



ARGYLE v STOKE CITY



SUNDAY, 26
JANUARY
2025
2PM



The FA Women's
National League

FANVIL CUP SEMI-FINAL



Ryan Perks

HEAD COACH NOTES

Good afternoon, all, and welcome to Home Park for our FA Women's National League Cup semi-final match against Stoke City.

Firstly, a huge welcome to the Green Army in the stands at the Theatre of Greens today. We are delighted you have come along to get behind the team and be the 12th person on the pitch to spur us all on. You will make a difference today so be

loud, and we'll do our absolute best for you on the pitch.

We also extend our welcome to the players, staff, officials, and supporters of Stoke City to PL2 today.

Today is a very important day for all players, staff and fans of Argyle Women. We are aware that our form in the league hasn't been good enough so far this season,

but we've seen major improvements from the start of the year which has allowed us to be fighting for a place in the final of the cup.

We will make sure that we leave it all out there on the pitch today. Stoke City are a strong side - you can see that from their current league position and results so far this season - but we're going to go into the game with the confidence needed

to get a result and progress.

Thank you, once again, for your support this season Green Army. It really does not go unnoticed, and we can't wait to see you all today.

Enjoy the game and afternoon. Hopefully, we will have something to celebrate after the game.

Ryan

"We will make sure that we leave it all out there on the pitch today"



STOKE CITY

Stoke City Women were formed in the summer of 2001. The inaugural season in the West Midlands League Division One ended in success as the team, who were known as Stoke City Ladies for their first 18 years in existence, finished third in the table and gained promotion via the play-offs.

Promotion to the Midland Women's Combination was secured in 2009 as the team finished as champions, whilst a historic treble was earned in 2013 with the side scooping the League title, League Cup and County Cup.

That title saw Stoke promoted to the FA Women's Premier League (North). The team continued to make strides on and off the pitch with an announcement in 2023 that the team would become a semi-professional outfit for the upcoming season and onwards following significant investments from the owners of Stoke City FC.

During the summer of 2023, former Women's Super League winner and Republic of Ireland International, Marie Hourihan was appointed the first full-time coach of the team.

This season, the Potters find themselves fourth in the FAWNL Northern Premier Division. The Northern section of Tier 3 in women's football is as competitive as their Southern counterparts, with Nottingham Forest, Wolverhampton Wanderers and Burnley all in a position to fight for the title.

Stoke City have lost just three games in league play this campaign: twice to Nottingham Forest and once to Burnley. Stoke have won eight and drawn one, meaning they sit on 25 points after 12 games.

Midfielder Millie Ravening has scored 18 goals in nearly as many appearances this season in all competitions, with Tamara Wilcock also reaching double figures already this season with 10 goals in 16 games.

The Potters secured a place in the final with a one-goal victory over Burnley in the quarter-final, before being drawn away from home to Argyle.





Match

v WATFORD QUARTER FINAL

Argyle secured their place in the semi-finals of the FAWNLCup with a hugely spirited 1-0 win over Watford at Home Park.

Despite coming under pressure for much of the game, Argyle scored through Lulu Jarvis on 30 minutes, and showed tremendous organisation and work-rate to see the game out and advance to the final four.

Watford, in the same division as Argyle, are sixth in that league, with 17 points from their ten games. The Greens showed respect to their higher-in-the-table visitors, and sat in a

defensive shape as the Hornets dominated early possession.

Argyle looked organised, sharp and dogged as, while they accepted Watford would have most of the ball, the Greens made sure it was never easy. Indeed, save for a few long-range efforts that sailed wide, Watford seldom troubled the Argyle goal in the first half.

Perhaps the visitors' best chance came after Argyle had shown promise on the front foot. A Watford defender's backpass came up a little short, and Charlotte Whitmore raced to get



there first, just outside the area, ahead of goalkeeper Jacqui Goldsmid. Whitmore got a touch, and a spreadeagled Goldsmid blocked it – possibly with a hand – to Watford's relief.

Seconds later, Watford attacked down their left, crossed, and Maia Lazaro's angled effort at the far post flew over. It was the best position they had got into to that point, and it was a relief to see the ball sail into the stand.

Just before the half-hour mark, Argyle took the lead. The Greens had shown persistence, and slowly built down the right side, with Katie Dickson drifting infield and having a swing with her left foot. It was probably a combination of cross and shot, but it ended up veering towards the former as it took a deflection and arched into the air.

In the box, Jarvis read the flight of the ball best of all, met it with a well-timed header, and steered into the corner of the net.

