

## Scott on Womens Football

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This is a token piece of writing ive had to do as part of my course - sports journalism. Unfortunately i have to post it to to prove that i can. If you are interested in reading a comment piece about England V's Japan in the group stages of the Womens Football World Cup then read on my friends, read on.

click read more below to do exactly that

If you were to describe me when I was asked to watch womens football it safe to say I was sceptical. Posiibly critical and very definately dreading the pain that would be inflicted on me over the next 90 minutes.

My assigned match was Englands opening game of the 2007 World Cup Finals. A very significant match for all England Womens fans and team, it is first time the team have qualified for a World Cup since 1995. The outlook is apparently good, those who now these things have told me that there was never a more likely time to win the Cup. A perfect blend of age and youth, all of whom understand the tactics and can execute them well.

The Japanese are the first test. They have a player who scores lots of goals and is very good according to my Womens Football Informants. The only player who catches my eye is a 4ft shorty with a 'fro- yes a japanese lady with an afro. Battling midfield dynamo once you see past the 'fro. But Englands Kelly Smith is tipped to breakthrough the Japanese defences time after time - never has she been playing better football. Also she is one fo the favourites for this years Golden Shoe, the equivalent to the mens Golden Boot.

Half way into the first half i was pleasantly surprised that the England Ladies were not playing like the England Men. Route one was still in, but less so. The game was less physical, more tactical, more passing, closer to my preferred type of play totalfootball. Its still a long way from total football but it could easily get there Cruyff knew that it wasnt how physical you were or how much you ran but where you were in relation to the defenders and how much space you created.

The english had pace and used it to good effect after stringing a few good moves together causing the japanese backline a few problems. However the bane of football, the lineswomen, had something to say about those sliding few balls (offside!). Early on the Japanese got a free-kick in a promising position 25 yards out. As they set up the attack i notice in amazement that the Japanese forwards are mixing with the wall - in a whole new way. Blocking the view of the 'keeper, preventing the english defenders moving/seeing. NO. Two fo them knelt down in fron of the wall. To what purpose i could not fathom. Until it struck me - admittedly after the free kick had been taken - they were there to serve no purpose whatsoever. The free kick had been blasted low into the wall poleaxing those Japanese strikers who thought it clever to kneel.

The second half yielded all 4 goals, 2 apiece for kelly smith and opposite number Miyama. One of Miyama's goals came from a free kick where the old 'kneel in front of the wall' trick was used. England played some delightful passing football but the execution was more often then not found lacking.

Providing England can convert more chances then they have been they should breeze through these opening stages, their main competitor being the Germans. The same Germans who spanked Argentina 11-0 in the opening match of the tournament. Germans are the form team, with the track record if we are going to win this thing we need to beat the old enemy. It will be interesting to see if a re-work of Venables' Christmas Tree formation will do the job.