

Part 3

Questions 11–15

For each question, choose the correct answer.

Football and me!

Sixteen-year-old Alicia Hughes looks back at how she started out in football.

I started playing football when I was seven. I'd rush home from school to play with other boys and girls. I loved it, and after a while, I wasn't a bad player. However, my family knew I often became keen on new hobbies and then dropped them, so I'm sure they thought the same thing would happen with football. But it never did.

In fact, I was already dreaming of playing football professionally when I was older. And the opportunity came sooner than I'd hoped. I often played in local tournaments, and one of the referees noticed that I was a promising player, so he asked the manager of a professional women's club to watch me play. After that, she asked me to join her club. I didn't believe it at first – I thought they'd got my age wrong, and I had no idea that young girls could join women's clubs. But the manager was impressed, and I started regular training with a big club as a young 13-year-old.

After that, I improved enormously. Despite this, people still weren't sure I'd ever be a star player, which made me feel a bit upset. But the coach encouraged me to just be myself, and believe in myself – he even let me play in one of the club's championship matches, much earlier than I'd expected! I've never run so hard in my life – I didn't want the other players to blame me for losing. Then by pure luck, I got the winning goal. As usual, in spite of the large crowd, I could clearly hear my coach's voice cheering me on, and after the match, the team carried me round the pitch. I felt fantastic!

Since then, I've scored lots more winning goals! And next month, my coach and I are running a football tournament for teenagers in my area. The aim is to give them a chance to chat to the professional players in my club. It'll let them see the professional environment, and encourage them to feel they could play for a top team, if they're prepared to put in the work. But my advice to them will be the same as my coach gave me – you'll have good times, but be prepared for bad times, too. I've had very few of those, though – so I've been lucky!

- 11 Alicia says that when she first started playing football, she
- A immediately discovered she had a talent for the game.
 - B was too busy with other activities to play very often.
 - C tried to find more girls to play football with her.
 - D felt no one believed she'd be interested in it for long.
- 12 When Alicia was asked to join a women's football club, she was
- A convinced that she wouldn't enjoy it.
 - B worried that the invitation might be a mistake.
 - C sure that her skills wouldn't be good enough.
 - D surprised that women's clubs even existed.
- 13 When Alicia played in her first big club match, she
- A was keen not to disappoint the rest of the team.
 - B felt she was ready to play in such an important event.
 - C promised herself she would manage to score a goal.
 - D was embarrassed at the attention she got after the match.
- 14 Alicia says she hopes that the football tournament for teenagers will
- A result in more of them playing for their local teams.
 - B help her coach select the ones who could become professional.
 - C show them what they need to do to reach a high level.
 - D introduce them to teenagers in their area who also want to start playing.
- 15 What would Alicia's coach write about her?

A Alicia wanted to prove to other people who said she wasn't good enough that they were wrong – it's great that she didn't take any notice of them.

B Alicia's produced some amazing performances so far, and helped to win many matches. And I still shout more loudly than anyone else!

C I'm impressed that Alicia has never given up, even during the many times when things weren't going well.

D I'm glad Alicia took my advice about needing to change clubs regularly to succeed in professional football. Her attitude's completely changed now.