The remainder of the half followed a similar pattern, but for all of Watford's territorial superiority, they were entirely contained by the well-drilled Greens.

Watford started with purpose after the break, having a free-kick blocked and a couple more long-range potshots before a neat move on the left saw a cutback to Annie Rossiter, who dragged an effort wide.

Coral Haines then took aim from 20 yards, and the ball slammed the crossbar before bouncing out, hitting the oncoming Melis Mehmet, and trickling wide.



Moments later, a Watford corner looked set to go straight in before Caitlin Smith's perfectly timed intervention diverted the ball's path.

Whenever Argyle were able to break, they looked a threat, and after Jarvis sent an effort over from distance, the Greens put together a smart move down their right. Dickson's fizzed ball into the feet of Whitmore allowed the forward to take the ball in and release Jarvis over to her left, but the ball was always getting away from her, and the chance was lost.

Naturally, Watford upped their intensity as the minutes wore on, the need to find an equaliser ever pressing. Bang on 75 minutes, Watford crossed low into the area again, finding substitute Ellie Head, who was denied by a superb save by Comfort Erhabor. As the ball fell loose, green-shirted players put bodies on the line, and kept the sheet clean once more.

Watford were, by now, encamped in Argyle territory, but the Greens continued to show indomitable spirit, repelling what came their way at all costs.

On the arrival of 90 minutes, the sight of a '+8' graphic filling the screen may well have been a daunting one. Indeed, the game had entered the 101st minute before the referee's final, and oh-so-welcome, whistle blew, and Argyle had done it.





FA Women's National League Cup

Road to the Semi-Final

Argyle's season has been full of highs and lows, but on Sunday, 26 January, a place in the final of the FA Women's National League Cup can be secured at Home Park.

The Theatre of Greens is the venue, Stoke City are the opponents and a chance at cup glory awaits, but how did the Greens get to this stage of the competition?

Ryan Perks' side have had a longer path than many to the semi-final of the competition, winning five games prior to the tie against the Potters, starting with a 4-2 victory over Bridgwater United.

The South West clash at Coach Road started positively, with Giota Papaioannou's header placing Argyle in the lead just after the 10th-minute mark. Progress was not without its scares, however. Bridgwater were level at the break and led early in the second half, but things turned in the middle of the second period, with Georgia Wilson's equaliser and a brace from Ellie Sara all coming in the space of eight minutes.



A comfortable victory in the Preliminary Round of the cup followed suit at Home Park. Three first-half goals, including a Wilson brace and Charlotte Whitmore volley, propelled Argyle into the first round proper and set up a tie away from home against FAWNL Division One South West side Maidenhead United.

A stellar performance ended with passage to the second round. Goals from Katie Dickson, Ava Kuyken, Whitmore and Sara secured a 4-1 victory for the Greens but the two following games still live large in the mind of the Green Army and those involved.

Billericay Town were the next side to try and force Argyle out of the competition, to no avail, as the Home Park crowd propelled those in green to victory. The Pilgrims were made to work for their win, after falling behind after eight minutes as Bonnie Horwood curled in a free-kick. Whitmore

equalised before half-time and, as Argyle took charge in the second period, Wilson stroked home what proved to be the game's winning goal.

Then, in the final game of 2024, the cup quarter-final against Watford. A hugely spirited one-goal victory for Argyle ended in scenes of jubilation on the pitch as the full-time whistle was blown. Despite coming under pressure for much of the game, Argyle scored through Lulu Jarvis on 30 minutes, and showed tremendous organisation and work-rate to see the game out and advance to the final four.

Tickets for Sunday's semi-final, which takes place at Home Park with a 2pm kick-off, are free for season-ticket holders of both the men's and women's team. For non-season-ticket holders, tickets cost £7 for adults, £5 for over-65s, £1 for 14-17 year-olds, and under-14s go free.





interview **BEACON ELECTRICAL**

KATIE DICKSON

Argyle Women find themselves in a very unfamiliar position, but an extremely positive one.

Today, the Greens are 90 minutes away from a spot in the FAWNLCup final when they face Stoke City.

The semi-final match is the furthest the club has reached in the competition, with a quarter-final loss to Portsmouth in 2022 being the closest result in recent history. Several members of Ryan Perks' squad on that day still feature in the team this season, one of which is Katie Dickson.

The 21-year-old defender is seen as a senior figure in the squad already, despite being young in

comparison to many players in the FAWNLC.

