

PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALLERS AUSTRALIA

W-LEAGUE REPORT

2020/21



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super



SUPPORTING THE PLAYERS. BUILDING THE GAME.



Professional Footballers Australia

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W-LEAGUE FOREWORD

KATHRYN GILL & BEAU BUSCH

CO-CHIEF EXECUTIVES

The 2020/21 W-League season was unprecedented for countless reasons.

The magnetic pull of club football in the northern hemisphere again proved too enticing for a host of stars who once called the W-League home. At the same time, the pandemic played havoc with clubs' and players' schedules as the league grappled with the uncertainty of COVID-19.

The season window shifted from November to the final days of December 2020 – kicking off simultaneously with the A-League for the first time – while the Grand Final, typically played in February, was won by Melbourne Victory in the second week of April.

The players' efforts and that of the League's administration was widely applauded, as snap lockdowns, postponed matches and travel restrictions delivered ongoing scheduling disruptions.

Fortunately, the collective determination across the league prevented a more radical, although not uncommon, outcome in a COVID-19 impacted landscape; the cancellation of the women's league altogether.

In a season of uncertainty, a beacon of hope was delivered by the stars of the future, and, in the face of adversity and outside distraction, the W-League provided exciting matches and compelling storylines.

Among a range of emerging trends outlined within this report, players within the 18-24 age bracket enjoyed a 38% increase in minutes, halting the previous decline within that cohort, as evidenced over the last three W-League seasons. That alone is cause for relief, as increasing match minutes for our

emerging players remains critical to our competitiveness on the international stage.

However, a 46% decrease in foreign players on W-League rosters caused by the hiatus in global migration likely impacted squad quality and stability. Simultaneously, a 14% decrease in player payments across the league reflects the clubs' precarious financial situation in an environment where match-day revenues have all but disappeared.

Importantly, this report provides a timely synopsis of where the W-League has progressed to after 13 seasons under Football Australia's operation – and where the opportunities lie for next season, which will be the first in a new era of independence.

The club owners are inheriting a competition design that has largely stagnated. Since Melbourne City entered the competition in 2015 – six years ago – no new teams or expansion plans have been unveiled, at a time where the W-League is slipping down the local and global pecking order for female professionals.

In this strategic vacuum, other sports have strengthened or emerged from nothing; five new female professional leagues have materialised in Australia in the past five years – and one, the AFLW, rapidly expanded from eight to 14 teams.

In a global context, the W-League's position has also fallen behind. Investment in European women's football has skyrocketed. In England – the new destination for the Matildas – the FA Women's Super League has surged ahead in interest and popularity and secured a multi-million-dollar broadcast partner.

While identifying problems is easy, several viable solutions can regenerate the W-League.

In a season of uncertainty, a beacon of hope was delivered by the stars of the future, and, in the face of adversity and outside distraction, the W-League provided exciting matches and compelling storylines.

A full home and away season is not only logical but is required to deliver a competition that can keep pace with our overseas equivalents and legitimise the professionalism of the League and the careers of the players. Expansion is critical to this process.

In addition, a genuine 12-month footballing proposition needs to be considered for our professional players.

Importantly, progress in new areas cannot come at the expense of regression. Workplace standards and players' minimum remuneration must continue to advance and can't be compromised as the competition design evolves.

Few in the Australian football community need a reminder of the inspirational and transformational opportunity of the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup.

With that game-changing event on the horizon, there is no better – or rather, no other – opportunity to ensure we re-establish the W-League as the premier sporting competition for our footballers.

The time to transform the W-League and build a foundational football legacy and player base through the W-League is now.

Through this report, we hope players and the Australian football community can better comprehend the uniqueness of this unprecedented season, the challenges the players and the competition face and the path to future success.



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Summary

W-LEAGUE SURVEY



METHODOLOGY

Where this symbol appears, you will see data and quotes from our major annual survey of W-League players. Every W-League player was sent a link to the online survey at the conclusion of the 2020-21 season. Between late-March and mid-April, 136 players responded to the survey, around 75% of the playing cohort.

The survey covered a broad range of areas impacting players' careers, from contracts, work and study outside of football, transition-readiness, assessments of their club, the W-League, Collective Bargaining and the PFA.

STATISTICAL DATA

This year the PFA has partnered with InStat to provide performance data for sections of this report. InStat is a global sports performance analysis company, providing statistical data reports and in-depth analysis for football clubs and leagues around the world.

InStat



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



136

Number of players who responded to the 2020/21 W-League survey – approximately 75% of the playing cohort



188

Number of players contracted with W-League clubs in 2020/21



43%

Percentage of players in their first season at their club



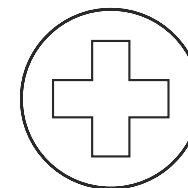
4.3

Average seasons of experience per player, up 0.1 from 2019/20



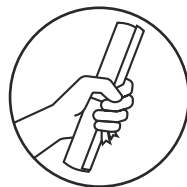
23

Number of foreign players in the W-League, down 14 from last season



3.48

Matches missed per injury, up 8% on last season



65

Number of players who received an Education Grant this season



1,061

Average attendance at home and away matches this season



\$354,261

Average spend on total player payments per club this season, down 14% from last season



STRATEGIC CONTEXT

- Generation Next
- The 'Golden Generation' of Matildas

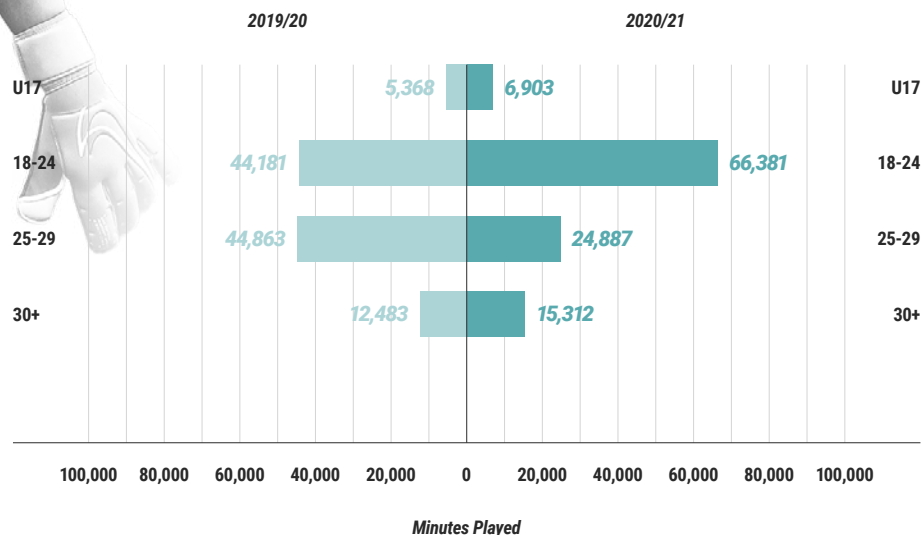
GENERATION NEXT

There were two main narratives in the public consciousness at the start of the 2020/21 W-League season. How would the league survive the departure of several high-profile stars from the competition? And how would the league survive the COVID-19 pandemic? In both cases, the W-League passed these tests with flying colours. Despite a difficult schedule, multiple snap lockdowns and strict health protocols, players' professionalism and resilience ensured the season was completed not just on time but maintained a high standard of entertainment and competitiveness.

While the departure of established stars such as Sam Kerr, Steph Catley and Caitlin Foord in recent seasons has undoubtedly changed the demographics of the competition, resulting in a drop of minutes played in the 25-29 age group, it opened the door for the next generation of stars to emerge. Players like Adelaide United's Matilda

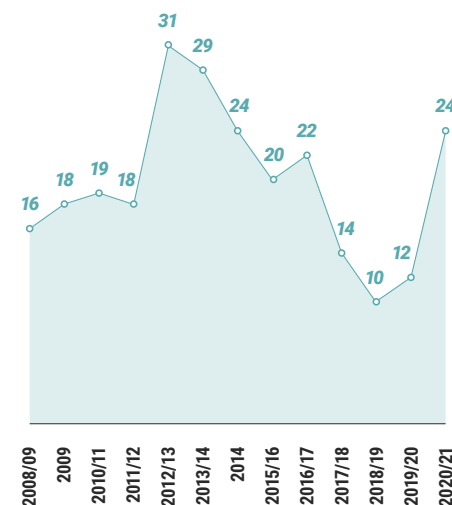
McNamara, Sydney FC's Jada Whyman, and Melbourne Victory's grand final hero Kyra Cooney-Cross are just a few of the young footballers who cemented themselves as the new faces that have the potential to carry the game forward.

**TOTAL MINUTES PLAYED:
BY AGE GROUP**



A sharp rise in minutes played by the 18-24 demographic clearly shows that young talent played a key role in the W-League this season. 24 players aged 22 and under played over 900 minutes (around 83% of available match minutes). That represents the highest number of players to reach that threshold since 2014 and equal third highest in the history of the W-League. The previous spike in this metric in 2013-2014 was a watershed moment for the W-League, with a flood of young players like Sam Kerr, Steph Catley, Katrina Gorrie, and many more, bursting on to the scene in their teenage years to go on to become the competition's household names and form the backbone of our national competition. They now form the backbone of our national team. After a breakout campaign for so many young stars, will this season's young guns be the ones on the back of fans' jerseys and representing the Matildas in the years to come? Only time will tell.

