



#BBFA21FOR21

EVE SAVAGE

CLUB: WYCOMBE WANDERERS RESERVES (PLAYER)

BUCKS SPORT ACADEMY & MANDEVILLE SCHOOL GIRLS TEAM (COACH)

How long have you been involved in Football for?

I have been refereeing for two years and was inspired to start because of the funding from the 21 for 21 programme. I started my referee course in November 2019 but the end of my course was delayed due to COVID so only became fully qualified in June 2021. I have been playing football for a team since I was 10 so 8 years now. I have been coaching on and off for about 4 years with varying teams and age groups.

Who is your Inspiration/Role Model and Why?

One of my coaches is my Coaching role model because he demonstrates the qualities of a good coach, is supportive and gives good feedback in order to help me improve. My Refereeing inspiration is the lack of female referees in football compared to men. I remember when I was younger there was only one female referee locally and now seeing more and more women being officials in both professional men's and women's matches is really inspiring. I hope that I can also show to other younger players that it is possible to have a female referee. My playing role models are Steph Houghton and Lucy Bronze because they are some of the best defenders in the world and I am a defender too.

What do you most enjoy about being involved in football?

I enjoy being able to challenge myself and develop both my life skills and knowledge of football. I also enjoy being able to support players to play football in a safe environment and see them succeed on the pitch. I love playing as part of a team and having fun with my friends as well as challenging myself and developing my skills.

I love engaging with the players and helping them to have fun

What have been your biggest achievements since the programme began?

Refereeing has been challenging but has taught me so much, pushed me out of my comfort zone and improved skills such as communication, leadership, as well as, how to reflect and improve on my performance. My biggest achievement has been being the assistant referee for men's matches and gaining positive feedback from coaches and players.

Improving as a player so I am now able to push out and play more of a centre mid role and have even been scoring goals recently!

This year I received the 'Inspirational Young Person' award, which is presented to a young person aged 14 to 21 who is an excellent and positive role model, for my commitment to challenging and motivating others through coaching and refereeing Football.

What challenges have you experienced since the programme began and how did you overcome them?

Dealing with stressful situations and being able to make decisions quickly. I spoke to my coaches for advice and furthered my knowledge by researching online. I have learned from other referees by observing and analysing what they do well and what things I could also do when I am refereeing. I have had previous issues overworking my hamstrings and quadriceps muscles so finding the right balance between training and rest and recovery. Not being able to coach for a long time due to COVID. We have struggled for numbers some training sessions so being adaptable in order to still deliver a fun session.

What are your aspirations/targets for the next year? How do you hope to get there?

I have applied to study at university for a degree in sports science, coaching and physical education so I am hoping to continue my passion for sport there. I would also like to continue volunteering as a football coach, play for the university football team and contact the local league about continuing to referee.

What has been the most useful support you have accessed through the programme? (i.e., Equipment, Funding for Qualifications/ Reg Fees)

Funding for my referee qualification and the FA Introduction to Coaching Football course. The funding also went towards my playing fees and I was able to buy a referees kit.

How have you found the programme, including support from the BBFA?

The programme has been supportive and has enabled me to start my refereeing journey and fund courses to extend my knowledge.

Which WEuros games are you most looking forward to? Have you got tickets for any games?

All of them! I'm looking forward to watching England of course and any other big matches. We have tickets to see a couple of the matches and I will be volunteering at the MK matches