Scoring against Maidenhead United in the first round proper and featuring in all but one tie, Katie is hoping Argyle can continue the magic run against an unknown foe.

"The main thing I remember is I played right-back in the quarter-final game against Portsmouth," Katie said. "Previously, I was always on the wing or in midfield. I remember Ryan saying to me, 'oh, we're going to try you at right-back.'

"I remember being so scared because they had a winger called Sophie Quirk and she's unreal! All the analysis before the game was about

stopping her, and all I could think about was 'why am I going against her in my first game at right back?' I remember I was playing and doing okay and then she scored, and I was like, 'uh oh'!

"I think Giota [Papaioannou] was playing right centre-back, so to have someone with that experience beside me when I was playing a new position was good. She chats constantly and keeps you in the right position, so you can talk through things and then work it out.

"Our Cup run this season has been fun, but I think the Watford game is obviously the highlight. To play a team with that much quality and then

be able to beat them gives us a confidence boost because it shows that we can compete and beat teams like that.

"The way we celebrated afterwards was so nice. It also felt the same with the win against Billericay Town in the round prior. We got beat by them away from home in the league and we felt a bit disheartened after that, because it's a team that we know we can beat - and we did.

"I think the run has given us a confidence boost knowing that we can now go into league matches and get results. It's a shame that we do it in the cup and not the league, but the cup run itself is special. When you look at the three other teams, Stoke and Hashtag

are doing well in their leagues and as for Nottingham Forest, we know how good they are. To be amongst those three is a pretty good achievement.

"There have been a lot of good performances which I think we have to look at ahead of Sunday. We have to go back and see what we did well and what our mindset was going into those games. The Watford game wasn't necessarily the prettiest game of football that we ever played. We defended for 85 minutes, but it shows we can do it and get results. If we keep a clean sheet against a team like Watford, then we can keep a clean sheet against anyone.

"I think that's probably one of the areas we've fallen on this season, is we concede so many silly goals. I think it's just a matter of concentration. Everyone was so switched on in that game, chatting to each other the whole time and being so up for it, and I do think that will be the case on Sunday."

Growing up near Belfast, Northern Ireland, Katie's love and passion for football started at the age of six following in the footsteps of her brother. Playing in an all-boys team is a similar story to many of her teammates but, at 13 years old, the defender switched to a local girls' club, but did not enjoy the move.

A move to Linfield soon gave Katie the chance to represent her country at youth level. However, a bigger destination swap soon was on the cards when she switched from Northern Ireland to the South West of England, becoming a dentistry student at the University of Plymouth.

"I loved playing for Northern Ireland," she said. "From as little as I can remember, my Dad, my brother and I went to the men's games and watched the European qualifiers and all that sort of stuff. When Northern Ireland got to the Euros in 2016, I was obsessed with and loved it. So, representing my country was just a dream come true, to be honest. It was something I always wanted to do and I'm really proud to be from Northern Ireland, so it was a nice moment for me.

"I knew I was coming to Plymouth for university. I couldn't imagine stopping playing football, so I looked online at clubs in the area and obviously, Plymouth Argyle stood out. I emailed Ryan and explained that I'd played at a certain level and then was invited to training and now here we are!

"representing my country was just a dream come true, to be honest. It was something I always wanted to do"



"My course is very busy all the time. The first year was so intense but now this year it's crazy! We have clinic three days a week and that's in Exeter, so we have to get the bus at like 7am to Exeter and don't get picked up until 5pm, so it's a long old day. We do get some days off when we don't have clinic but it's not a set day. However, when we get it, it's a nice time to relax!

"I don't have a lot of free time. If I'm not playing football, I'm studying, to be honest. If I had a weekend off, ideally, I'd go home, but travelling to and from Plymouth is a pain sometimes. I usually fly from Bristol, so I have to get a 3-hour bus to Bristol, wait in the airport for 3 hours, then the flight's only like an hour, which is short. I don't really do anything else apart from playing football, but that's always been the case with sports. When I was younger, I did every

sport I could; I played hockey and netball for school and just loved it.

"I didn't know if I liked moving here at the start. It was hard being away from home. When I was 18, I didn't overly want to go away from home. Everything I knew was at home: my boyfriend, my family. I struggled a bit at the start, but then you get used to it, I think. It's just the way it is, but now I couldn't imagine living at home. Plymouth as a city is not overly big or anything, so it's been good and you also have the sea, which is a bit of a bonus. It's not that different compared to home to be fair. Everyone's friendly and it's the same at home, so it's quite nice."

