

## Kate Hill

### Wycombe Wanderers and Bucks Ladies

The football life started out for me when I joined Flackwell Heath Minors at the age of about 7 or 8. At first it was training after training and I never got any games. I think the manager thought that because I was a girl I couldn't play and didn't have the skills or qualities of the boys. So as time passed I heard about an actual girls' team at Loudwater F.C I wanted to join and managed to go with some friends I knew, so I didn't go all by myself. The first session was intimidating but fun; the girls sometimes train with the Loudwater boys' team so I got to know them better as well.

I went to more training sessions and then I had the opportunity to play in some of the boys' games because I was only 9 and young enough to play in mixed games. I scored five goals in my first mixed game for Loudwater, and really enjoyed the experience. When my first year at Loudwater finished I was offered the chance to go and play for Wycombe Wanderers Ladies, I was really excited and jumped at the chance. Again at the first training session I was nervous but after a while I settled in and have now made great friends. Now I play right mid-field for the under 14s and every game brings us together as a team and is great fun.

While at Wycombe I was offered the opportunity to go for trials at a Buckinghamshire county training centre. I was so happy I was offered the chance and was really excited at the trials. The first time I tried I was really hoping to get in, and when I got the letter saying I was through I was so happy and couldn't wait for the training sessions during the winter. I have done it for two years now, and we play three or four tournaments every year. I find it really good as well because it brings all the teams in the area and all the players can make friends and aren't so competitive, but we still love it when we beat our rivals so we can chat and have a little tease when we play for the county!

At the county in my first season they had a training session on nutrition. They explained to us how important nutrition is for footballers even at our age and how it affects our fitness. It made me aware of the types of food I should be eating to maintain a high level of fitness.

I think girls' football is evolving. But I think there should be more opportunities for young girls who want to get into the great game.

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*As well as playing for Wycombe Wanderers and Buckinghamshire Ladies, Kate also Captains the under 14 girls team at Wye Valley School and her side has just got to the finals of the Bucks County Cup. Editor*