

AFC TORONTO

Professional Women's Soccer in Canada



**STRONG ALONE.
INVINCIBLE TOGETHER.**



Dear Toronto,

We're not just playing football; we're setting the stage for girls and women to achieve their fullest potential. Every tackle is for greatness, every goal is a dream achieved, and every match is a step towards empowering a new generation.

Together, we rise. Together, we create history.
Together, we change the game.

It's time. Rise up with us!

Love, AFC TORONTO

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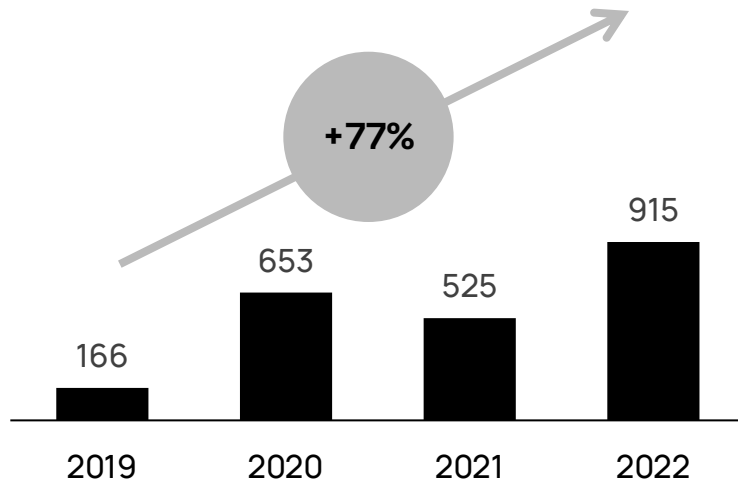
MARKET OPPORTUNITY

The popularity of women's sports has been surging—



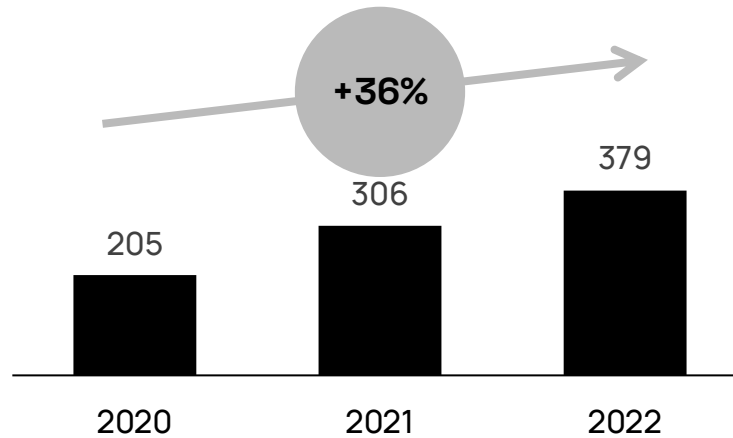
LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP VIEWERSHIP ('000S)¹

Average annual percentage increase



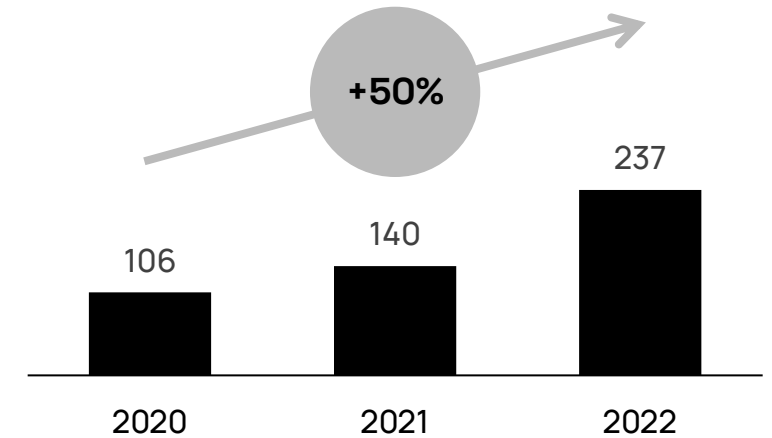
REGULAR SEASON AVERAGE VIEWERSHIP ('000S)²

Average annual percentage increase



TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS VIEWERSHIP ('000S)³

Average annual percentage increase



¹ ESPN; NWSL; Reuters; 2020 was unique due to COVID – one-off challenge cup following month long tournament vs typical championship match; ²WNBA; ³The Athletic; NBC (Golf Channel)

... Which has resulted in greater demand in women's sports content.



