

Arsenal Women's USA Preseason Tour - Washington D.C.

Viability and Growth of Women's Sport



On the morning of Sunday 18th August, before attending the match at Audi Field, UFA Mountains Branch Director, Stephanie Buquoi, UFA Forsyth Select Girls Director, Lizzy Schmidt and UFA Girls ECNL Assistant Director, Renata Peixoto were able to attend a brunch and a panel discussion hosted by Arsenal and Washington Spirit regarding the Viability and Growth of Women's Sport. This was a small, intimate event that was hosted by the Deputy Head of Mission at the British Embassy in Washington. We had the opportunity to mingle and talk with different women who work towards promoting and growing women's football. We met and enjoyed a conversation with Clare Wheatley, Head of Women's Football at Arsenal. The morning concluded with a panel which consisted of Juliet Slot (Chief Commercial Officer, Arsenal F.C), Michele Kang (Owner, Washington Spirit), Bruce Orcutt (CMO of women's sporting non-profit ABBYY) and Melissa Schulman (CVS Health Senior Vice President of Government and Public Affairs). This was a unique opportunity to hear directly from investors and executives about why they value women's football and how they demonstrate this with their time, money, and relationships with players and staff.



Arsenal vs. Washington Spirit Match

One of the most exciting parts of the Arsenal Preseason Tour was watching a game at Audi Field. We were invited to join Adidas in a luxury suite. It was awesome to look out and see the fans of both Washington Spirit and Arsenal. It was a great game with Arsenal emerging victorious with a 2-1 win.

Arsenal Training Session at George Mason University



We concluded the tour as attendees at the Arsenal training session at George Mason University. We were greeted with a keepsake tote bag and a picture with Gunnersaurus, which was a lovely gesture. We sat in the bleachers with hundreds of fans to watch this unique and exciting experience.

Following the training, the players signed autographs, took pictures, and showed their appreciation towards the fans. While this occurred, the Arsenal coaches were leading a training session for a local youth program which really showed the club's dedication and passion for community projects. Lastly, there was a panel consisting of a variety of people from different platforms. Members of TOGETHXR, America Scores, players, coaches, and more participated in an intimate question and answer session. This was an incredible day for UFA and one that we will cherish.

Takeaways

It was incredible to be a part of something so new and unique. The focus on women's soccer as an investment is tremendous. People are considering what women need specifically in order to excel and are looking to differentiate their needs from men's players. We have seen the incredible growth of women's football over the last few years and this is just the start. We are extremely excited to see what the future holds. To see the emphasis put on growing the women's game was inspiring, and it is exciting to see the heights it will reach.

We want to thank Arsenal and Adidas for the opportunity to join them in Washington as they completed their USA preseason tour.