after she had cut inside.

An equaliser looked inevitable – and it was no surprise that it came via the boot of top scorer Hepple, who turned home Ellie Christon's low cross at the near post.

It would get better for Durham before the break too, with Georgia Popple's shove on Sarah Wilson handed the hosts a penalty on the stroke of half-time.

Hepple duly converted, sending Wood the wrong way from the spot.

The Wildcats continued their dominance after the interval, with Wood making a smart stop to deny Galloway as she sought her first goal for the club.

A third would eventually come, albeit in strange circumstances. Sharpe's cross looked for all intents and purposes to have gone behind the goal, only to creep into

the top corner and nestle in the back of the net.

And before the hour mark, it would be four – Hepple completing her hat-trick with a well-struck free-kick from the edge of the area.

That three-goal cushion allowed Durham to rotate their squad further, with winger Lily Crosthwaite and stopper Brooke Mackain both handed senior debuts.

And there was little the latter could do about Coventry's consolation goal – a well-struck effort from Becky Anderson who quickly took a free-kick.

It mattered little in the end, though, as Galloway rounded-off the scoring with the Wildcats' fifth as she turned home Crosthwaite's cross at the back post to grab her first for the club.

The win moves Durham to the top of Group A with one fixture played.

Megan Borthwick

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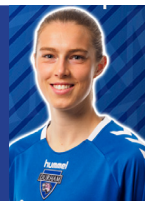
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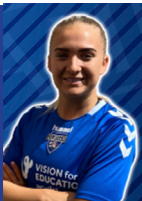
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6	Liverpool (A)	FAWC	D 1-1	Borthwick	Hill	Salicki	Christon	Holmes	Lambe
12	Lewes (H)	FAWC	W 3-0	Borthwick	Hill	Salicki	Wilson	Christon	Holme
27	London City (H)	FAWC	W 1-0	Borthwick	Hill	Salicki	Wilson	Christon	Lambe
October 2020									
4	Leicester (A)	FAWC	D 2-2	Borthwick	Hill	Salicki	Wilson	Christon	Lambe
7	Coventry (H)	CC	W 5-2	Borthwick	Ayre	Salicki	Wilson	Christon	Lee
11	Crystal Palace (H)	FAWC							
18	London Bees (A)	FAWC							
November 2020									
4	Sheffield Utd (A)	CC							
8	Charlton (H)	FAWC							
15	Sheffield Utd (A)	FAWC							
19	Aston Villa (H)	CC							
December 2020									
6	Blackburn (H)	FAWC							
13	Coventry (A)	FAWC							
20	Liverpool (H)	FAWC							
January 2020									
10	Lewes (A)	FAWC							
17	Crystal Palace (A)	FAWC							
24	London Bees (H)	FAWC							
February 2020									
7	London City (A)	FAWC							
14	Leicester (H)	FAWC							
March 2020									
7	Blackburn (A)	FAWC							
28	Sheffield Utd (H)	FAWC							
April 2020									
25	Charlton (A)	FAWC							
May 2020									
2	Coventry (A)	FAWC							

2020/21 STATS



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TheFA Women's
Championship



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THE TEAMS



- 1 Hannah Reid
- 2 Kathryn Hill
- 3 Lauren Briggs
- 4 Mollie Lambert
- 5 Sarah Wilson
- 6 Sarah Robson
- 7 Beth Hepple
- 8 Molly Sharpe
- 9 Nicki Gears
- 10 Iris Achterhof
- 11 Bridget Galloway
- 13 Megan Borthwick
- 14 Becky Salicki
- 16 Ellie Christon
- 17 Emily Roberts
- 21 Hannah Greenwood
- 24 Abby Holmes
- 30 Brooke Mackain



- 1 Chloe Morgan
- 2 Annabel Johnson
- 4 Amy Goddard
- 5 Georgia Clifford
- 6 Leigh Nicol
- 7 Amber Stobbs
- 8 Amber Gaylor
- 9 Kate Natkiel
- 10 Ashlee Hincks
- 11 Bianca Baptiste
- 12 Lizzie Waldie
- 13 Cherelle Khassal
- 14 Siobhan Wilson
- 15 Andria Georgiou
- 17 Amy Taylor
- 20 Emma Gibbon
- 21 Leeta Rutherford
- 22 Coral-Jade Haines
- 23 Ashleigh Goddard
- 24 Ffion Morgan
- 25 Hannah Churchill
- 26 Aofie Hurley

NEXT UP AT HOME

Durham v Charlton
8 November
12pm kick-off