**PLAYERS AGED 22 AND UNDER WITH OVER 900
MINUTES PLAYED: SEASON COMPARISON**



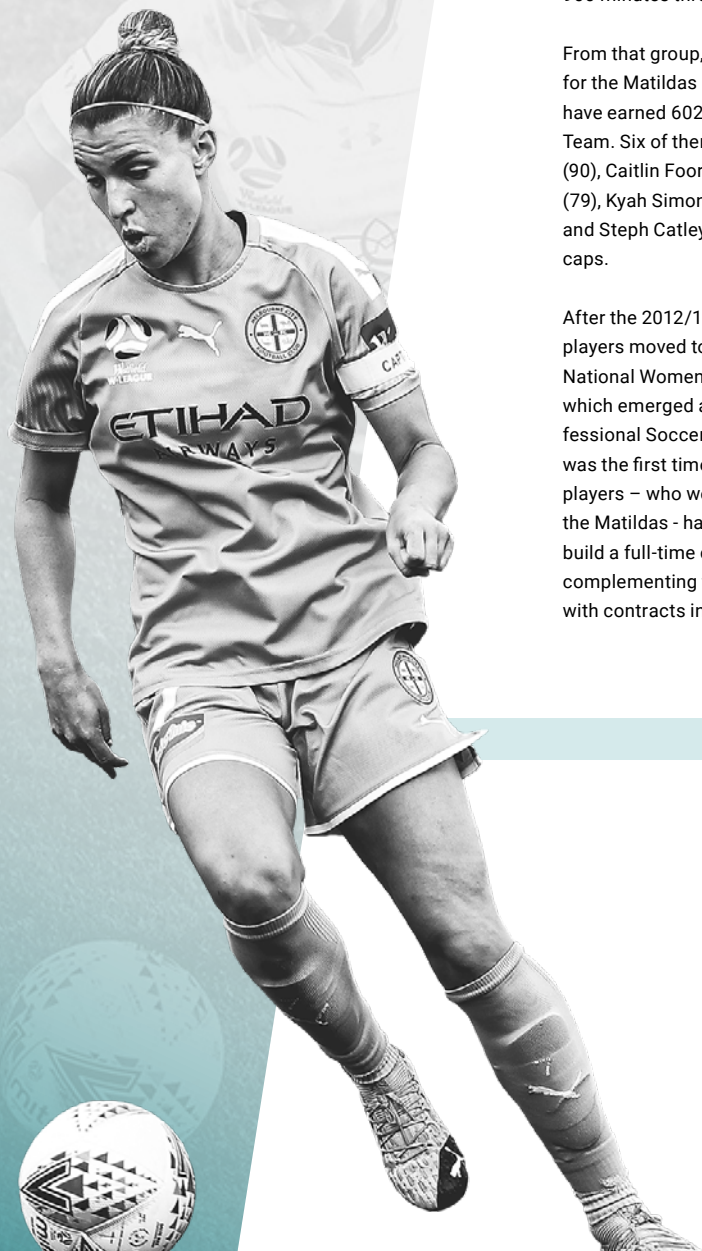
GENERATION NEXT

YOUTH MATCH MINUTES 2020/21:
PLAYERS AGED 22 AND UNDER WITH OVER 900 MINUTES PLAYED

PLAYER	TEAM	AGE*	MINUTES PLAYED	APPEAR- ANCES
Emily Condon	Adelaide United	22	1,027	12
Matilda McNamara	Adelaide United	22	1,080	12
Nickoletta Flannery	Canberra United	22	1,033	12
Elizabeth Anton	Perth Glory	22	1,080	12
Ally Green	Sydney FC	22	1,062	12
Grace Maher	Canberra United	21	1,018	12
Claudia Bunge	Melbourne Victory	21	1,080	12
Melina Ayres	Melbourne Victory	21	1,025	12
Charlotte Mclean	Sydney FC	21	1,049	12
Jada Whyman	Sydney FC	21	1,080	12
Princess Ibini-Isei	Sydney FC	21	1,008	12
Remy Siemsen	Sydney FC	21	930	12
Danika Matos	Western Sydney Wanderers	21	924	11
Leah Davidson	Melbourne City	20	1,076	12
Tessa Tamplin	Newcastle Jets	20	1,018	12
Deborah-Anne de la Harpe	Perth Glory	20	1,028	12
Winonah Heatley	Brisbane Roar	19	1,061	12
Laura Hughes	Canberra United	19	995	12
Kyra Cooney-Cross	Melbourne Victory	19	1,050	12
Polly Doran	Melbourne Victory	19	966	12
Tori Tumeth	Melbourne City	19	985	12
Jamilla Rankin	Brisbane Roar	17	1,059	12
Hana Lowry	Perth Glory	17	1,006	12
Jessika Nash	Canberra United	16	1,079	12

Note: *Age as at the start of the 2020/21 W-League Season.

THE 'GOLDEN GENERATION' OF MATILDAS



The emergence of the 'Golden Generation' of Matildas

Compared to the most recent season, the 2012/13 season produced the highest number of players (31) within the 22 and under cohort to reach the 900 minutes threshold.

From that group, 15 players have played for the Matildas and between them have earned 602 caps for the National Team. Six of them – Alanna Kennedy (90), Caitlin Foord (86), Katrina Gorrie (79), Kyah Simon (93), Sam Kerr (90), and Steph Catley (83) – have over 75 caps.

After the 2012/13 season, several players moved to the newly established National Women's Soccer League, which emerged after the 'Women's Professional Soccer' league folded. This was the first time that many of these players – who went on to represent the Matildas – had the opportunity to build a full-time calendar of football, complementing their W-League season with contracts in the NWSL.

YOUTH MATCH MINUTES 2012/13:
PLAYERS AGED 22 AND UNDER WITH OVER 900 MINUTES PLAYED

PLAYER	TEAM	AGE*	MINUTES PLAYED	APPEARANCES	MATILDAS CAPS
Teresa Polias	Sydney FC	22	1,260	14	12
Gulcan Koca	Melbourne Victory	22	1,100	13	
Gema Simon	Newcastle Jets	22	1,080	12	11
Abby Erceg	Adelaide United	22	1,080	12	
Samantha Spackman	Western Sydney Wanderers	21	919	11	
Liz Milne	Perth Glory	21	1,094	12	
Kyah Simon	Sydney FC	21	990	11	93
Sarah McLaughlin	Adelaide United	21	900	10	
Enza Barilla	Melbourne Victory	21	1,226	14	
Alesha Clifford	Western Sydney Wanderers	21	957	11	
Bronwyn Studman	Perth Glory	20	1,077	12	
Nicole Begg Sykes	Canberra United	20	1,080	12	
Marianna Tabain	Perth Glory	20	1,144	13	
Vedrana Popovic	Brisbane Roar	20	1,120	13	2
Jennifer Bisset	Canberra United	20	1,000	11	
Katrina Gorrie	Brisbane Roar	20	973	13	79
Erika Elze	Brisbane Roar	19	1,170	12	
Samantha Kerr	Sydney FC	19	986	12	90
Rebekah Stott	Melbourne Victory	19	1,290	14	
Hannah Brewer	Newcastle Jets	19	1,080	12	3
Alexandra Huynh	Western Sydney Wanderers	18	924	12	1
Stephanie Catley	Melbourne Victory	18	1,110	12	83
Mackenzie Arnold	Canberra United	18	900	10	25
Ann Mayo	Adelaide United	18	1,080	12	
Eliza Campbell	Newcastle Jets	17	1,080	12	2
Alanna Kennedy	Sydney FC	17	989	12	90
Brianna Davey	Melbourne Victory	17	1,110	12	18
Caitlin Foord	Sydney FC	17	962	12	86
Emma Checker	Adelaide United	16	900	10	7
Jessica Waterhouse	Adelaide United	15	900	10	
Elizabeth Ralston	Sydney FC	15	1,123	14	

Note: *Age as at the start of the 2012/13 W-League Season.



EMPLOYMENT FRAMEWORK

- ▶ Snapshot
- ▶ Player Payments
- ▶ Player Analysis
- ▶ Foreign Players
- ▶ Match Minutes
- ▶ Squad Profile
- ▶ League Comparison

SNAPSHOT



\$354,261

Average spend on total player payments per club this season, down 14% from last season



43%

Percentage of players in their first season at their club



23

Number of foreign players in the W-League, down 14 from last season



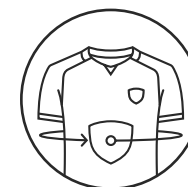
22

Average age of players in the W-League this season



18

Players Aged 30+ who made an appearance, up 1



66%

Percentage of players who intend to stay at their current club next season, down 3%

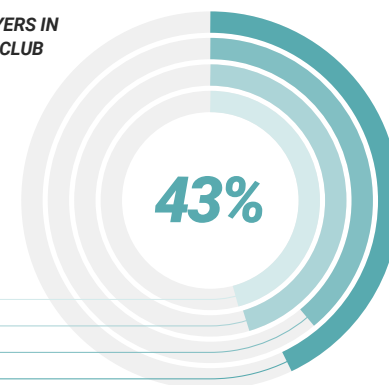
Response	Percentage
Received a letter from the IRS regarding their tax return	65%
Did not receive a letter from the IRS regarding their tax return	25%
Do not know if they received a letter from the IRS regarding their tax return	8%
Prefer not to answer	2%

The results provide an approximation of salary ranges based mainly on media reports and sometimes league websites. However, despite this, it's clear that the earning potential in some of the world's leagues is far greater than the W-League as more and more countries invest heavily in women's football.

PERCENTAGE OF PLAYERS IN
FIRST YEAR AT THEIR CLUB



171



46%
45%
39%
43%

Seasons Played	Number of Players
1	46
2	30
3	26
4	17
5	17
6	12
7	9
8	4
9	5
10	5
11	5
12	5
13	7

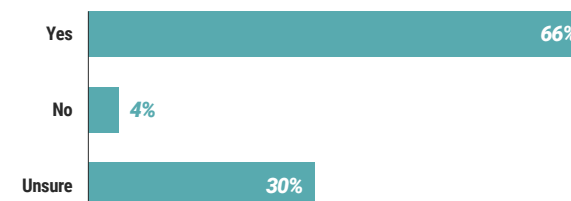
In all, **188** players were contracted with W-League clubs in 2020/21, with an average **4.1** seasons of experience, up **0.1** from 2019/20.

In all, **188** players were contracted with W-League clubs in 2020/21, with an average **4.3** seasons of experience, up **0.1** from 2019/20.

W-LEAGUE SURVEY



Do you intend to play for your current W-League Club next season?