- Targeting a deal worth >\$100M per year after current agreement with ESPN ends in 2025¹
- Scripps to televise Friday night games on ION from 2023-25 for \$39 million total (\$13 million per year)²



- Google announced a multi-year partnership with The Athletic in November to double the amount of women's sports coverage with a focus on soccer and the WNBA³



- Three-year broadcast deal signed with Sky Sports in 2021 for £24M (£8M per season)⁴
- Largest domestic women's football TV deal in history
- First time television rights have been sold separately from the men's game



- First-ever network to focus on women's sports launched in November 2022
- 1000+ hours of women's sports content including original storytelling from the athletes across a multitude of league partners, award-winning documentaries and league highlights

¹WNBA Commissioner Cathy Englebert (July 2022); ²Forbes (April 2023); ³The New York Times (November 22, 2022); ⁴Forbes (March 21, 2022)

... and strong interest and substantial investment from blue chip sponsors.

Most active brands among women's Leagues and teams



Professional women's sports sponsorships grew 20% year-over-year in 2022¹

"Ally Financial has finalized a one-year, multimillion-dollar sponsorship deal with ESPN and Disney that funnels 90% of its overall investment into women's sports"¹

"Alex Morgan has 27 endorsement deals, more than any NFL, NBA, MLB, MLS or NHL Athlete"²

"Athletes Unlimited, which operates basketball, softball, volleyball, and lacrosse leagues, saw sponsorship revenue increase by 122% year-over-year"³

"Barclays will make the largest commercial investment in women's sport that the UK has seen after agreeing to a new £30m deal to sponsor the Women's Super League and Women's Championship for the next three years"⁴

Fans of women’s sports are highly engaged and dedicated to their teams and players.

Women who are athletes are driving significant engagement across social media...



For the third straight year, brands performed better with women who engaged 53M followers with branded posts, versus 38.5M for men who are players¹



Women who are athletes generate 4x more total audience engagement and 7x more engagement per deal than men who are athletes

... and marquee players outperform many of the men who are athletes²

























Women’s Soccer	vs	Men’s Hockey
<p>alishalehmann7</p> <p>426 posts 16.5M followers 240 following</p> <p>Alisha Lehmann</p>		<p>aleksandrovechkinofficial</p> <p>609 posts 1.6M followers 294 following</p> <p>Alexander Ovechkin</p>
<p>alexmorgan13</p> <p>1,242 posts 10.1M followers 622 following</p> <p>Alex Morgan</p>		<p>mcdavid97</p> <p>289 posts 1.1M followers 459 following</p> <p>Connor McDavid</p>
<p>alexiaputellas</p> <p>1,029 posts 3.3M followers 696 following</p> <p>Alexia Putellas</p>		<p>austonmatthews</p> <p>131 posts 883K followers 348 following</p> <p>AM</p>

1. SponsorUnited - 2022. Women in Sports.
 2. Instagram as of 6/17/2023

Angel City FC is demonstrating the power of women's soccer in North America.



- Angel City FC is based in Los Angeles, California
- Expansion team that began play in 2022
- Raised money in 2021 at a \$115 million valuation
- Average over 19,000 fans per game, more than most MLS teams
- Angel City's largest single-game gate revenue was over \$1 million
- Angel City also sold \$6 million in merchandise in 2022

Fans per game		Instagram followers	
	46,00		8.2M
	35,600		517K
	19,700		244K
	19,400		230K
	18,700		225K
	18,700		205K
	18,500		196K
	18,300		171K
	18,200		160K
	18,100		148K
	17,600		133K
	17,200		127K
	16,700		117K

Source: Soccer stadium digest. 2023 MLS and NWSL average attendance as of June 4, 2023. Instagram as of 6/17/2023.

Canada is well-positioned to benefit from these trends and is an untapped market with no existing women's professional soccer league.

