



Season Review

2019/20

Welcome

The power of football to unite communities was evident during a Premier League season like no other, and there was plenty of thrilling action on the pitch to keep fans around the world entertained throughout the campaign

The 2019/20 Premier League season was one we will never forget. COVID-19 caused an unprecedented crisis and my thoughts are with everyone whose lives have been affected by the pandemic.

To restart and then complete the season after a 100-day hiatus was an achievement only made possible by the collaboration of clubs, players, managers, staff and the hard work of so many. We witnessed a brilliant season up to the suspension in March and there were plenty of exciting, competitive matches following the restart, which fans watched in record numbers.

Of course, I must congratulate Liverpool on their spectacular title win. Their performances were of the highest standard and they showed remarkable consistency to be crowned Premier League champions for the first time in fewer matches than any other club – an incredible achievement.

There are many reasons why the season will live long in the memory, including the outstanding performances of numerous young English players and a final day that kept us on the edge of our seats until the very last minute.

The season also saw the introduction of Video Assistant Referees. It has been a period of learning for us, but the key thing is we are getting more correct decisions. We will continue to work with clubs to discuss how improvements can be made.

Following football's suspension, I was extremely proud of the way the League, clubs, players, staff and fans responded quickly to COVID-19. The importance of clubs to their communities was more evident than ever, as they provided great support to the NHS and helped hundreds of thousands of people during the crisis, including making phone calls to fans and providing food parcels to vulnerable or isolated individuals. The power of football to unite communities, at a time when people have been so far apart, has been incredible.

While playing behind closed doors meant it was not the Premier League we all know and love, the fact we were able to restart and finish the season was important, not only for us but for the wider football pyramid, sport as a whole and for society generally. It was also important for us to make as many matches as possible available for fans to follow and we worked closely with our broadcast partners to ensure the viewing experience was as enjoyable as it could be.

Our commitment to tackling discrimination and promoting equality and inclusion across all areas of football continues to be a priority. One incident of discrimination is one too many and we have programmes and policies in place to address this issue, but we strive to do more.

The online abuse some players have received is wholly unacceptable and we have launched a reporting system to help investigate such incidents and take legal action where appropriate. Players also came together this season to show their solidarity against racial prejudice and we will continue to work together to promote equality of opportunity and celebrate diversity.

We have overcome many challenges to complete a 50-week season, learning so much along the way. This can only help us as we look forward to 2020/21 and more thrilling football on the pitch. The Premier League will not truly be back until we have fans in our stadiums and we are working with the Government, the whole of football and other stakeholders on this important next step, with safety remaining a priority.

Richard Masters
Chief Executive, Premier League

The Football

Champions and homegrown talent	06-07
Premier League Season Awards	08-09
Coaching and development	10-11
Project Restart	12-13

The Fans

Everyone's game	14-15
Open and inclusive	16-17
Broadcast enhancements	18-19
Global appeal	20-21

The Communities

Covid-19 community support	24-25
Caring for the NHS	26-27
Pathways for young people	28-29
Aiding positive physical and mental health	30-31

The Premier League

Economic and social benefits	32-33
Tackling discrimination	34-35
Sharing success	36-37
Positive impact	38-39

The Football

Exciting football

A season of exceptional quality presented unforeseen challenges and a three-month suspension, but our clubs' commitment to the highest possible playing and coaching standards remained as strong as ever

"I couldn't be more proud of my coaching staff and all the people in Liverpool since we came in. It's been a really exciting ride since the first day and it is not over yet. It is such a big moment and I'm completely overwhelmed. I never could have thought it would feel like this. It's an incredible achievement by my players and it's a huge joy for me to coach them."

Jürgen Klopp
Head Coach, Liverpool

Keeping our foot on the accelerator

Season 2019/20 saw Liverpool clinch their first Premier League title in record-breaking fashion, and there was no shortage of exciting new talent emerging in the top flight

Hitting new peaks

In the most unconventional of seasons, Liverpool were crowned Premier League champions for the first time in emphatic style.

Having pushed Manchester City so close in 2018/19, Jürgen Klopp's side began the campaign in the same imperious fashion they had finished the previous one. By the time they beat West Ham United in February to stretch their unbeaten start to 27 games and record their 18th straight win, they had taken a record 110 points from their last 38 League matches, with 36 victories and two draws.

When the season was suspended due to COVID-19 three weeks later, they were just two wins away from ensuring the Premier League trophy would head to Anfield and the title was sealed within two games of the restart. Their 4-0 victory over Crystal Palace was followed by Manchester City's defeat to Chelsea meaning that, with seven fixtures still to play, Liverpool were the earliest Premier League champions in history.

"I have no words, it's unbelievable," said an emotional Klopp having led the Reds to their first title in 30 years. "It's much more than I ever thought could be possible. Becoming champion with this club is absolutely incredible."

For captain Jordan Henderson, lifting the Premier League trophy fulfilled a lifelong ambition.

"Winning the Premier League has been a dream of mine since I was a kid," he said. "It's been an amazing season and I am so thankful to be part of this club and team."

Homegrown talents enter the stage

One of the standout features of the 2019/20 Premier League season was the quantity and quality of homegrown players making a name for themselves.

Managers throughout the League put their faith in the abilities of gifted young English players, who proved they were good enough for regular elite-level competition. Examples include Manchester United striker Mason Greenwood (pictured), who made his full debut in the final match of 2018/19 before appearing 31 times in the League this season, scoring 10 goals. Norwich City's Todd Cantwell was one of the team's shining lights, missing only one League game after making his debut on the opening day.

A total of 62 homegrown players made their Premier League debut – an increase of 51 per cent on the previous campaign – demonstrating that the long-term investment in youth through the Elite Player Performance Plan (EPPP) is reaping rewards.