FOREIGN PLAYERS

NUMBER OF FOREIGN PLAYERS IN THE W-LEAGUE



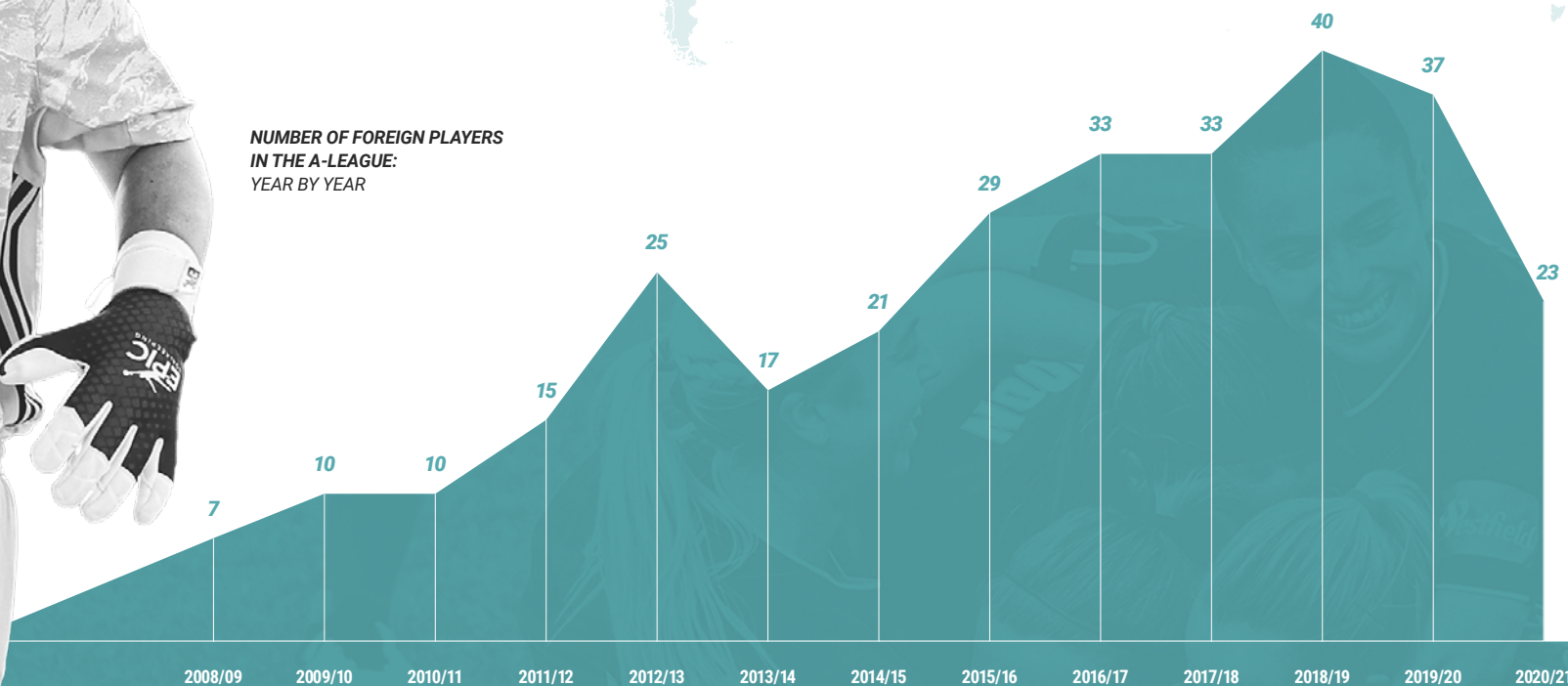
23

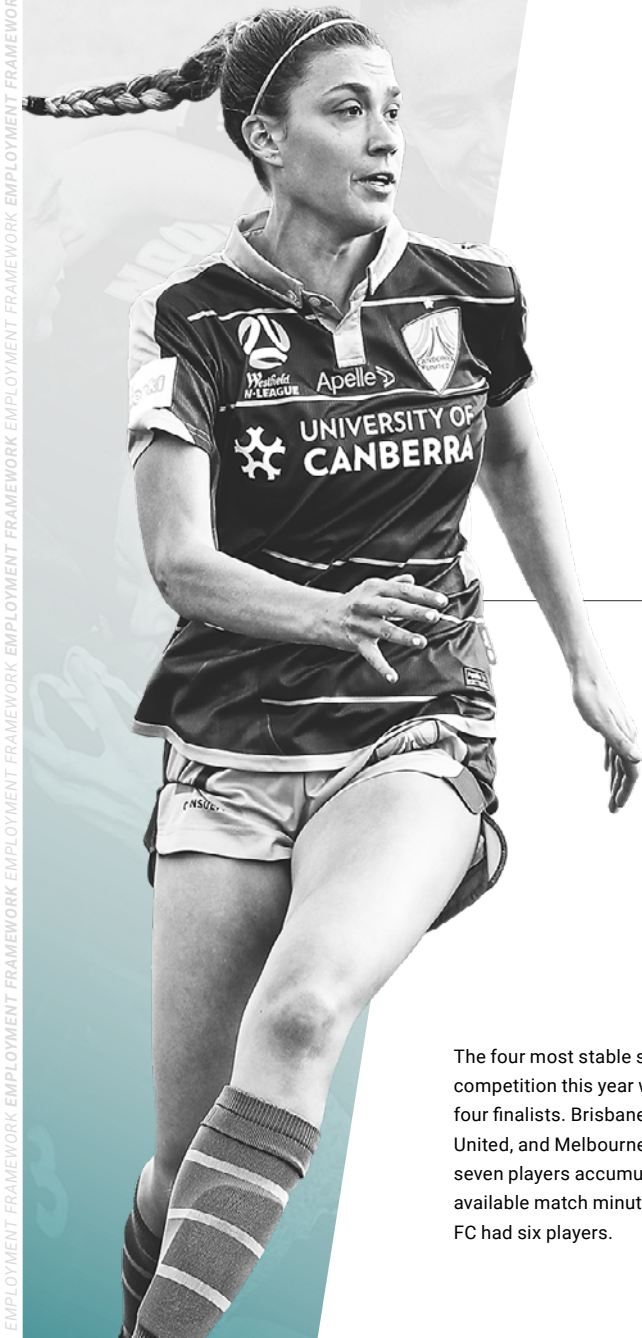
Down 14

CONFEDERATION OF FOREIGN PLAYERS IN THE A-LEAGUE



NUMBER OF FOREIGN PLAYERS IN THE A-LEAGUE: YEAR BY YEAR

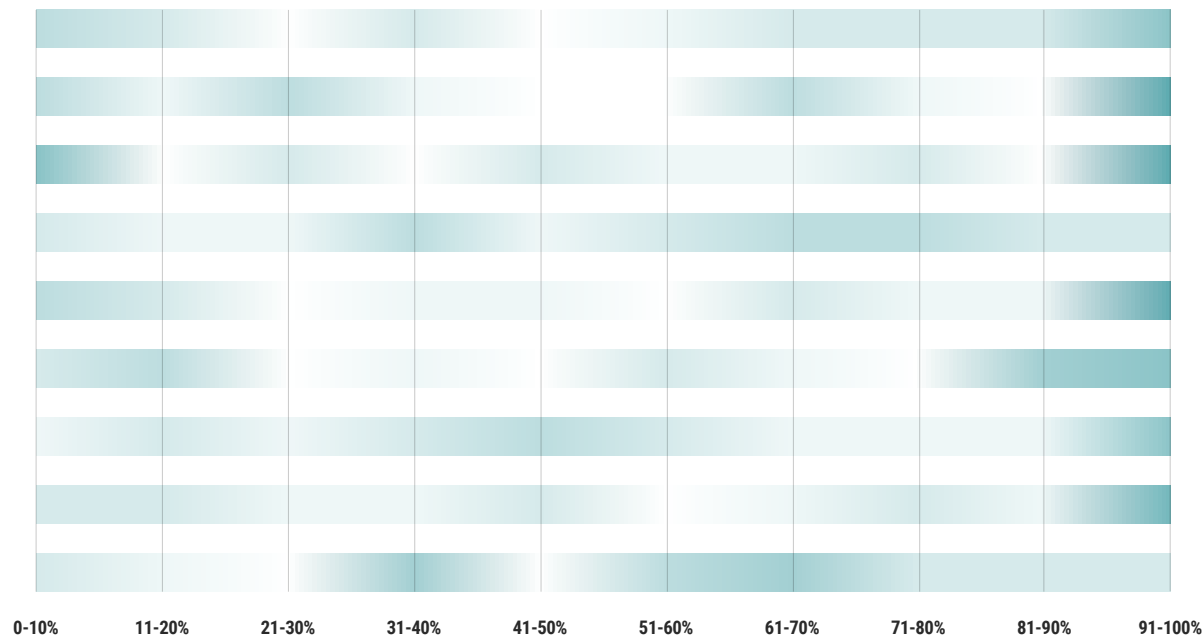




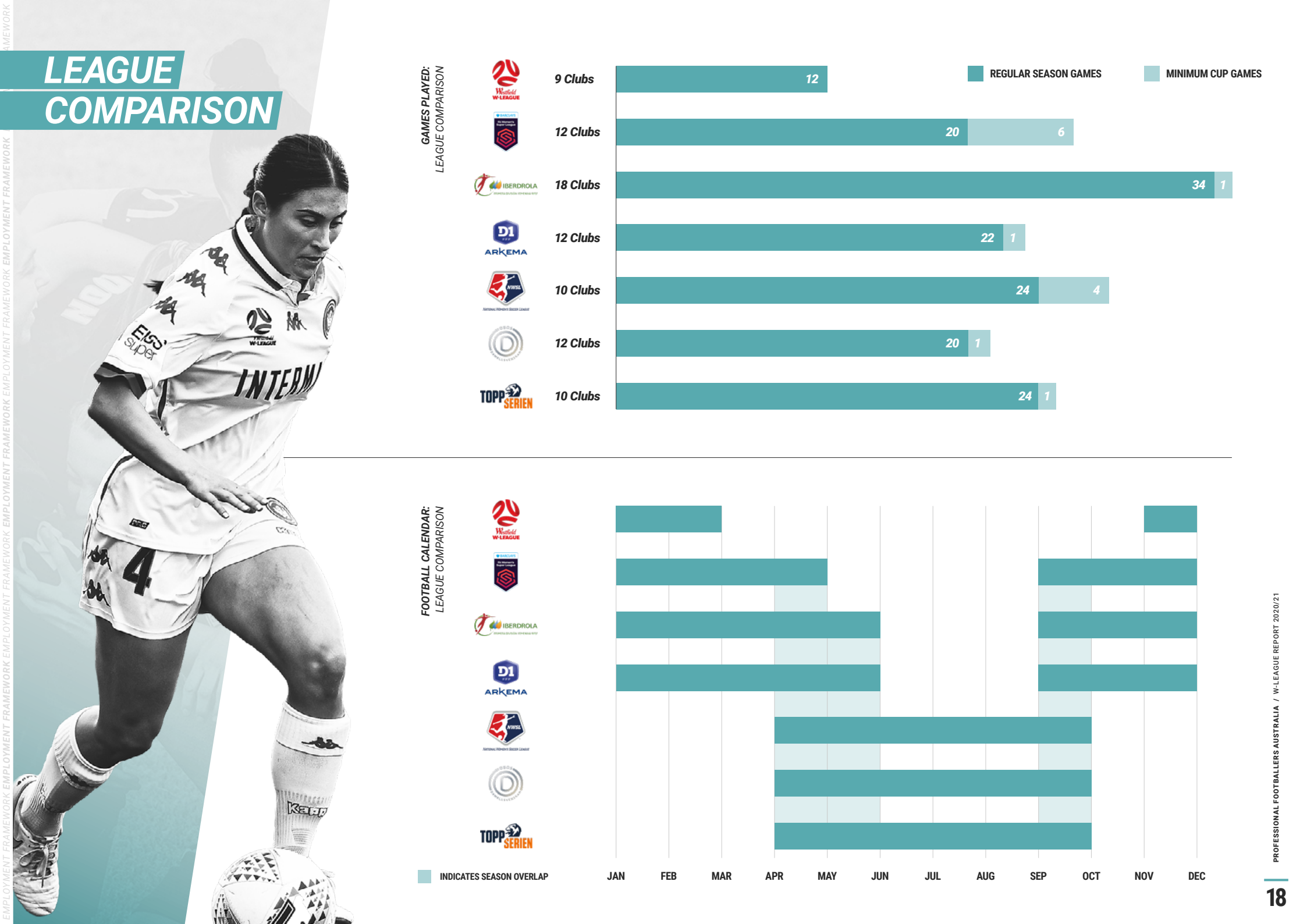
SQUAD STABILITY:
CLUB COMPARISON



PLAYERS CONTRACTED	PLAYERS USED	PLAYERS IN FIRST YEAR AT CLUB	AVERAGE AGE
21	19	5	22.9
23	20	9	24.4
21	20	8	23.6
23	20	14	24.3
20	18	9	25.2
18	18	9	24.3
20	19	8	22.9
21	18	10	22.8
22	20	9	23.4

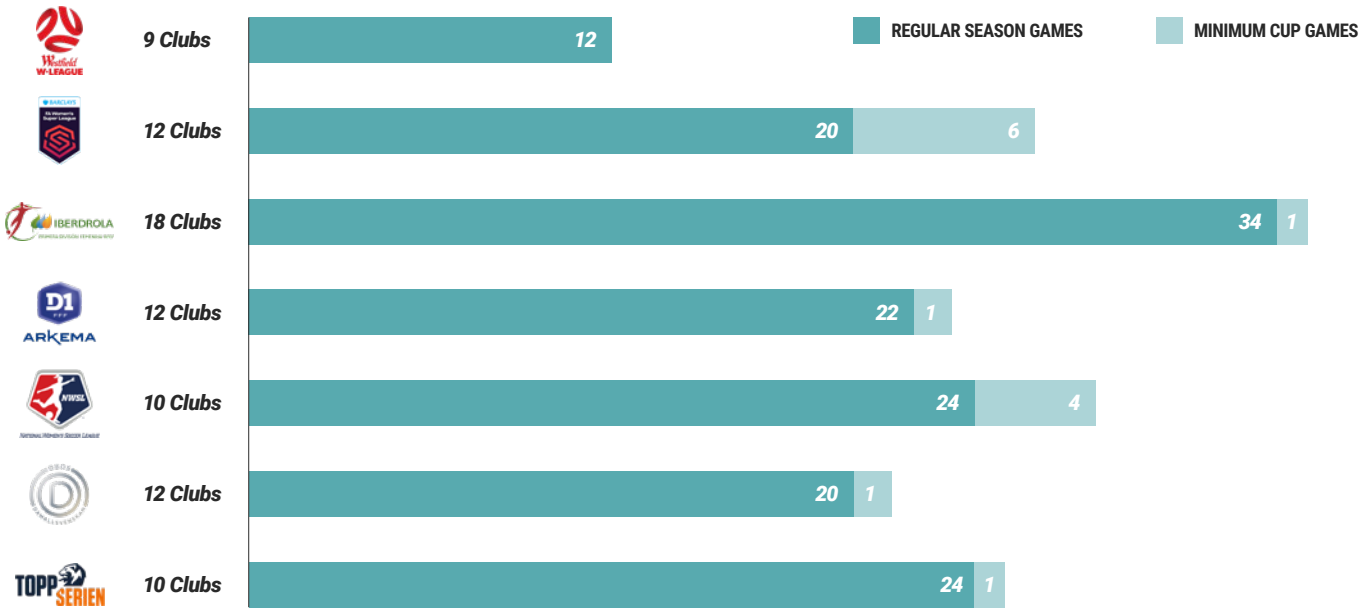


