

Lesson 9: History

Aim:

To transfer knowledge from historical sources to a written document

Objectives:

- To select relevant information and draw conclusions

National Curriculum Links:

1 a, b, 2 a, 3, 4 a, b, 5, 6 c

Activity

Reading

Ask the class to answer the following three questions in pairs (without referring to the information sheet):

1. In which year were women banned from playing football on Football Association member grounds?

a- 1897 b- 1921 c- 1945

2. When was the ban lifted?

a- 1971 b- 1951 c- 1981

3. On Boxing Day 1920, how many fans were at Goodison Park, Liverpool to see a ladies match?

a- 3000 b- 33,000 c- 53,000

Read number 1 on Information Sheet: History (included in this document) to check your answers, and feed back to the class. Are there any surprises?

Discussion

Now read the whole of the information sheet, and discuss these questions in pairs:

1. Why did women's football become popular between 1914 and 1918?
2. What were the reasons for the FA's ban on women's football in 1921?
3. Why did female players wear hats?
4. What made Lily Parr an exceptional character?

5. Is the general perception of women's football different today than it was when Parr was playing?

Ask several pairs to feed back to the class on each question.

Writing

Complete one of the following tasks:

1. Write an article in a local newspaper from 1920 about a Dick, Kerr's Ladies match. Include some background information about the team.
2. Write a brief comparative report on the perception of women's football from 1914 to the present day.

Note: You may wish to set the writing exercise for homework, and encourage students to carry out further research.

Activity Sheet 1. Dick, Kerr's Ladies: The History of Women's Football

Dick, Kerr's Ladies is the most famous early women's football team. The team was founded in Preston, Lancashire, England as a works' team for a company, Dick, Kerr & Co., owned by two Scots: W.B. Dick and John Kerr. The women joined the company in 1914 to help produce ammunition for the First World War.

The Beginning

Although women had been discouraged from playing football, it was believed that such organised sporting activity would be good for morale in wartime factories and would aid production, so competitive sport was encouraged. After beating the men of the factory in an informal game, the women of Dick, Kerr's formed a team, under the management of office worker Alfred Frankland. The team drew strong crowds, playing in charity fixtures against similar teams around the country and they raised money for many injured servicemen during and after the war. It also helped promote women's football around the country. The women were paid 10 shillings a game by Dick, Kerr & Co. to cover their expenses.

1920

The team played the first women's international in 1920, against France. The French team were from Paris and were led by the great patron of Women's sport in France, Alice Milliat (1884-1957). There were a total of 4 games played in the UK, the first at Deepdale, where the Dick, Kerr's Ladies won 2-0, the second match at Stockport was won by the Dick, Kerr's Ladies 5-2, the third game in Manchester drew 1-1 and the final was won by the French at Stamford Bridge in London with a score of 2-1. After the UK tour by the French, the Dick, Kerr Ladies went on to tour in France where they played in Paris, Roubaix, Havre and finally Rouen, drawing on three and winning the final game.

The French tour generated tremendous publicity for the team and on Boxing Day of 1920 they managed to draw a crowd of 53,000 spectators to watch a match at Goodison Park, Liverpool in a game against St. Helen's Ladies. The team were featured regularly in the Pathe newsreels of the day and players like Lily Parr and Alice Woods became an appealing draw at British football grounds.

Uniform

Their club colours were black and white jerseys and blue shorts and their England colours were white jerseys and blue shorts. The women also wore striped hats to cover their hair.

FA Ban

The popularity of the team led The Football Association to ban women's football at its members grounds on 5 December 1921. Ostensibly this was due of concerns that women were not physically able to play football, but there was a belief that the popularity of the team made some in the men's game feel threatened.

USA Tour

Despite the ban, the team continued to play on non-FA grounds. In late 1922 the team went on a tour of Canada and the U.S.A. On their arrival in Canada, they were told that they couldn't play, so they crossed the border into the USA. Once in the USA, they discovered they were due to be playing against men's teams, some of which included immigrants who had previously played in the British football league, plus at least one American who would go on to represent the US at the 1930 World Cup finals. Dick, Kerr's Ladies acquitted themselves well, winning three games, drawing three, and losing three.

They proved tough opponents. *"I played against them in 1922,"* recalled Paterson 'keeper Pete Renzulli. *"We were national champions and we had a hell of a job beating them."*

Later History

During its history the team played 828 games, winning 758, drawing 46, and losing 24. The teams' name changed to **Preston Ladies F.C.** in the latter part of the 1920s but carried on playing until 1965. The FA finally recognised women's football in 1971, 50 years after they had banned the game.

A Preston North End W.F.C. exists today (and is playing in the Women's Northern Championship), but is unrelated to this team.

Activity Sheet 2. Lily Parr

Lily Parr(Lillian) was born in 1905 in St Helens, Merseyside and died in 1978. In 2002 she was the only woman to be made an Inaugural Inductee into the English Football Hall of Fame at the National Football Museum for the United Kingdom. She is most well known for playing for The Dick, Kerr's Ladies team, which was founded in 1917 and based in Preston, Lancashire.

Career

Although she was sometimes referred to as being 6ft tall, she was actually 5ft 10in. Unlike women's teams today, Lily played against both male and female teams and she reputedly had a harder shot than any male player. She had started life playing football with her brothers on waste ground in St Helens, before playing for the St Helen's Ladies team. It was there she spotted and recruited into the Dick, Kerr's Ladies for a job in the Dick, Kerr & Co. factory in Preston and 10 shillings in expenses per game. Lily scored 43 goals for the team in her first season, when she was only 14 years old. She totalled more than 900 goals in her career between 1919 and 1951. Lily also played in the first ever recognized women's international football tournament between England and France in London in 1920. There were 4 games in total, which included a crowd of 25,000 that saw the Dick, Kerr's Ladies win 2-0 at Deepdale, home of Preston North End. The Dick, Kerr Ladies went on to tour France, playing against local French teams. They also toured Canada and the USA in 1922, after the 1921 Football Association ban on women playing on any of their member grounds. In the USA they played nine games against men's teams. They won three, drew three and lost three games.

Personal life

Lily was born in a rented house in Union St, Gerrards Bridge, which at the time was the most deprived and poverty-stricken part of St. Helens. She was the 4th child of 7 to George and Sarah(Sal) Parr. Gerrards Bridge was largely home to the descendants of Irish Catholic labourers. Her father, George, was a labourer at the local Glass factory and her family rented out space in their yard and rooms in their house for extra income. During her time working for Dick, Kerr & Co she lodged in Preston with one of her teammates, Alice Norris. She was good friends with her team-mate Alice Woods, who was

also from St Helens. While playing for the Dick, Kerr's Ladies she was noted for her large appetite and almost constantly smoking Woodbine cigarettes. After working in the Dick, Kerr & Co. factory Lily trained as a nurse. She worked in the Whittingham hospital, a mental hospital, until she retired as a Ward Sister. While working at the hospital she continued to play women's football for the Preston Ladies until 1951. This included taking part in further tours of France and Belgium.

Lily lived out most of the rest of her life in Goosnargh, near Preston, with her partner, Mary. She lived openly as a lesbian and is a noted individual in British Gay and Lesbian history. Along with this she is particularly respected as she came from a working class background. With the help of her partner Mary's organisational skills, she became the first member of her family to own her own home. Lily died of breast cancer in 1978 and is buried in the town of her birth, St Helens, Merseyside. Her beneficiary was her nephew, Roy Parr, with whom she had a strong relationship.