MASSIVE POTENTIAL FAN BASE

Most played sport in Canada

- 1M registered soccer players¹

Loyal, attractive fan base

- ~20M Canadians (or 65% of adults) have some level of engagement with professional women's sports²
- 24M Canadians identify as soccer fans³
- 6M Canadians identify as avid soccer fans³
- 3.35M Ontarians identify as avid soccer fans³

DEMAND FOR SOCCER CONTENT

High viewership relative to other sports

- 4.4M Canadians watched the women's gold medal soccer match (Canada vs Sweden) at the 2020 Olympics, the highest watched event by Canadians⁴
- Average attendance for Canadian Women's and Men's National Team and Canadian MLS games exceeds the NHL, CFL and NBA (due to larger venues)

WORLD CLASS TALENT

Decorated athletes

- Canadian Women's National Team won a medal at past 3 Summer Olympics (2x bronze, 1x gold)

Canadian talent playing internationally

- 100+ Canadian professional women's soccer players⁵ playing abroad, including Christine Sinclair (Portland Thorns FC), Jessie Fleming (Chelsea), Kadeisha Buchanan (Chelsea), Ashley Lawrence (Chelsea)

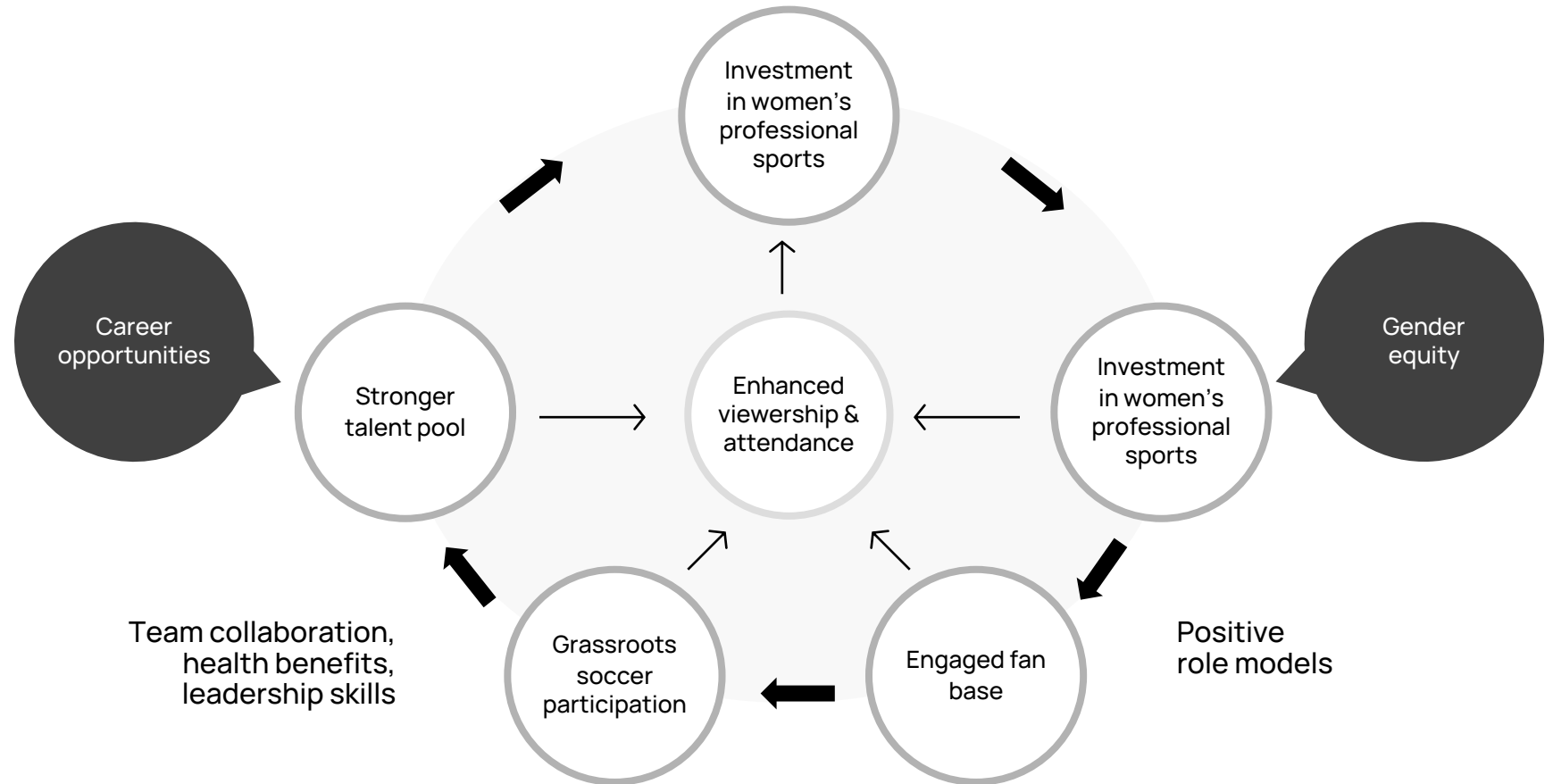
¹World Football Index – data as of 2019. ²Vivintel. Passion for the game: The women's pro sports audience in Canada. Vividata; 2020;