The four most stable squads in the competition this year were also the four finalists. Brisbane Roar, Canberra United, and Melbourne Victory had seven players accumulate over 90% of available match minutes, while Sydney FC had six players.

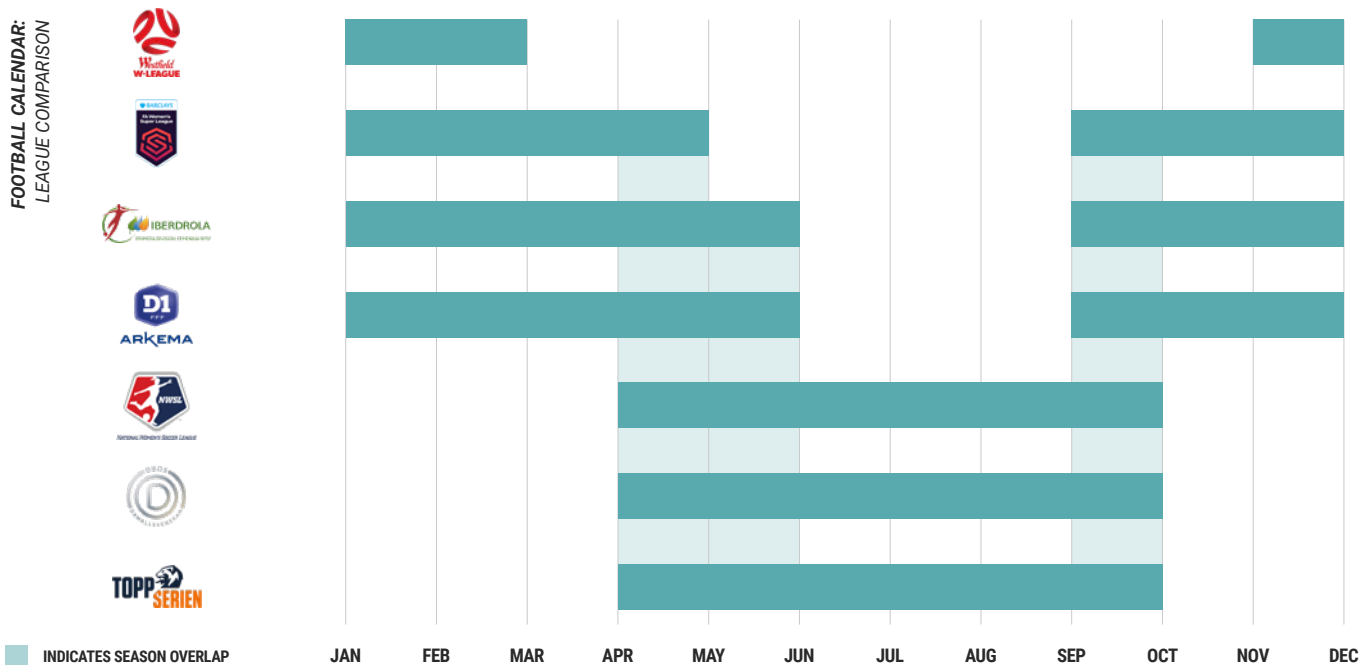


LEAGUE COMPARISON

GAMES PLAYED:
LEAGUE COMPARISON



FOOTBALL CALENDAR:
LEAGUE COMPARISON



LEAGUE ASSESSMENT

A black and white photograph of two female soccer players from the Westfield W-League. They are wearing dark jerseys with 'BHP' and 'Westfield' logos. The player on the left has blonde hair and is smiling broadly, while the player on the right has dark hair and is also smiling. They appear to be in a celebratory or joyful moment, with their arms around each other.