Youngsters making their mark

It was a breakthrough year for young players at Chelsea, with six Academy products making their first-team debuts and two establishing themselves as familiar faces in Frank Lampard's side.

Mason Mount and Reece James became regulars following their Premier League debuts as the Blues pushed for UEFA Champions League qualification. There was also top-flight experience in 2019/20 for Billy Gilmour, Tariq Lamptey, Armando Broja and Tino Anjorin.

Chelsea head of youth development Neil Bath said: "We restructured the Academy in 2004, and several of the players now in the first team have been on that journey for almost as long. When you see those players out on the pitch at Stamford Bridge, it brings tremendous satisfaction."

Chelsea were also crowned champions of Premier League 2 Division 1 on a points-per-game basis, following the curtailment of the season due to COVID-19.

VAR Introduction

This season saw the use of Video Assistant Referees for the first time in the Premier League.

Over the course of the campaign, more than 2,400 incidents were checked and 109 decisions were overturned by the VAR, an average of an overturned decision once every 3.5 matches.

The percentage of correct key match decisions rose from 82 per cent in 2018/19 to 94 per cent this season, with the average delay to games caused by VAR at 50 seconds.

99

Liverpool achieved the second-highest Premier League points tally of all time

18

Liverpool equalled the record held by Chelsea, Manchester City and Manchester United for 18 wins at home during a season

41%

Of starters in Match Round 31 were eligible to play for England – a season-high – with the average of 35.6% up from 30% in 2018/19

Premier League Season Awards

Recognising the individuals whose outstanding contributions during 2019/20 earned them our seasonal honours

Player of the Season Playmaker - Kevin De Bruyne

De Bruyne's stunning form for Manchester City earned him two Premier League Season Awards in 2019/20, becoming EA SPORTS Player of the Season as well as winning the Cadbury Playmaker honour for the second time in three years. With 20 assists, he equalled Thierry Henry's record from 2002/03, and also delivered his best goal return in a Manchester City shirt, netting 13 times in the League.

Golden Boot - Jamie Vardy

Leicester City's Jamie Vardy won his first Cadbury Golden Boot award after scoring 23 goals in a fantastic season that also saw him surpass 100 Premier League goals. At 33, Vardy is the oldest player to win the accolade. He ended the campaign a goal ahead of Arsenal's Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang and Southampton striker Danny Ings.

Golden Glove - Ederson

A clean sheet against Norwich City on the final day of the 2019/20 season saw Manchester City's Ederson win the Cadbury Golden Glove award. He recorded his 16th clean sheet of the campaign in his side's 5-0 win over Norwich City, to move one ahead of Burnley's Nick Pope.

Manager of the Season - Jürgen Klopp

Having led Liverpool to their first Premier League title, Klopp has cemented his status as a club legend. Under his stewardship, the Reds lost only one game before the season was suspended in March, and Liverpool became champions quickly after the restart, with a host of club records broken along the way. They remained unbeaten in the League at Anfield for a third consecutive season – the first time they have achieved this in the club's history.

Young Player of the Season - Trent Alexander-Arnold

One of six English players on the eight-man shortlist for the inaugural TAG Heuer Young Player of the Season award, Alexander-Arnold was integral in Liverpool becoming champions for the first time in 30 years. Part of the League's tightest defence, he earned 12 clean sheets, but was equally impressive as an attacking force, providing 13 assists and scoring four times.

PL2 Player of the Season - Curtis Jones

It was a dream breakthrough campaign for Jones, who won a Premier League winner's medal and played a starring role at Under-23 level. He made six League appearances for Jürgen Klopp's side, scoring once, and netted nine goals in Premier League 2 Division 1.

Goal of the Season - Son Heung-Min

A prolific scorer for Tottenham Hotspur, Son has netted his fair share of eye-catching strikes as he has hit double figures in each of the last four seasons. His solo effort against Burnley in December was nothing short of world class, topping off a skilful run from deep inside his own half with the coolest of finishes.

Taking the next step forward

How we are developing the playing stars of tomorrow and helping a new generation of coaches to break through

“Our number-one goal is to develop good people first who just happen to be talented at football,” says Ryan Garry (left), the Under-23s assistant coach at Arsenal.

A product of the Elite Coach Apprenticeship Scheme (ECAS), he believes the club’s holistic approach to creating the Premier League stars of tomorrow is reaping rewards.

The club’s Academy Leadership Group sees one player from each age group voted into a forum where they will discuss and work together with the coaches to help improve their learning at the club. This approach offers older players the chance to be mentors to the younger members of the Academy. Arsenal have also launched the Arsenal Academy Island which aims to ‘Build Strong Young Gunners’, offering mental health support, advice and structure to all Academy players.

The hard work of Ryan and his fellow Academy coaches has brought significant rewards for Arsenal recently. Homegrown talents such as Bukayo Saka, Joe Willock, Reiss Nelson, Ainsley Maitland-Niles and Eddie Nketiah have emerged from the Academy to feature in the first team.

“I see my role as helping the boys take the next jump into the Premier League,” Ryan said. “It is about preparing players who can survive and thrive in the hardest league in the world.”

Rising talents shine on Indian stage

Through the Academy programme, young players are involved in international tournaments and festivals that enhance their knowledge of other cultures and styles of football.

Under-14 players from Chelsea, Manchester United and Southampton took part in the Next Generation Mumbai Cup in February, taking on Under-15 Hero Indian Super League (ISL) and local youth sides, Bengaluru FC, FC Goa and the Reliance Foundation Young Champs academy, in a week of football matches and activities. Chelsea ran out Season 2019/20 tournament winners.