³Research & Co/Glacier Media, December 2022 ⁴CBC; ⁵Independent research by A. C. Lang (wsoccer.ca)

Professional women's sports also provides an opportunity to advance gender equality and deliver broader societal benefits.

Research shows that sport participation increases leadership and health outcomes for girls and women¹:

- Higher levels of confidence and self-esteem and lower levels of depression
- A more positive body image and experience higher states of psychological well-being
- More likely to get better grades in school and more likely to graduate
- 80% of women who are executives at Fortune 500 companies identified themselves as having played sports



¹ Women's Sports Foundation

PROJECT 8



Project 8 was founded to create an inclusive Canadian professional women's soccer league.

MISSION

- To create an opportunity for every Canadian to engage with the promise of sport through the establishment of a professional women's soccer league
- Founded on the principles of inclusion, community and identity
- To believe in the power of visible opportunities, icons and pathways for Canadians in sport
- To validate the perception of Canada as a global leader in sport and gender equity

VISION

- Top-tier destination for some of the world's best players
- Independent league and clubs with diverse ownership structures
- Centralized rights in eight key partner categories, including apparel, media and airline
- Kick-off in 2025

League Overview

- 8 founding Clubs,
expansion to 12 Clubs
within 8 years
- A Canadian League for
Canadians
- Tier 1 League for world
class players
- Independent league with
independent Clubs



The league is developing quickly with three founding clubs secured and support from several top-tier corporate sponsors.

FOUNDING TEAMS

- 3 of 8 founding clubs announced
- Planned expansion to 12 teams within 8 years



AFC
TORONTO



CIBC



DOORDASH



AFC TORONTO



MISSION

To deliver an outstanding, compelling and inclusive supporter & player experience of women's professional soccer in the Greater Toronto Area.

OUR DREAM

To build a passionate AFC Toronto family that opens pathways for girls and women through the creation of more opportunities to chase their dreams, their way - on and off the pitch.

WHAT WE STAND FOR

COMMUNITY

- Strong alone. Invincible Together.
- Bringing people together and lifting each other up.

TENACITY

- Outlast. Outplay. Outwork.
- Staying strong and persistent in every challenge.

LEGACY

- Leave it better than we found it.
- Creating enduring, positive change in sports and our world.

AFC Toronto is an opportunity to invest in the growing women's sports landscape while promoting gender equity, diversity and inclusion in the community.

A THRIVING, DIVERSE CITY



Toronto Region:

- Average Mean Household Income \$97,000¹
- Population 6,417,850¹
- Number of visitors 44.5M¹

Soccer Participation:

- 90k registered youth soccer players in the GTA (City of Toronto, York, Durham, Peel, Halton)²
- 30k of them are girls²

LEADERSHIP FROM LOCAL BUSINESS, SPORTS & COMMUNITY FIGURES



- Existing agreements & relationships with facilities & vendors
- Extensive knowledge of Canada Soccer & Ontario Soccer governance
- Experience with North Toronto Soccer, one of the strongest development programs for girls in Canada and one of the leading youth soccer clubs in Canada
- Substantial experience running community outreach programs

A SUCCESSFUL KICK-OFF, DRAWING WIDE-SPREAD ENTHUSIASM & INVOLVEMENT

- 100+ Total Media Stories
- 65M+ Total Media Impressions (inclusive of print, online, and broadcast)
- 200k+ Twitter profile impressions
- CBC says: "Toronto named 3rd franchise in Canadian women's pro soccer league set to start in 2025"

OUR FOUNDERS

A team relentlessly striving for excellence, dedicated to unity and fair play, grounded in honesty and integrity.