Entering a new environment in a new stage of life is hard for anybody but also having to join a new club in the sport you love adds pressure and stress. Katie found herself worried

about the new task ahead with the Greens but found a shoulder to lean on through club captain Giota, someone she sees as one of her best friends to this day.

"I've always been quite a shy person," Katie explained. "Coming into a new team, I just remember being so scared and you don't know anyone at all. Giota actually had a players' breakfast on the first weekend I was here. My international clearance hadn't gone through, so I couldn't even play, but she invited me over and I met the girls before actually training with them, which was quite nice."

"I didn't really chat to anyone. I think I just kept myself to myself at the start because, at the time I joined, there were quite a lot of older players, whereas my team at home would have been more like the team is now being

quite young. I remember being a bit scared of that but when you train with people, I think you get to build a difference in your relationship which is nice.

"I wasn't really getting much game time at the start, which is expected because it takes a while to get into the team and stuff, but I struggled slightly with that because all I wanted to do was play football. It came around eventually and now I'm extremely happy to be here and the friendships I've forged."

"When I was younger, I did every sport I could; I played hockey and netball for school and just loved it"





FOUNDING MEMBERS



2024/25

FAWNL SOUTHERN
PREMIER DIVISION
FIXTURES & RESULTS



Women's
National League

AUGUST

-  Sun 18 Cheltenham Town L 0-4
-  Sun 25 Oxford United L 1-3
-  Thur 29 Bridgwater United WNL CUP W 4-2

SEPTEMBER

-  Sun 1 Milton Keynes Dons W 5-1
-  Sun 8 Hashtag United L 1-5
-  Sun 15 London Bees WNL CUP W 3-0
-  Sun 22 Billericay Town L 1-2
-  Sun 29 Maidenhead United WNL CUP W 4-1

OCTOBER

-  Sun 6 Lewes L 0-2
-  Thu 9 Exeter City L 0-3
-  Sun 13 Ipswich Town L 1-5
-  Sun 20 Billericay Town WNL CUP W 2-1

NOVEMBER

-  Sun 3 Poole Town FA Cup W 6-0
-  Sun 10 Gwalia United W 4-3
-  Sun 17 Cheltenham Town L 0-2
-  Sun 24 - Exeter City H FA Cup L 1-5

DECEMBER

-  Sun 1 Watford H WNL CUP W 1-0

JANUARY

-  Sun 5 Milton Keynes Dons W 2-1
-  Sun 12 Hashtag United L 2-0
-  Sun 19 Watford L 0-4
-  Sun 26 Stoke City H WNL Cup

FEBRUARY

-  Sun 2 Lewes H
-  Sun 9 AFC Wimbledon A
-  Sun 23 Billericay Town H

MARCH

-  Sun 9 Watford A
-  Wed 12 Exeter City A
-  Sun 23 Ipswich Town A

APRIL

-  Sun 13 AFC Wimbledon H
-  Sun 27 Gwalia United A

Green = Home games Black = Away games

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FIXTURES HERE



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CAITLIN SMITH

Maisie Moxworthy



COMFORT ERHABOR

Childrens Wishes

THE TEAMS



- 1** Lily Felgate 🍀
- 2** Katie Dickson
- 3** Roxy Thomas
- 4** Amii Kearley
- 5** Giota Papaioannou
- 6** Taya Pomfret
- 7** Charlotte Whitmore
- 8** Imy Crawford
- 9** Ellie Sara
- 10** Georgia Wilson
- 11** Jade Berrow
- 13** Grace Smith
- 15** Georgie Knott
- 16** Ella Stephens
- 17** Lulu Jarvis
- 18** Katie Grigg
- 19** Erin O'Shea
- 20** Fern Orchard
- 21** Chloe McMahon
- 24** Ava Kuyken
- 25** Jess Geach
- 26** Caitlin Smith
- 56** Comfort Erhabor 🍀



- 1** Lauren Bracewell 🍀
- 2** Sophie Thompson
- 3** Lucia Molinari
- 5** Olivia Cook
- 6** Molly Holder
- 7** Erin Nelson
- 8** Monique Watson
- 9** Delphi Cole
- 11** Roisin Kivel (C)
- 13** Dom Cooper
- 14** Evie Priestley
- 15** Tamara Wilcock
- 16** Sophie Tudor
- 17** Shannon Stamps
- 21** Liz Hobson 🍀
- 23** Millie Ravening
- 26** Arabella Shuttie
- 27** Aleesha Collins
- 41** Jess Reavill