The event also included the renewal of the Premier League’s Mutual Cooperation Agreement with the ISL, which sees the two leagues continue to work together to enhance coaching, refereeing and football development in India. Arsenal and Leicester City, meanwhile, hosted ISL coaches as part of a week-long study placement early in Season 2019/20. They gave the next generation of Indian coaches’ valuable insight into Premier League Academy operations.

Helping players achieve full potential

Brighton & Hove Albion’s head of Academy coaching Ian Buckman fully endorses the commitment of the Premier League and our clubs to create outstanding coaches and players.

The 44-year-old (below) has come through both the Elite Coach Apprenticeship Scheme (ECAS) and the Elite Heads of Coaching (EHOC) programme, which focus on strengthening each coach’s skill-set.

Buckman has particularly benefited from the EHOC programme and has helped devise a fantastic training framework that has seen Academy products such as the 2018/19 Premier League 2 Player of the Season Aaron Connolly and Steven Alzate thrive.

“We really focus on each coach’s technical knowledge and area of interest and see how we can apply that to training,” Buckman said.

“Aaron and Steven are just two of the players that have progressed and that is ultimately our biggest goal – to improve technical and physical performance, and the holistic development of our players.”

Pathway for BAME coaching hopefuls

The Premier League, EFL and PFA launched a new player-to-coach placement scheme aimed at increasing the number of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) players transitioning into full-time coaching roles in the professional game. The scheme provides up to six coaches per season with a 23-month intensive work placement within EFL clubs. This is one example of how football is creating opportunities and pathways within coaching.

Doncaster Rovers manager and Chair of the Premier League’s Black Participants’ Advisory Group Darren Moore (left) said: “This is a critical time for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic coaches. We all know and agree that the diversity of coaches and managers must increase and this placement scheme represents a positive step.”

The scheme has been developed over the last 18 months and complements the existing programme within the Premier League Elite Coach Apprenticeship Scheme, which provides a bursary for BAME and female coaches to be placed within Premier League and Category One Academies each year.

Project Restart

How the Premier League and our clubs worked together to resume Season 2019/20 safely

Safety first

Following the suspension of Season 2019/20 on 13 March due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Premier League worked closely with the Government, the whole of professional football in England, public agencies and other relevant stakeholders on Project Restart, with the aim of resuming the campaign when it was safe to do so. Throughout the crisis, the overriding priority was the health and wellbeing of everyone, and the safety of players, coaches and club staff was paramount in both the phased return to training and the resumption of matches.

Players and managers were consulted throughout and strict protocols were put in place to ensure that both training grounds and stadiums were as safe as possible for everybody present.

Key dates

17 May - Twice-weekly testing of players and staff at all 20 clubs commenced.

19 May - Stage One of the Return To Training Protocol permitted small-group training while maintaining social distancing.

27 May - Stage Two allowed a resumption of contact training, while minimising any unnecessary close contact.

17 June - Season 2019/20 resumed behind closed doors.

Sean Dyche - Burnley manager

"Once we returned, the scale of the measures put in place was evident. A lot of work went into this by our medical and operations team, who were heavily guided by the Premier League. The end product was a process that was as safe as it possibly could be and quite simplistic in the way the players could follow it.

"That allowed us to focus on getting match ready in a short space of time.

"Then there was clearance to play friendly games and that enabled us to have a trial run of how the stadium was going to work on a matchday.

"We had to distance the dressing rooms, the treatment areas and so on, and there was guidance given for on-field behaviour, so there was an awful lot of planning that went into making the stadium safe as well."

Conor Coady - Wolverhampton Wanderers captain

"I was one of those players who couldn't wait to be back training and playing, and as a football club we wanted to get going as soon as possible, but we knew it was only possible by making everybody's health and safety the priority. As club captain, I was updated on all the latest developments, which was really reassuring.

"We always felt that nothing was left to chance, with all the hygiene and social-distancing measures put in place.

"Playing without fans in the stadium has been strange, but we knew that was the only way it could be, and we hope it won't be

too long until the supporters can be back cheering us on."

Dr Zaf Iqbal - Crystal Palace Head of Sports Medicine

"First and foremost, we reassured players that their safety was paramount. Looking at all the measures put in place, I don't think there were any environments that were safer than a Premier League training ground or stadium.

"The step-by-step process of the Return To Training Protocol was vital and only once the players felt comfortable did we move onto the next stage. There were lots of differences, such as the players arriving individually and already dressed for training. They had temperature checks and a health questionnaire via an app, and they weren't allowed into the training ground until they had completed those. Then it was all about the social distancing and making sure everything was as clean as possible.

"The testing was important to prove that the protocols we had put in place were effective. A key point to get into the players was that it was not just about their behaviour at training, it was also about making sure they followed all the advice around social distancing and hygiene at all times.

"Another big responsibility was ensuring that all our processes were not a burden on the NHS and public services in any way, and that was the case with both training and the matches themselves."

"We're in the safest workplace in the country" - Andros Townsend

0.09%

The percentage of positive results (20) from 22,133 COVID-19 tests of players and coaching staff. As the biggest pool of collected data in England, the Premier League has shared this information with Public Health England as a key part of their coronavirus research

The Fans

Everyone's game

An open and inclusive atmosphere is integral to the Premier League experience, and we worked alongside clubs and partners to adapt during the COVID-19 pandemic

“As we prepared for the return to football behind closed doors a key priority was ensuring our fans continued to feel connected and engaged with the club. This allowed us to explore innovative activations, including the Fan Wall, to keep our supporters at the heart of the matchday experience, letting them know that their support remained as important as ever.”

Nuria Tarre
Chief Marketing Officer,
Manchester City Football Club

Opening doors to all supporters

From cut-price children's tickets to expanding disability access and welcoming fans from the LGBT community, our clubs are committed to inclusion at every level

Just the ticket

Karen and James Rainbow have been taking their children Ossie and Daisy (pictured below) to watch AFC Bournemouth since 2013.

