

8 Read the article and choose from the sentences (A–F) the one which fits each gap. There is one extra sentence.

- A Then in 1966, when England won the World Cup, people started getting interested in women's football again.
- B This was the twentieth defeat by Germany in a row!
- C The Football Association (the FA) decided to ban all women's football matches on the FA's clubs' grounds.
- D Unfortunately, professional women football players earn very little money.
- E According to sports experts, girls at school are still not encouraged to go into football.
- F I'm sure everyone reading this is going to think I'm talking about a football match and that's true.

Go, girls!

Last weekend I watched a brilliant sports event at Wembley stadium. There was a huge crowd of 45,619 people in the stadium with me and it was a match between England and Germany! ¹ However, it wasn't the normal type of match that we see every Saturday on TV. This was the final of the European Women's Football Championship.

Women's football used to be very popular in England at the end of the nineteenth century and in the beginning the matches attracted more spectators than the men's matches did. However, this all changed in 1921. ² The reason they gave was that football was 'unsuitable' for women because it wasn't good for their health! Some people thought that the real reason was because the men were jealous of the popularity of the women's game!

Whatever the reason, women's football nearly disappeared completely. ³ However, there wasn't much money given to develop the game and even in 1993 there were only eighty girls' teams, no professional players and not much training.

The Football Association then started to help develop the game and women's football has come a long way in the last twenty years. Now it is the most popular female team sport in England and there are lots and lots of competitions for professional players. ⁴ His can be as low as £20,000 a year and it's ridiculous when you compare it to professional men footballers' enormous salaries! Many of the England national team have to have a part time job too. Last weekend England's women lost to Germany. ⁵ They will have another chance in the World Cup next year.