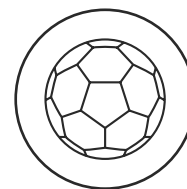
- ▶ *Snapshot*
- ▶ *Competitive Balance*
- ▶ *Broadcast*
- ▶ *Attendance*
- ▶ *Pitch Ratings*
- ▶ *Integration*

SNAPSHOT



27 points

The distance between the first and last placed teams this season



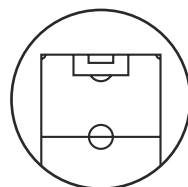
44%

Percentage of matches won by a margin of 1 goal



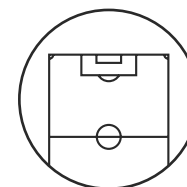
1,061

Average attendance at home and away matches this season



3.9

*Average pitch rating in 'major' stadia.
Down from 4.18 last season*



3.4

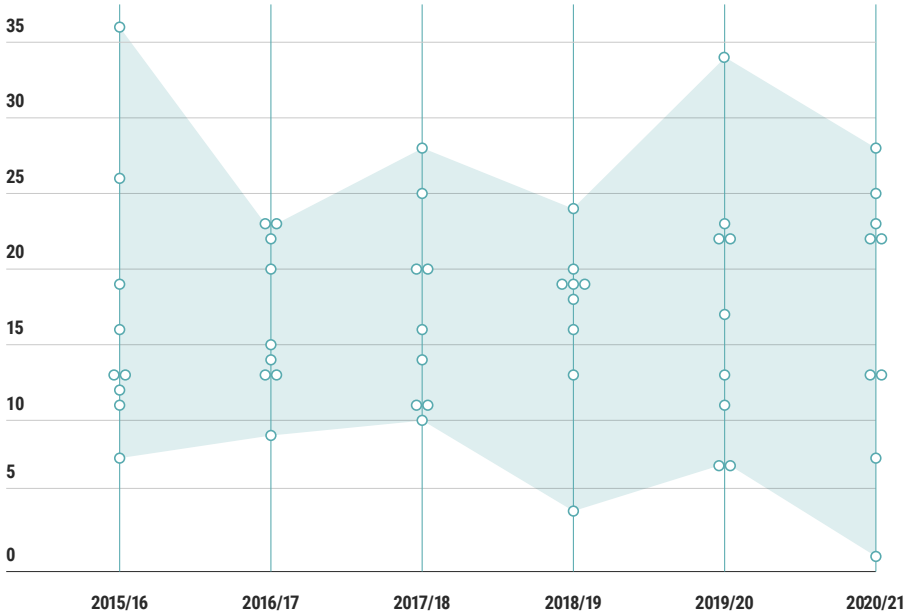
*Average pitch rating in 'minor' stadia.
Up from 3.28 last season*



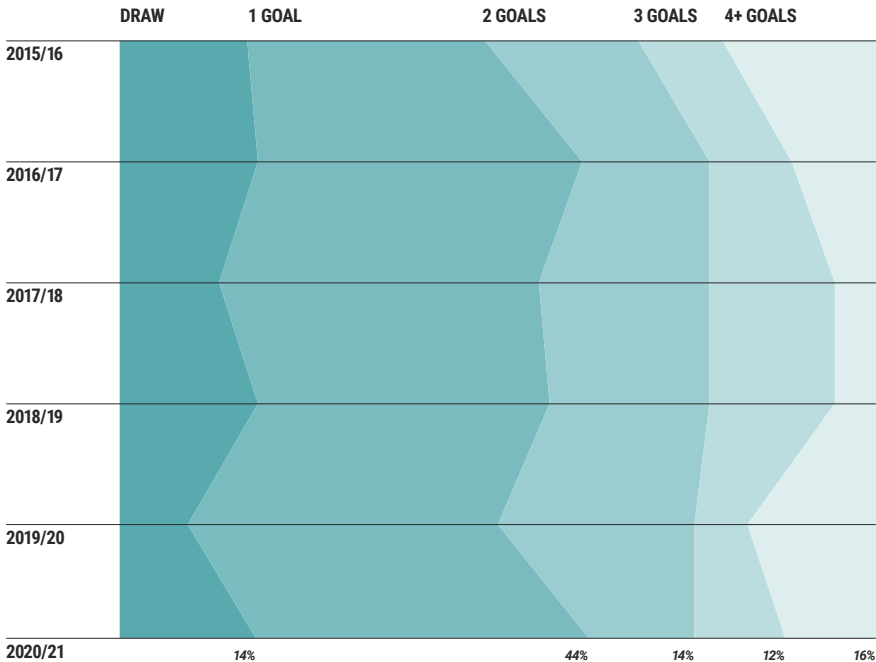


COMPETITIVE BALANCE

POINTS SPREAD COMPARISON



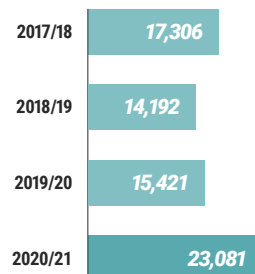
WINNING MARGINS



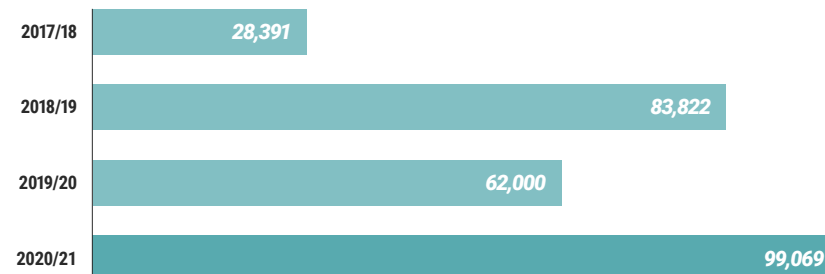
The points spread across the competition remained the same this season with 27 points separating the top and bottom teams, the exact same figure as last year. Sydney FC had a fantastic season finishing on top of the table with 28 points, the equal fourth highest tally in the W-League era. Winless Perth Glory only managed to pick up one point this campaign, the equal second lowest ever in the W-League. In terms of in match competitiveness, the percentage of draws and games decided by 1 goal grew this year and 4+ goal blowouts declined, suggesting a more competitive competition than the previous year.

BROADCAST

AVERAGE COMBINED VIEWERSHIP
PER GAME



GRAND FINAL COMBINED VIEWERSHIP

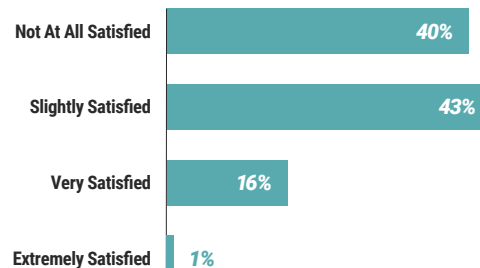


Note: Combined viewership' refers to the combined viewership of ABC and Fox Sports broadcasts.

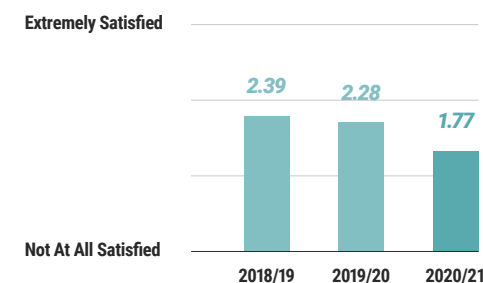
W-LEAGUE SURVEY



How satisfied are you with the broadcast of
the W-League this season?



AVERAGE BROADCAST SATISFACTION:
BY YEAR



While viewership of the W-League spiked this season, the quality of the broadcast dropped according to feedback from the players' survey. Average viewership per game surged almost 50% higher than the previous season as interest in women's football grows and

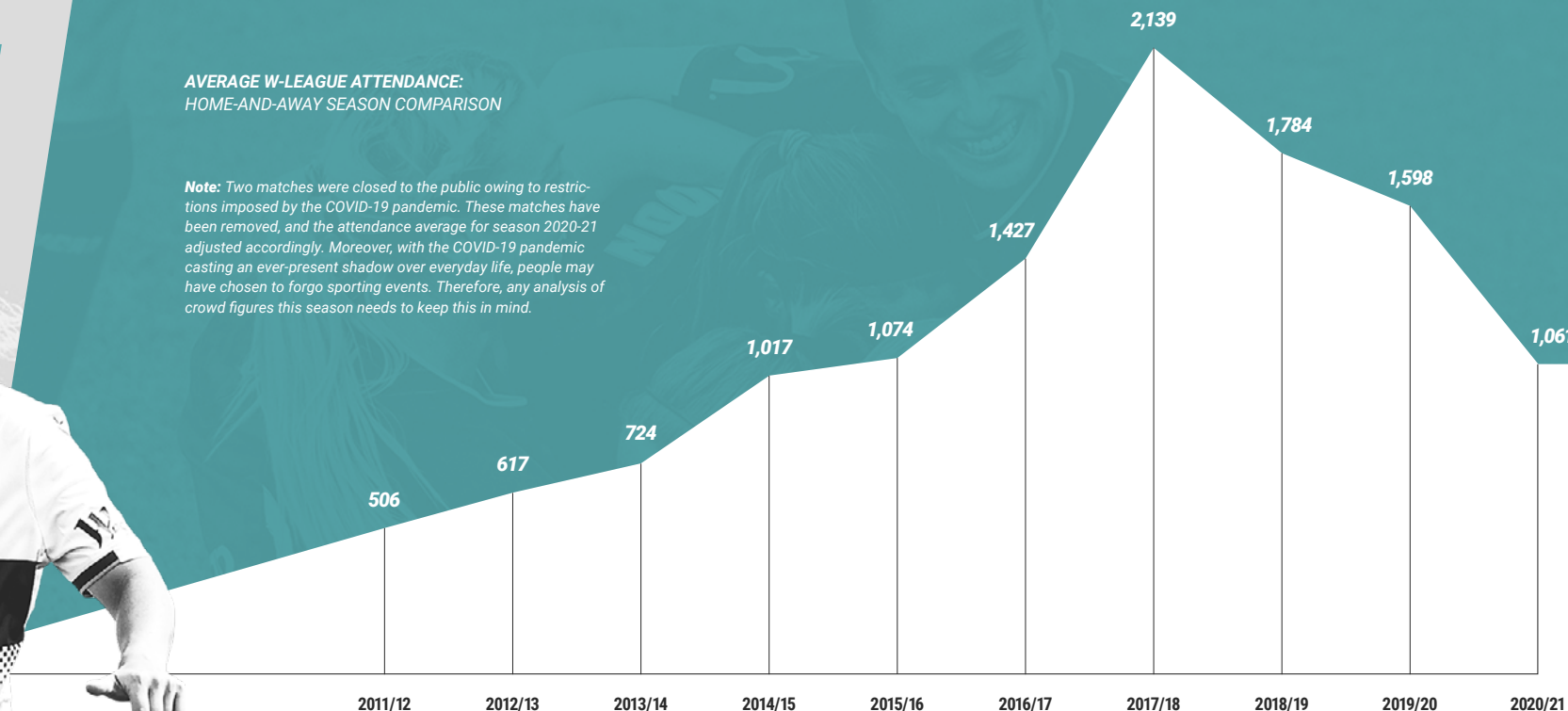
the global pandemic forces people to spend more time at home. Unfortunately, at the same time, players' satisfaction with the broadcast dropped significantly as the coverage ran into multiple technical issues throughout the season. The percentage of players who were "Not at

all satisfied" rose from 11% in last season's survey to 40% this season; Fox Sports' last year broadcasting the league. Next season brings hope that new broadcaster ViacomCBS (through Channel 10) can continue to build audiences and give the league the coverage it deserves.

