

**Joe:** It's the most popular game on Earth. From kids playing in the street to professional players in huge stadiums, more people play and watch this game than any other. And now football, or soccer, is more popular than ever among British girls and women. There are more than 5,000 girls' youth teams registered in England.

I'm here to meet some of the rising stars of Tottenham Hotspur, also known as Spurs, here in London. We're just a few minutes down the road from the famous White Hart Lane soccer stadium.

Spurs Football Club was set up more than 130 years ago. It's now one of the most famous clubs in the world, playing in the English Premier League. Women's teams have been playing at Spurs since the 1980s. These players are the Spurs Ladies Academy Team, and if any of them are good enough...

[**Joe:** I'm rubbish at this]

...they could progress to the Spurs Women's First Team.

**Footballer 1:** What I really like about football is the competitive side, wanting to win games...

**Footballer 2:** I just enjoy the competition, the atmosphere...

**Footballer 3:** ...not being discriminated because of your sex...

**Footballer 4:** Like, you're with all your friends playing football, you're all doing the same thing that you love. I think it's really fun, actually.

**Joe:** Today we're following Kitty as she trains for a big match. Kitty, how did you get into football?

**Kitty:** I've been playing football since I was 9. I started playing in a park and got picked up by a coach. And now I've moved up to Tottenham Hotspur.

**Joe:** Are you treated any differently to the boys that play football?

**Kitty:** No, not at all. We get a lot of support and the same standard of coaching.

**Joe:** The girls' team coach is Karen Hills.

**Karen:** Over the last 20 years, football for ladies in this country has changed dramatically. When I was playing, there wasn't many opportunities within schools. There's many teams that cater for girls' football. There are leagues set up, there's a structure in place from playing all the way up to Senior England Ladies football.

**Joe:** It's now several weeks later and time to put all that training into practice. Spurs Ladies Academy are playing Barking Abbey in the British Colleges League - Division One.

It's a big match for Kitty, so how's she feeling?

**Kitty:** Today's going to be really competitive. There are two good sides who are pretty familiar with each other. So I'm feeling quite nervous about the game today.

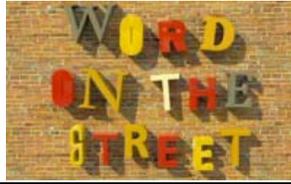
**Joe:** The teams are pretty evenly matched, but five minutes into the game, Spurs go one-nil up, and it's Kitty who scores! Barking quickly hit back with a goal of their own. Just before half time, Spurs score a second goal. And then, in the second half, Kitty has a chance to make it three-one. The final score is three-two and Kitty's team have won.

**Joe:** So, Kitty, not only did your team win but you scored two of the goals. How does that feel?

**Kitty:** Thank you, yeah, that was... I'm not... I haven't scored like that for a long time, actually.

**Joe:** And it's only early in the season, isn't it, but do you think, judging from how you guys played there, do you think it's going to be a good season?

**Kitty:** Yeah, definitely. I can see everyone improving every single week. And, like they



helped me a lot, like, I didn't get those goals by myself.

**Joe:** And what does it feel like to score those goals?

**Kitty:** I had goose bumps from the second one. It felt so good.

**Joe:** So, it's a great start to the season, but there are many more matches left to play. And from what we've seen today and in training, there's plenty more excitement and tension to look forward to.