Despite the constraints of the limited capacity at Vitality Stadium, Karen feels the club does its best to welcome young fans to matches.

"The price they charge for the young fans is brilliant," she said. "It cost only £6 for a Junior Cherry aged eight or over to watch a Premier League game.

"For Junior Cherries aged under seven, it was free with an accompanying adult, and an annual Junior Cherries membership cost only £7.50."

Bournemouth's ticket pricing policy was part of a clear strategy to engage and connect with young supporters.

"The vast majority of our near 4,000 Junior Cherries members have now watched a live Premier League match and, for a club which has community at the heart of everything we do, that is something to be very proud of," said general manager Liz Finney.

Price of football study

The Premier League's comprehensive study of ticket prices during Season 2019/20, in conjunction with EY, revealed:

£32 - The average ticket price across the Premier League in 2019/20, the same as 2017/18, with the majority of fans paying under £30.

£16m - Total saved by season-ticket holders thanks to deals and discounts from clubs.

23% - The percentage of away tickets priced below the £30 cap, with some available for just £5.

Pride of the Foxes

The Premier League and our clubs work in partnership with Stonewall on the Rainbow Laces campaign, as we continue to celebrate LGBT inclusion and make it clear that football is for everyone.

Graeme Smith, co-founder of Leicester City's LGBT supporter group, Foxes Pride, joined fellow co-founder Paul and member Mish at the King Power Stadium to discuss the Rainbow Laces campaign with first-team players Ben Chilwell and James Maddison.

"What we're starting to see now - and Ben and James are examples of that - are players starting to get involved," said Graeme, who discussed the importance of players being allies to the LGBT community."

The club's inclusive nature also extends to the pitch.

"I think if a team-mate were to come out and say they were gay, then nothing changes," Maddison said. "That's how it is with us."

Access for all

Accessibility was a key factor in the construction of Tottenham Hotspur's new stadium, with the club working with their Disabled Supporters Association throughout the process to ensure that inclusive provision was considered at every stage.

Jo McNicol, SpursAbility Chairperson, said: "The stadium's access facilities are amazing because they enable me and other disabled supporters to enjoy the full matchday experience, just as any other fan would.

"The club has maintained a consistent dialogue with SpursAbility right from when these facilities were first being designed, which shows how much it cares about meeting the needs of all fans."

The creation of the Sensory Suite, a space specifically designed for fans with sensory requirements, has proved to be very popular. Changing Places facilities can also be accessed in different areas of the ground, as well as through the Tottenham Experience. The club has also created more than 250 wheelchair accessible bays and has more than 500 accessible seats which are located on all levels at the stadium, to give supporters a greater variety of viewing options for matches.

£7

The average price paid by junior season-ticket holders to watch Premier League matches in 2019/20

Different focus

In a season which attracted some of our biggest live broadcast audiences of all time, the Premier League worked with broadcast partners to bring a number of enhancements for fans at home when matches were staged behind closed doors

The final 92 matches of Season 2019/20 were missing one of the Premier League's most recognisable and important features: stadiums packed full of home and away supporters creating the atmosphere for which the League is famed around the world.

Playing games behind closed doors was essential in order to complete the campaign and all the fixtures following the restart were televised live in the UK by Sky Sports, BT Sport, Amazon Prime and the BBC.

Sky Pick, Amazon Prime and BBC Sport showed 33 fixtures free-to-air, with live commentary of every fixture available in the UK on BBC Radio 5 Live and talkSPORT, ensuring as many people as possible could follow the action from the safety of their own homes. Sky Sports and BT Sport also provided offers for season-ticket holders who did not have an existing subscription.

To enhance the behind-closed-doors experience for fans watching at home, the Premier League and broadcast partners developed a series of innovations. This included:

- Seat wraps to improve the visual and acoustic environment as well as stadium dressing applied by clubs.
- A crowd noise option for fans, supplied by EA Sports Atmospheric Audio, was selected by approximately 75 per cent of viewers.
- 'Fan walls' featuring live footage of supporters watching from home were made available to broadcasters and for use on stadium big screens.
- Use of music inside stadiums at key trigger moments such as kick-off, goals and substitutions.
- Tunnel cameras allowed fans to see the immediate build-up to the match.

UK broadcast facts and figures

The 2019/20 season accounted for six of Sky's top-10 Premier League audiences, three of which came before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Following the resumption of the season, three matches broadcast by Sky went straight into their top-10 highest Premier League audiences ever, including their biggest of all time.

4.968m for the Merseyside derby, an all-time record.

BT Sport showed more Premier League matches in a season than ever before (52+12 additional fixtures following the restart) and attracted its fifth-highest audience ever, with **1.554m** watching Liverpool v Sheffield United in January.

Amazon Prime Video became the Premier League's newest domestic broadcast partner in 2019/20, showing **20** live matches during December. The streaming service also carried four fixtures free-to-air following the restart.

BBC showed its first live Premier League matches, with **4** games televised during June and July. Two of them entered the top-five most watched Premier League matches ever:

4.364m Southampton v Manchester City on BBC1 drew the second-highest audience of all time for a Premier League live match. The audience peaked at 5.9m viewers – the highest peak ever achieved for a live Premier League match in the UK.

3.564m Bournemouth v Crystal Palace on BBC1 attracted the third-highest ever audience for a Premier League live match.

880m

The number of homes, in 188 countries, where the Premier League is broadcast

Global appeal

When it comes to engaging with fans from all over the world, the Premier League continues to set a high bar

The popularity of Fantasy Premier League (FPL) rose again, with a 20 per cent increase in the number of players compared to Season 2018/19. With two-thirds of FPL managers coming from overseas, the game's global reach continues to grow.