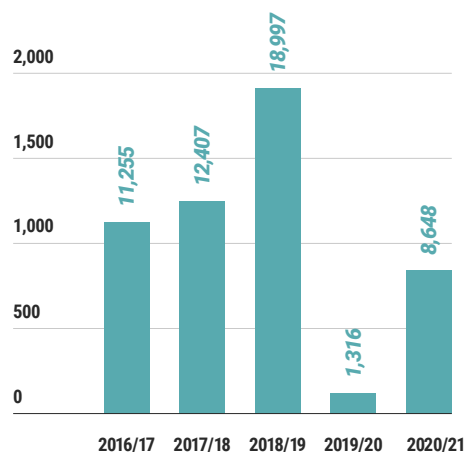
ATTENDANCE

AVERAGE W-LEAGUE ATTENDANCE: HOME-AND-AWAY SEASON COMPARISON

Note: Two matches were closed to the public owing to restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. These matches have been removed, and the attendance average for season 2020-21 adjusted accordingly. Moreover, with the COVID-19 pandemic casting an ever-present shadow over everyday life, people may have chosen to forgo sporting events. Therefore, any analysis of crowd figures this season needs to keep this in mind.



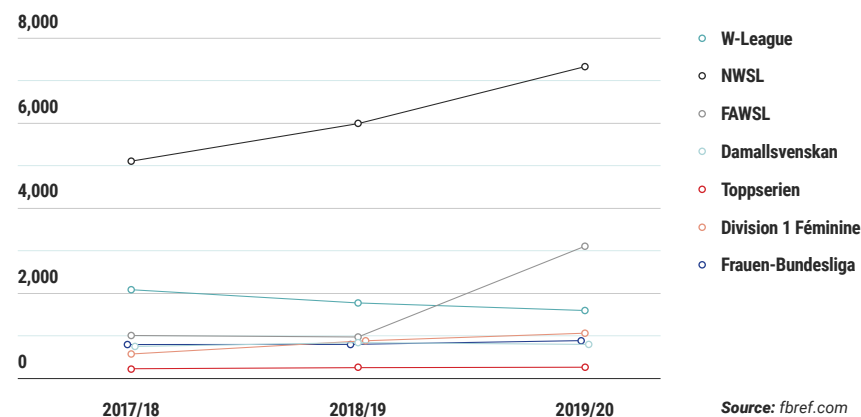
FINALS COMBINED ATTENDANCE



To benchmark attendances in the W-League against other professional women's football leagues, the PFA collated data from a range of women's leagues around the world for the last three seasons (preceding the COVID-19 pandemic). The data shows that while the W-League was once one of the best attend-

ed women's leagues in the world, it now finds itself at a key moment in its trajectory. With many other leagues showing upward trends in their attendance figures, the W-League's declining crowds highlights the need for investment and reform to avoid losing more ground.

AVERAGE ATTENDANCES: LEAGUE COMPARISON



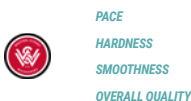
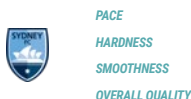
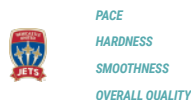
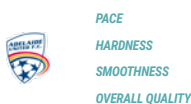
Source: fbref.com

PITCH RATINGS

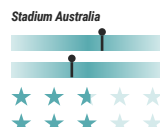
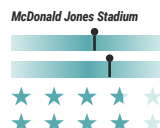
PITCH RATINGS KEY



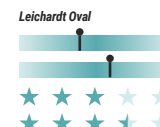
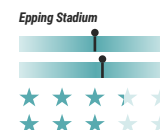
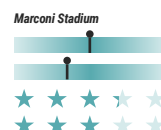
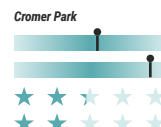
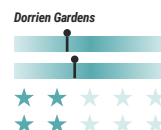
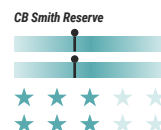
The PFA W-League Pitch Ratings are voted on by selected away team players after each match. Players rate the playing surface on four measures: pace, hardness, smoothness and overall quality. Pace and hardness are measured on a scale where the ideal score sits at the middle, while smoothness and overall quality are simply scored out of five.



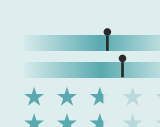
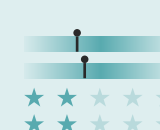
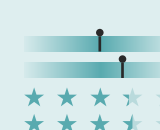
MAJOR STADIA



MINOR STADIA



TOTAL



AVERAGE
OVERALL
QUALITY

3.9

3.4

3.5



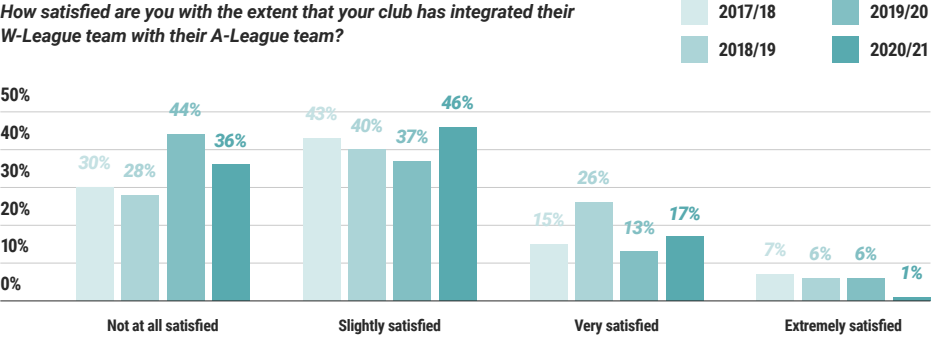
CLUB INTEGRATION

W-LEAGUE SURVEY

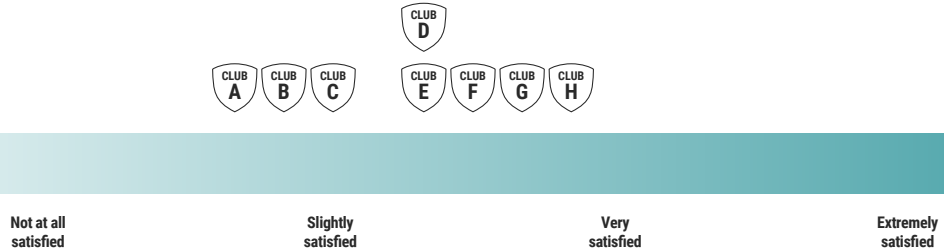


Integration of the A-League and W-League teams remains an opportunity to enhance both Leagues. While the percentage of players who were 'Not at all satisfied' dropped from 44% to 36% in this season's survey, the most common response was 'slightly satisfied' (46%), with only 18% of respondents either 'very' or 'extremely' satisfied, down from 19% last season.

How satisfied are you with the extent that your club has integrated their W-League team with their A-League team?



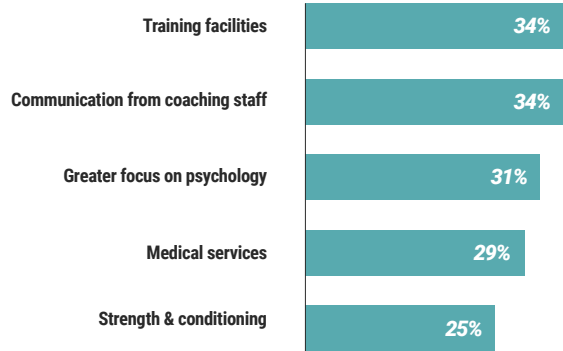
CLUB BY CLUB BREAKDOWN:
INTEGRATION SATISFACTION



Do you believe your club's facilities are female friendly?



In what areas do you feel the biggest gains could be made to improve your club's performance standards? (Top 5 answers)



A black and white photograph of several female soccer players in Westfield W-League uniforms celebrating a goal. They are huddled together, with one player in the foreground smiling broadly. The uniforms feature the 'Westfield W-LEAGUE' logo and the number '9'.

