



# Girls With Balls: The Secret History of Women's Football

*Tim Tate*

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## **Girls With Balls: The Secret History of Women's Football** Tim Tate

In their day they were bigger than Beckham—the working class factory girls who played in front of vast crowds throughout Britain and became celebrities across the world. But they threatened the entire male dominated bastion of 20th century soccer. So the FA plotted to shut them down . . . Women's soccer began to flourish among factory workers during World War I, and by 1920 had become a major spectator sport. Yet in the success of ladies' teams and the celebrity of their leading players lay the seeds of their destruction. A year later, the men of the Football Association, alarmed by the huge popularity of the women's game, met behind closed doors and, after a brief debate, banned women's soccer from all professional grounds. *Girls With Balls* tells the extraordinary story of the time when women ruled the soccer world. With recollections from the last surviving member of the leading factory team during its glory years, backed by remarkable contemporary photographs, here is the missing chapter in soccer's history—its last great secret. It is a tale of self-interested men with power, wealth, and a fiefdom to protect. But above all, it is the story of girls with balls.

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