This year's edition saw fans in Egypt register almost 700,000 teams, representing the most managers in a country outside the UK and nearly 10 per cent of all participants, as the nation's hero Mohamed Salah was joined by compatriot Trézéguet in the Premier League. The game also grew elsewhere in Africa, as numbers in Nigeria rose 57 per cent, while there was an increase of 60 per cent in Kenya.

There was also a noticeable rise in female managers, with 24 per cent more women and girls taking part compared to the previous season.

FPL managers in 2019/20 found an unlikely hero in Sheffield United's John Lundstram (left). Classified as a defender in the game but playing in midfield for the promoted side, Lundstram's four goals and five assists rewarded managers' eye for a bargain as he finished the season as the fifth-highest points-scoring defender.

Gamers take on ePL challenge

The second season of ePremier League saw thousands of participants competing on behalf of all 20 clubs in an EA SPORTS FIFA 20 tournament.

There was some thrilling action throughout the early stages to decide the players who would appear in the grand finals, before the COVID-19 pandemic led to the postponement of the live event.

With the season suspended, the ePL Invitational brought together Premier League players and some special guests in two instalments of a knockout FIFA 20 competition.

Wolverhampton Wanderers' Diogo Jota was crowned the inaugural champion, with Leicester City midfielder James Maddison coming out on top in the second tournament.

Channel proves a huge YouTube hit

The Premier League's official YouTube channel launched at the start of the season with Rapman (left) paying tribute to some of the greatest players and moments from Premier League history in one of his trademark wrap-up videos.

Subscribers soon surpassed the one million mark, delivering more than 110m views, with viewers able to enjoy a host of unique content, including appearances from first-team players in the

Uncut series, and regular pub quizzes during lockdown.

Premier experience in China

Wolverhampton Wanderers have enjoyed their best-ever Premier League finishes over the past two seasons, which came either side of a triumphant performance in the 2019 Premier League Asia Trophy.

Wolves joined Manchester City, Newcastle United and West Ham United in the tournament, the second to be held in mainland China and the first to take place in two different cities, giving more fans the opportunity to enjoy the Premier League experience.

After a 4-0 win over Newcastle in Nanjing, Wolves faced Manchester City in Shanghai, the home of the club's owners Fosun. A tightly-fought final at the Hongkou Stadium ended in a penalty shootout victory for the Black Country club, who not only enjoyed success on the pitch but off it as well, as they staged a number of events to engage their growing number of fans in China.

"We did a fantastic job all week," said head coach Nuno Espírito Santo. "It was great to come to China and see so many of our fans here."

During the tournament, the Premier League also reinforced its commitment to the development of the game in China, with the winners of the Premier Skills Under-12 Cup getting the opportunity to enjoy unique experiences with Premier League sides. Other activities included the Chinese Super League (CSL) Under-15 Cup, a Youth Conference open to coaches from the Chinese FA and CSL and local teachers, all of which was preceded by training camps for CSL and Premier Skills coaches.

Events bring US fans closer to action

Austin, Texas and Miami, Florida were the 2019/20 season destinations for the Premier League Mornings Live fan festivals.

Run in partnership with NBC Sports, the live broadcast events bring fans from all clubs together for the chance to watch Premier League football matches, meet legends of the game such as Ashley Cole, Tim Howard (pictured) and Premier League record goalscorer Alan Shearer, and take part in free family-friendly activities.

Premier League Mornings Live is part of the League's ongoing commitment to bringing unique experiences to fans, with more than 30,000 people in the United States having now attended one of these festivals.

7.6m

A record number of FPL registrations, up 20% on 2018/19

5

Number of continents the ePL Invitational was televised in

4

Of the 10 most streamed Premier League matches of all time in the U.S. took place in Season 2019/20

The Communities

A force for good

The importance of the League, clubs, players, managers and staff to their communities was evident throughout 2019/20, especially when they rose to the challenges posed throughout the pandemic

“This is the kitchen garden at the training centre where we grow fresh fruit and veg for the first-team restaurant. This food is being taken to our food distribution hub at the stadium so that it can reach those most in need within our community. I will be volunteering my time to help out in the garden and take this food to the stadium as we fight this pandemic together.”

José Mourinho
Head Coach, Tottenham Hotspur

Helping hand in time of need

How Premier League clubs and players supported their communities during the COVID-19 pandemic

Supporting local communities and the NHS was a priority for the Premier League, our clubs and players during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Shortly after the season was suspended, the League provided £20 million to support the health service, communities, families and vulnerable groups during the crisis. This included a financial contribution to NHS Charities Together, directed towards mental health support for NHS staff and their families, and funds to enable clubs to refocus their delivery efforts and develop significant outreach programmes.

Premier League players generated their own financial support for the NHS through the #PlayersTogether fund. The Premier League also worked closely with Government departments and authorities to create and coordinate a series of public health message campaigns throughout the crisis. This included videos featuring players from all 20 clubs to help communicate the latest official guidelines.

The next four pages feature examples of club and player support for the NHS and communities as a snapshot of the incredible efforts across the League.

Saints deliver the right prescription

Vulnerable members of the public were given a helping hand by Saints Foundation, the charity of Southampton FC, during the COVID-19 crisis as staff helped deliver prescriptions to homes across the region.

Through their #SaintsAsOne campaign, Saints Foundation joined forces with Southampton City Council and Southampton City Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to help those who were self-isolating or shielding during the pandemic.

After setting up a hotline so vulnerable people could outline their needs, club staff collected and delivered over 2,000 medical prescriptions to local residents and remained in contact throughout the entire COVID-19 lockdown, ensuring anybody self-isolating could regularly see a friendly face.