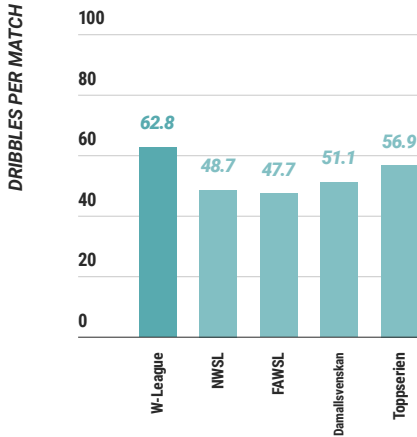
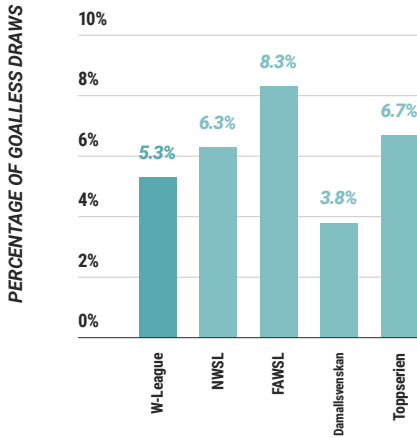
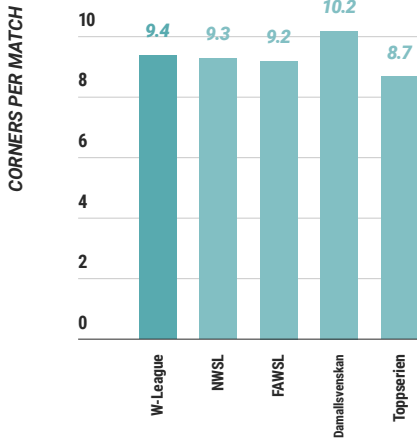
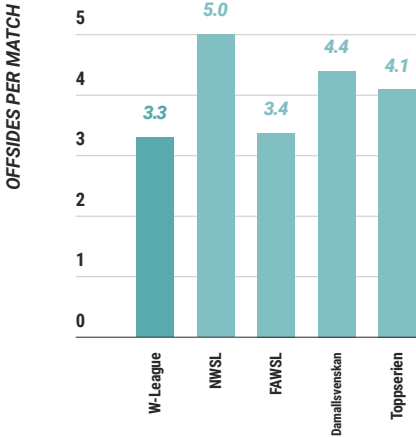
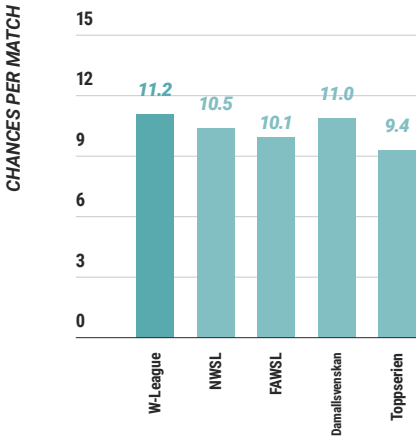
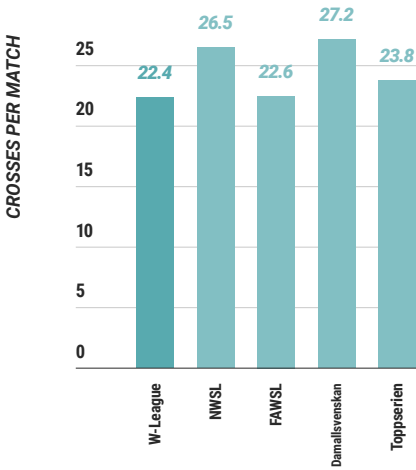
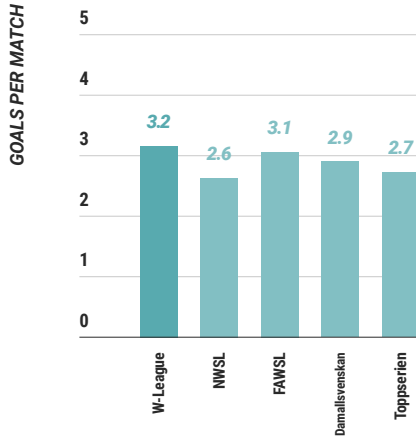
TECHNICAL REPORT

- Goals
- Passing & Defending
- Possession & Refereeing

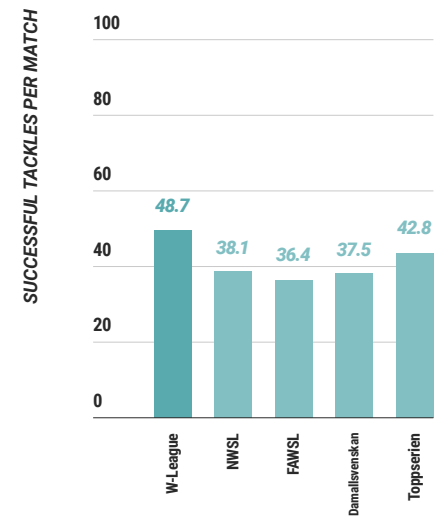
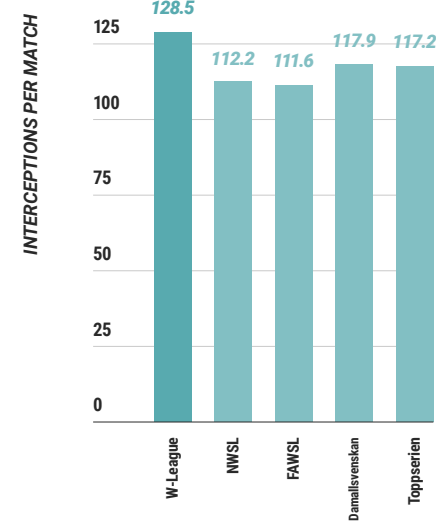
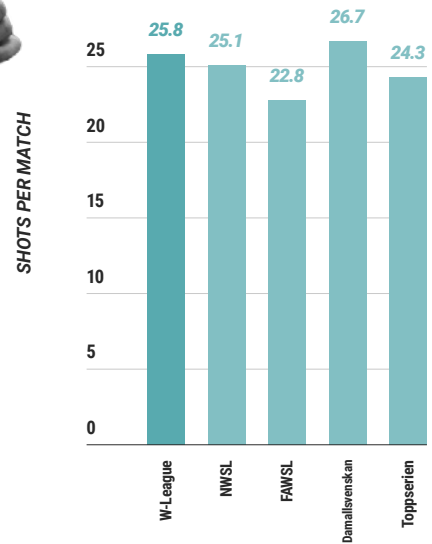
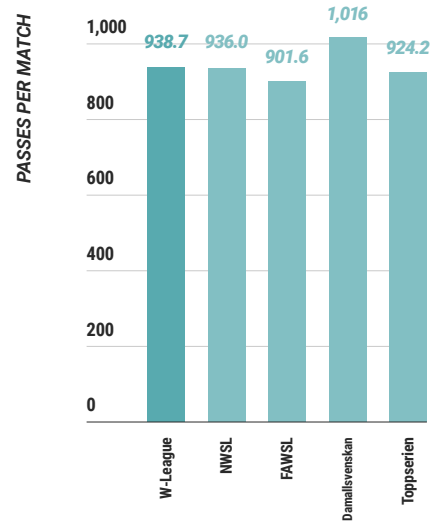


GOALS

In this year's technical report, the PFA compared statistical data provided by InStat, across a selection of female leagues to identify any similarities or differences in style or competitiveness. Of the selected leagues, the W-League is the highest scoring league, at 3.16 goals per game, although it ranks mid pack on the percentage of goalless draws with Sweden's Damallsvenskan being the lowest with 3.8% of matches ending in a scoreless draw. In terms of playing style, the W-League ranks a clear first in dribbles per match but is the lowest in crosses completed per match. The data also suggests the W-League is one of the more physical leagues in women's football, having the highest tally for tackles and yellow cards.



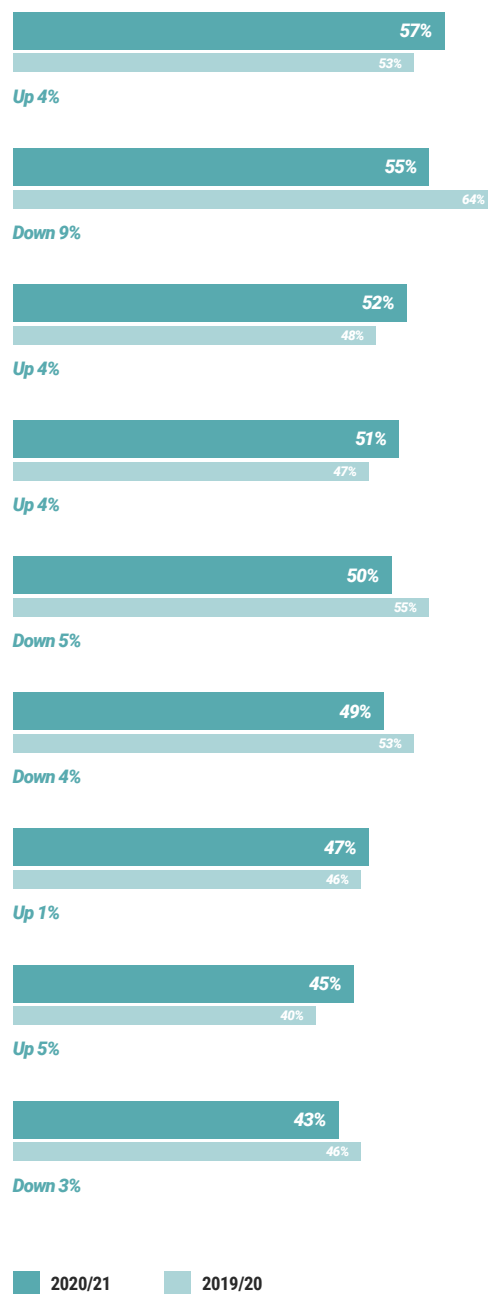
PASSING & DEFENDING



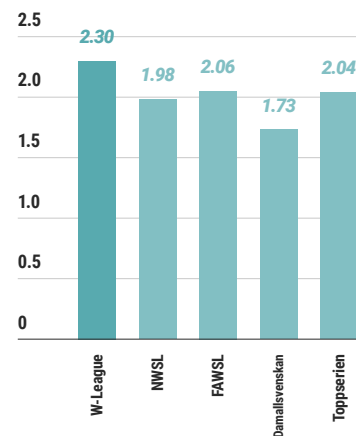
POSSESSION & REFEREEING



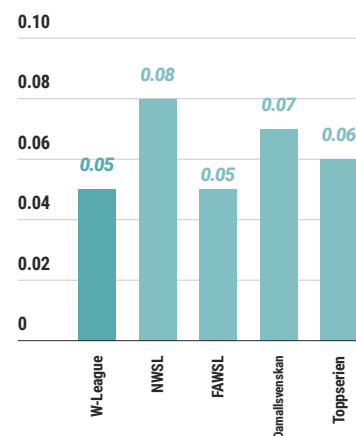
PERCENTAGE OF POSSESSION:
BY CLUB



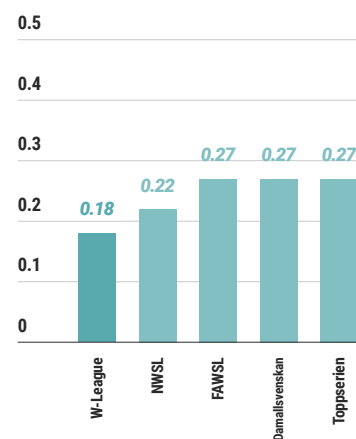
YELLOW CARDS PER MATCH



RED CARDS PER MATCH



PENALTIES PER MATCH



W-LEAGUE SURVEY



Since 2018, as part of the post-match survey, we asked players to rate the referee's communication, protection of player safety and decision making out of five.