HELENA RUKUN

Helena's extensive leadership experience on boards in the Toronto soccer community has built deep ties with the grassroots football network in Ontario and has honed her community partnership development and problem solving skills. Passionate about equity, diversity, and inclusion, she champions sport as a medium for fostering confidence and leadership in young women and girls and she is committed to driving this team towards success through a culture of fairness and respect.



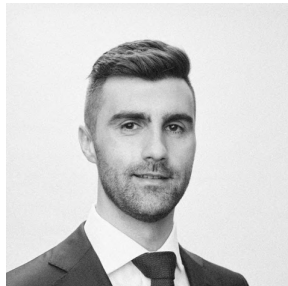
BRENDA HA

Founder and operator of Check Box Services, Brenda brings a wealth of business knowledge to AFC Toronto, backed by her experience in strategy, account management, and IT in senior leadership roles at two of Canada's Big Five financial institutions. A seasoned volunteer having held various leadership positions in her community, Brenda is committed to promoting gender equity, inclusion and diversity in sport at the highest level so female athletes can achieve their best and pursue their athletic dreams.



JILL BURGIN

A strategic brand marketer with over 15 years of experience at Diageo, Jill is well positioned to develop impactful marketing strategies that will propel women's professional soccer into the forefront of the sporting arena in Toronto. With years of involvement in girls' grassroots soccer watching & managing an OPDL team, she has experienced the transformative power of sport to build confidence, leadership skills & grit in young women and she is committed to bringing that experience to more women & girls in the GTA.



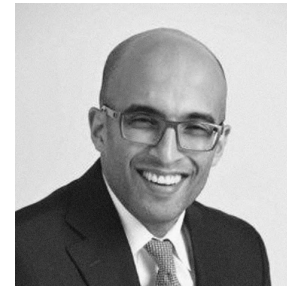
BILLY WILSON

Billy brings extensive experience as a sports executive having held leadership positions at both the Club and the Provincial Sport level. Billy is passionate about player and coach development and takes a people-first approach to nurturing talent. Billy's experience lends technical direction to the organization and he is responsible for building out the club's technical operations. Billy is also an A License coach.



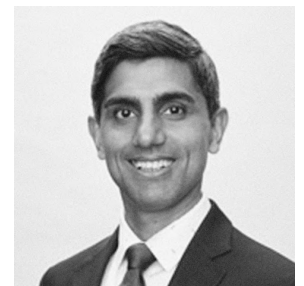
MIKE RUTHARD

Mike brings his extensive background in finance and accounting, overseeing the team's financial management and budget adherence. His skills in risk management and strategic operational execution, coupled with his entrepreneurial and board leadership experience, are crucial for the team's growth and for advancing its social responsibility and inclusion goals through local partnerships and initiatives.



SHAMEZ MANGALJI

A skilled foreign exchange dealer, Shamez enhances AFC Toronto with his extensive business acumen and board experience. His enthusiasm for leadership and team collaboration, combined with a strong commitment to women's sports and community involvement, makes him a key player in sales and fundraising.



KAMAL SANDHU

A seasoned technology executive with over 23 years of consulting and business operations experience, having served local and global clients across multiple industries. Through the management of large, complex, multi-year business transformation programs, Kamal brings deep expertise in client relations, financial and risk management, and program governance.

AFC Toronto

AFC Toronto is seeking investors & sponsors who are looking for meaningful & impactful transformation in society and business through the power of women's professional sports and who see the potential of women's professional soccer here in Canada.

If you would like to learn more, [please be in touch.](#)





**IT'S TIME FOR
WOMEN'S SOCCER
IN TORONTO**