Treve Sedgeman, 80, is one of many Southampton fans being supported by the initiative: He said: "Saints Foundation bring my medication every week or fortnight, and they are absolutely brilliant. Words can't describe what they have done, they are absolutely magnificent."

Free meals for vulnerable families

Like many clubs during the pandemic, Manchester United and Manchester United Foundation have been working to support families in their local area requiring food donations.

Over 30,000 items of food and drink from the club's stadium bars, kitchen and hospitality areas were shared with local groups and charities, while Manchester United Foundation committed £100,000 of funding to purchase bulk supplies to support local food banks and food groups who have seen an increase in demand during the crisis.

"It is a fundamental human right to have access to food. Our aim is to ensure we can provide a decent meal for as many people as possible, thereby giving them some hope and motivation for the future," said John Shiels, Chief Executive of Manchester United Foundation.

As part of a fan-led campaign, Manchester United also joined forces with Manchester City at the start of the pandemic to each donate £50,000 to local food banks via the Trussell Trust.

Marcus Rashford deservedly earned praise after he teamed up with charity FareShare to help raise £20 million, ensuring four million meals could be distributed to vulnerable people. He later played a key role in ensuring free school meal vouchers would be provided during the summer holidays.

Caring for the health service

How our clubs went the extra mile to support the NHS and its hard-working staff

Maternity care at Villa Park

The support of Aston Villa in providing a central hub for maternity care at Villa Park was welcomed by the Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust during the COVID-19 crisis and was just one of the ways in which the club helped others.

Deputy Director of Midwifery Louise Wilde is an Aston Villa season-ticket holder and she was amazed at how quickly the club offered their help.

"They came back within about an hour of me sending an email and within two days we were up and running," Louise said.

Villa Park became a hub for midwives, hosting clinics offering both postnatal and antenatal appointments and advice. Every day, between 25 and 30 women attended appointments at the stadium as staff from the nearby Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust offered their expertise in a safe and welcoming environment.

Support and praise for NHS

As the COVID-19 pandemic developed, Brighton & Hove Albion were quick to reach out to the NHS as they provided a myriad of services to help combat the crisis.

They set up the Albion As One fund to raise money for local charities helping the homeless and elderly, and the American Express Community Stadium was transformed into a drive-in COVID-19 testing centre.

The stadium was also made available as a contingency field hospital for Sussex NHS, the club's Performance Centre at Lancing was used to store equipment and medicine, and food and drink was also donated to local NHS staff.

The club gave away 1,000 match tickets to hospital staff for when fans are allowed back in stadiums. They also brought out a new playing shirt that praised NHS and key workers, with profits from sales going to NHS charities.

Sanctuary for key workers

Watford threw open the doors of Vicarage Road at the height of the pandemic to offer support to NHS workers from the neighbouring Watford General Hospital.

The stadium was re-named the 'Sanctuary' as it provided a safe environment for exhausted workers to recharge their batteries. More than 1,000 NHS staff members were fed each day, tens of thousands of pairs of surgical scrubs were washed by the club and the stadium's suites and function rooms were used as bedrooms and counselling rooms by the hospital's staff.

"Watford General is only a few yards away, but the environment is so different and really seems to lift the mood," said Christine Allen, Chief Executive of the West Herts Hospital NHS Trust.

"While our sole focus is our patients, the ability to get away makes all the difference. The demands on staff, especially those caring for our sickest patients, have been huge. Having a space to talk about the day or sit and reflect after work can really help staff manage their stress. This in turn helps them provide the best care for patients."

Help for staff on the front line

London was the early epicentre of the COVID-19 pandemic in the UK. Chelsea quickly responded by offering assistance to the NHS and charities supporting elderly and vulnerable groups.

The club provided more than 115,000 free meals to five nearby hospitals and offered the Millennium and Copthorne hotels at Stamford Bridge as accommodation for NHS staff.

In addition to this, Chelsea worked with a wide range of charities that support the elderly, the vulnerable and those who live in sheltered accommodation. Frank Lampard and his first-team squad also offered their help and made financial donations.

All Premier League players wore the NHS logo on their shirts following the restart. Blues midfielder Jorginho (left) said: "All the healthcare professionals who are doing everything they can, they are the real heroes. They are there on the front line, making sacrifices and putting their own life at risk to save the lives of others, shift after shift. I believe they deserve all the support in the world."

The path to a brighter future

From the classroom to the football pitch, we are committed to providing positive activities and pathways for young people

Helping children to shine

Launched in 2016, Premier League Primary Stars (PLPS) aims to engage and inspire primary school children aged five to 11 across Maths, English, PE and PSHE, with a focus on areas like personal skills and wellbeing. Four years on, 110 professional football clubs now deliver the programme in local schools, while more than 46,000 teachers are registered to the free online resource library.

Norwich City's Tom Trybull (above) saw first-hand the positive impact combining football and learning has on pupils, when he visited White Woman Lane Junior School, supported by the Norwich City Community Sports Foundation, who were creating their poem entries on ambition for this year's PL Writing Stars competition. He said: "This competition will help the kids and remind them that they should believe in their dreams."

During the pandemic, the PLPS teacher-facing resources were repurposed to provide free home-learning activities for families, to help educate and entertain children who were unable to attend school.

Inspiring youngsters to hit their goals

This season saw the launch of Premier League Inspires, a new community programme run in partnership with the PFA and Prince's Trust. It supports 11-25-year-olds through the education system and early adulthood; helping them develop personal skills and positive behaviours.

Headteacher Mandi Collins was full of praise for Leicester City in the Community Inspires Coach Kwesi Darkwa Ampadu (left), who has been working with pupils at Thomas Estley Community College since January. She said: "Some of our students who were struggling are now absolutely blooming!"