COMMUNICATION



PLAYER SAFETY



DECISION MAKING





INJURY REPORT

- ▶ Snapshot
- ▶ Methodology
- ▶ Season Overview
- ▶ Location of Injuries

SNAPSHOT



The number of injuries in the W-League this season was the same as the previous season (44), while the number of matches missed due to injury increased slightly, from 142 to 153 matches this season. This indicates an increase in the severity of injuries, with 3.48 matches missed per injury this season (up from 3.23). However, this figure is very close to the long-term average of 3.42 matches missed per injury over the last five years.

Reducing injuries is always desirable. The fact that injuries did not increase significantly this season is positive considering the additional demands placed on players due to the COVID-19 global pandemic. Scheduling challenges resulted in teams playing two matches within 4-5 days on eight occasions this season. To finish the season, Perth Glory played nine matches over 38 days.

While several factors cause injuries in athletes, increased training and playing load is a commonly cited factor in injury risk. However, despite this risk factor, W-League injuries remained steady. A contributing factor revealed through player feedback in the annual survey was that only 7% of players rated their medical care below expectations; the lowest figure

in the four years that the PFA has been completing the annual survey. 29% of players rated the medical support above expectations, again the highest since the survey began and significantly higher than the 17% recorded for the previous season.

While players are more satisfied with overall medical support than previous seasons, the access and length of treatment continue to concern players, with several survey respondents expressing concern that limited dedicated medical personnel made it difficult to get the treatment they needed.

METHODOLOGY

During the 2020-21 W-League season (excluding finals), the PFA collected and recorded the occurrence and location of all injuries causing players to miss matches.

The PFA Injury Report was formulated from publicly available information and private feedback, specifically through the following key sources:



**FOOTBALL AUSTRALIA (FA)
WEEKLY MATCH PREVIEWS**



**OFFICIAL W-LEAGUE
CLUB MATCH PREVIEWS/
REVIEWS**



OFFICIAL WEBSITES



**DIRECT COMMUNICATION
FROM W-LEAGUE PLAYERS**



OFFICIAL MEDIA RELEASES

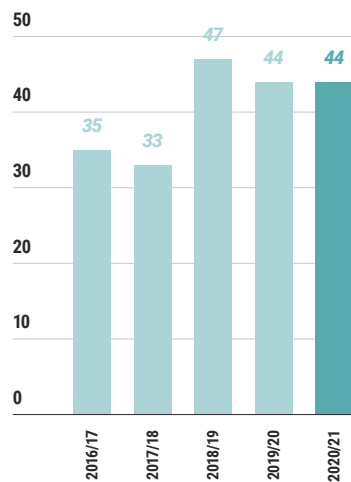
In this report, injury is defined as “any physical complaint sustained during a competitive game or training that resulted in a player being unable to take part in, at a minimum, the player’s next official W-League

game.” Based on the data collected about injury occurrence and related games missed, descriptive analyses were conducted.

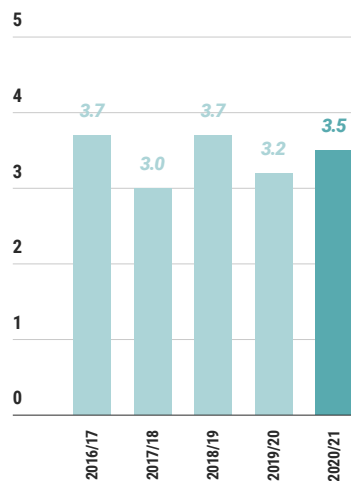
Note: The accuracy of the PFA W-League Injury Report’s results and analysis is dependent upon the accuracy of the sources of information from which it is derived. Accordingly, the PFA does not warrant that the results are an exact and complete record of player injuries. They are, however, an accurate summation of the publicly available information provided by FA and club sources. This report does not include injuries players received while playing for the Australian Women’s National Team.

SEASON OVERVIEW

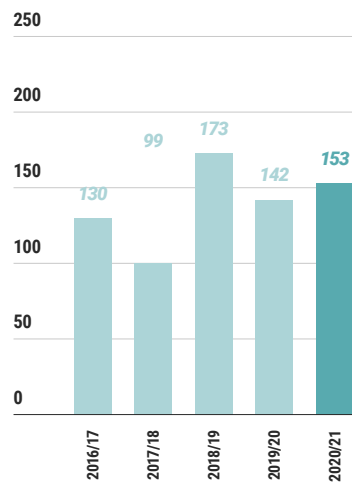
NUMBER OF INJURIES



MATCHES MISSED PER INJURY



MATCHES MISSED FROM INJURY



TOTAL COST OF INJURIES

\$290,749

Up \$58,762 from last season

Note: Total cost is calculated by dividing the total player payments at each club by 192 (16 players x 12 rounds) to find the average cost to that club of each match missed due to injury, then multiplying by the recorded number of matches missed.

MATCHES MISSED DUE TO INJURY: BY CLUB



2020/21 2019/20

INJURY LOCATION

[illegible]

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

- Program Engagement
- Career & Transition

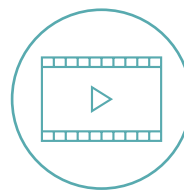


PROGRAM ENGAGEMENT



EDUCATION
GRANTS

65



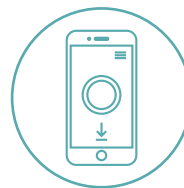
HIGHLIGHTS
PACKAGES

21



PFA CONCUSSION
WORKSHOP

101



PFA RED BUTTON
APP WORKSHOP

101



PFA MEDIA 101
WORKSHOP

25

While the PFA's in-depth research and analysis of the W-League and feedback from players provides a comprehensive and unparalleled insight into the competition, the organisation's Player Development Program provides a critical service for players in supporting them on and off the pitch throughout the season.

The PFA maintained 99 per cent membership within the W-League for the 2020/21 season and provided a varied range of support services, including confidential counselling, wellbeing and education resources, legal representation and highlights packages for players.

For the first time in the 2020/21 season, the PFA expanded the program's scope to deliver:

- a concussion workshop;
- education on the risk of match fixing through FIFPRO's Red Button App;

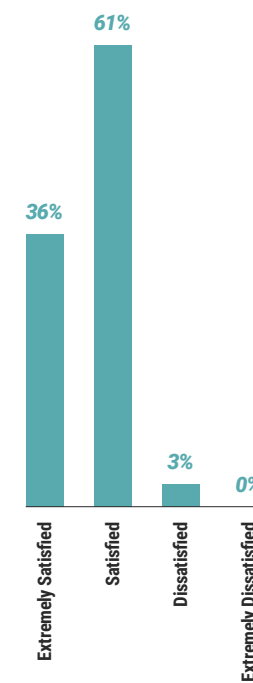
- media 101 workshop for players interested in building their media literacy skills and
- a respectful relationships course

While it's important to track the players' engagement levels and overall feedback on the program - 61% of players said they were satisfied and 36% said they were extremely satisfied with the program - the individual support that players receive in building their lives off the pitch and careers on it, are harder to quantify. These overwhelming positive reviews of the program, however, suggest that it is valued highly within the W-League competition.

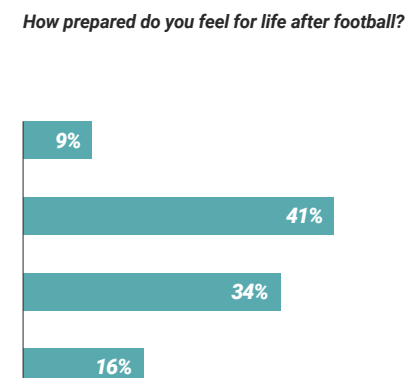
W-LEAGUE SURVEY



How satisfied are you with the PFA Player Development Program?



W-LEAGUE SURVEY



The survey results also show that financial pressures continue to challenge female players' careers, with 94% of respondents identifying more money from football as a key factor that could prolong their careers. As women's football leagues around the world continue to professionalise, significant investment is needed if the W-League is to keep pace and attract and retain the world's best footballers.

SUMMARY



Australia's elite female players have always been pioneers, committed to moving the ball forward for the next generation.

This season that collective ambition was evident once again. Players not only endured the uncertainty of COVID-19 but delivered a season that preserved a platform for growth and provided hope for the future.

Promisingly, a new generation of players received a vital increase in match minutes and first-team experience, which helped to answer the pressing question of whether our sport has developed adequate player depth to maintain an attractive and competitive league. Emphatically, the answer was yes.

Thanks to the players' resolve, the W-League remains well placed for its next stage of evolution.

With the separation of the professional leagues, a new broadcast partner and the opportunity to further enhance the attractiveness of the W-League career path through a new collective bargaining agreement illustrates the immediate opportunity that lies ahead.

To maximise that opportunity, the players and the clubs can create foundational and enduring change for the W-League through the following guiding principles:



PARTNERSHIP

After years of conservative strategic direction and modest investment, the new era of independence provides the perfect opportunity for the game and the players to build a genuine partnership and vision for the W-League



12 MONTH PROGRAM

There is an expectation from the players and a need from league to extend and build a year-round women's football proposition that incorporates the W-League



INVESTMENT

Investment is required across the entire football ecosystem to create a full-time women's program leading into the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup

Through these three principles, the players can help achieve their interdependent ambitions; build a football nation that supports world class football careers.

***COURAGE
WORLD CLASS
INTELLIGENCE
TRUST
RESPECT***



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