BBC Bitesize used Premier League Primary Stars resources during the pandemic as part of the 'biggest push on education in its history'

Support to fulfil potential

The Premier League's ongoing commitment to Kicks was demonstrated with the announcement of a three-year partnership with City Hall and the Metropolitan Police to enhance the delivery of the social inclusion programme in London.

London Mayor Sadiq Khan visited both Palace for Life and Tottenham Hotspur Foundation sessions during the season to speak to young people who are being encouraged to realise their potential and improve their wellbeing through Kicks.

"I know from personal experience that sport can provide young people with life-changing opportunities and I want all young Londoners to have the chance to reach their full potential," Khan said.

Metropolitan Police Commissioner Dame Cressida Dick, who visited a West Ham United Foundation Kicks session in March, added: "Premier League Kicks is bringing people together, giving people confidence and teaching them a healthy lifestyle. Most of all, they are just having fun together and in a very safe environment."

Kick-starting young lives

"It's given me a new lease of life," said Nick Phillips a former participant on Manchester City's Premier League Kicks programme, who is now a Kicks coach for City in the Community. "I am a great example of what Kicks is. I get to give back everything it has given me, so that's huge." In Nick's coaching role, he's able to mentor and support local young people facing the same issues he did.

Now in its 14th year, Kicks continues to work in partnership with clubs, young people and stakeholders across England and Wales to build stronger, safer and more inclusive communities. The programme provides a range of positive activities including free football sessions and workshops to young people in high-need areas.

It was relaunched in October 2019, with a new funding commitment from the Premier League who, working with BBC Children in Need and 38 clubs, will provide more targeted delivery and mentorship to support young people at risk of or affected by violence.

17,900

Primary schools across England and Wales engaged in Premier League Primary Stars

90

Professional football clubs funded to deliver Premier League Kicks

72,000+

Kicks participants in Season 2019/20

Playing a positive role

Our clubs are committed to providing positive activities and new and improved facilities to support individuals' physical and mental health

A Game Changer for struggling men

"Newcastle United Foundation are doing such amazing work battling stigmas around mental health and I'm proud to be an active part of it," says Newcastle United fan Josh Banyard (left). He cannot praise Newcastle United enough for the support he has received after admitting he needed to seek help.

The Newcastle United Foundation's Be A Game Changer programme reaches out to men aged between 18 and 44 in a bid to get more men to talk about their wellbeing.

Despite appearing happy to friends and family, Josh was struggling with his mental health but now credits the Newcastle United Foundation with helping him turn his life around.

He regularly attends the Foundation's men's support group, "Howay Inn", and that allows him to share any concerns over the way he is feeling.

He said: "To find a group full of like-minded people has been amazing. It has completely changed my outlook on life and has quite simply rescued me from a dark place."

Support at hand to help students

Beth, a Year 11 pupil at West Craven High School in Lancashire, is one of hundreds of young people being supported by Burnley FC in the Community's Schools' Mental Wellbeing Project. It gives pupils at seven secondary schools across the region access to a full-time psychologist who can support them with their mental health.

"Had I not received the help I needed I would not be able to stay in lessons and some days would not be able to attend school at all," said Beth who has been assisted by psychological wellbeing practitioner Katy Westwell.

"We've worked together on developing strategies which have helped me to attend school on a full-time basis."

As part of the Premier League's support of this year's Heads Up campaign on mental health, Beth and Katy were invited to London to share their story at an event with the Duke of Cambridge.

"I would definitely say to young people that, should they need to, have the confidence to speak to an adult," says Beth. "Anxiety and depression should not be seen as a weakness."

Sporting hubs success

Thrilled youngsters enjoyed a kickabout with Everton's Tom Davies during a celebration to mark the first anniversary of four multi-million-pound sporting hubs across Liverpool.

The Toffees midfielder was joined by other guests including Liverpool's Trent Alexander-Arnold and former Red Jamie Carragher for a tour of the state-of-the-art facilities at Jericho Lane playing fields, one of the sites developed as part of a £20.8m project in the city.

The hubs at Jericho Lane, Jeffrey Humble, Heron Eccles and Simpson were part-funded by the Football Foundation – a charity financed by the Premier League, the FA and the Government – with additional support coming from Liverpool City Council and the Rugby Football Union.

"People in Liverpool are football-mad and to see such a wide range of activity here at Jericho Lane is really inspiring," said Davies.

"To have these facilities, you know you're playing every week and you know you're getting a good pitch, whereas in the past you were not sure if your game would be on."

Everton in the Community runs Soccer Schools at Jericho Lane and Heron Eccles, as well as weekly Premier League Kicks sessions at Jeffrey Humble.

500,000+

visitors used Liverpool's new sporting hubs in their first year

The Premier League

Premier League

The Premier League's commitment to equality and diversity runs through all we do, and our competition supports both economic and social growth

"I'm extremely proud of what we have achieved in our first season back in the Premier League, both on and off the football pitch. We have played competitive, exciting football to entertain the fans, and have lots to build on as we head into the new campaign."

Stephen Bettis
CEO, Sheffield United

Tackling discrimination in football

The Premier League's commitment to fighting racism was evident throughout Season 2019/20, with our clubs once again demonstrating their dedication to equality, diversity and inclusion

The Premier League and its clubs will not tolerate discrimination in any form. This message has been clear during the season as the League, clubs and players have come together to tackle this issue.

The League undertakes wide-ranging action, working closely with Kick It Out, as well as The FA, EFL, Stonewall and other organisations to tackle discrimination across all areas of football.

No Room For Racism

In October, two match rounds were dedicated to promoting the No Room For Racism message, emphasising that racist conduct is not tolerated and urging supporters to take action – 'If you see it, report it'. All 20 clubs showed their support and helped reinforce the Premier League's zero tolerance stance.

A Black Participants' Advisory Group made up of current and former players, managers and others within the game was set up to ensure the views of black players and coaches are heard and help shape the Premier League's action. Regular meetings and consultations take place to ensure issues are discussed and dealt with.

The Premier League launched a dedicated reporting system for players, managers, coaches and their family members who receive serious discriminatory online abuse. Each case is reviewed, reported to the relevant social media company, investigated and, where appropriate, legal action is taken.

We continue to challenge major social media companies that fail to do enough to block offensive discriminatory material and identify and ban offenders from their platforms.

Black Lives Matter

Following the resumption of the season in June, the League supported the players' wishes to have "Black Lives Matter" on their shirts for the remainder of 2019/20, as well as backing players in 'taking a knee' before or during matches. The League wholly agrees with the players' single objective of eradicating racial prejudice wherever it exists.

Increasing opportunities

The Premier League joined with the PFA and EFL to launch a new coach placement scheme aimed at increasing the number of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) players transitioning into full-time coaching roles in the professional game.

Working in partnership

Close work with our long-standing partner Kick It Out continued, including the provision of financial support for their mentorship and leadership programme Raise Your Game. The League also funds specific events such as Football Black List, which celebrates and highlights role models from the black community working in football.

Education is vital and we run anti-discrimination education sessions within our schools and community programmes, as well as for fans.

The Premier League and clubs also continued to work in partnership with LGBT inclusion charity Stonewall to support their Rainbow Laces campaign.

Setting the standard

Manchester United proudly celebrated achieving the Advanced Level of the Premier League Equality Standard this season, with an on-pitch presentation at Old Trafford marking the club's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

The accolade, which is the highest level a club can receive, sees an independent panel consider evidence provided by the club on equality and diversity across all areas of their business, including the work of their charitable arm, the Manchester United Foundation. It takes into account the culture and policies at the club, as well as the development of club services that will enable people from all communities to engage in activities.

The #alredallequal campaign focuses on the club's commitment to the cause, noting that 'there's no greater goal than a more equal world' – a message which was amplified by the launch of their HATRED anti-discrimination initiative late last season.

Manchester United's Group Managing Director Richard Arnold (far left) said: "The journey does not stop here for us. Through our #alredallequal equality programme we will continue to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are integral throughout the business and that Manchester United remains as a club open to all."

Committed to sharing success

Thanks to the way the Premier League distributes funds, we are able to support clubs and communities across the football pyramid

"The Premier League and our clubs provide a range of support for the development of football, including solidarity payments, youth development grants and community funding for all EFL and National League clubs.

Through its payments to clubs, the Premier League is the most equitable of Europe's major leagues. The scale of our support and investment in the wider game, and in communities and schools, is unprecedented in professional sport.

Premier League and club activity also generates a range of wider economic benefits. Our most recent study in conjunction with EY showed that Premier League football generates £3.3 billion per annum in taxes, including £1.1 billion from players, and supports 100,000 jobs.

All of this emphasises the importance of being able to safely resume and complete Season 2019/20. The unforeseen challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic meant football had to quickly adapt as it came to terms with the postponement of the season before matches returned behind closed doors.

Despite the financial uncertainties faced by our own clubs, in April the Premier League put measures in place to deal with the impact of falling cash flow throughout the football pyramid, making advanced funds of £125 million available to the EFL and National League.

The League also committed £20 million to support the NHS, communities, families and vulnerable groups during the crisis, allowing clubs to refocus their efforts and develop significant outreach programmes to provide assistance, including to those most in need.

This commitment from the League included a direct financial contribution to NHS Charities Together, with footballers separately raising money for the same cause through the #PlayersTogether fund.

The Premier League also made additional financial contributions to support The National League, Women's Super League and Women's Championship.

In addition to their existing solidarity payments – as well as community and facility payments through the Football

Foundation and Football Stadia Improvement Fund – funding was provided to The National League to assist them with the completion of their season.

The contribution to the women's game enabled their two top leagues to start a testing programme ahead of Season 2020/21.

Facilitating improvements

The Premier League celebrated Non-League Day in October, encouraging fans to attend a non-league match in their area.

At the same time, we reflected on some of the clubs who have benefited from investment through the Football Stadia Improvement Fund (FSIF), which is solely funded by the Premier League and provides grants to improve facilities for clubs from the EFL down to the lower levels of the FA National League System.

Scarborough Athletic received £150,000 of Premier League funding via the FSIF, which was used to develop a new 1,138-capacity covered stand, with significant work also done to improve the experience of disabled supporters within other parts of the stadium.

"This is a great example of how the Premier League finances have underpinned what we are trying to do," said Trevor Bull, chairman of Scarborough Athletic FC.

Preparing for football's return

The Premier League, The FA and the Government provided almost £9 million of funding through the Football Foundation during the COVID-19 pandemic to help clubs and community organisations prepare their pitches and buildings for when it was safe for football to return.

The grants were available to clubs in the grassroots, non-league and women's game – as well as every club in the Welsh Cymru Premier League – which had lost out on normal revenue streams during the crisis.

The Pitch Preparation Fund benefited almost 3,000 clubs, with close to 10,000 pitches improved, while the Club Preparation Fund provided grants to benefit more than 40,000 teams, helping clubs and organisations to prepare their buildings to safely reopen in line with official guidance.

500,000

Jobs supported by Premier League football

150+

Clubs whose community programmes are supported by the Premier League

1,000+

Grants from the Premier League to non-league clubs through the Football Stadia Improvement Fund since 2000

£1bn+

Investment in club Academies throughout the Premier League and EFL since 2012

£8.69m

Value of grants awarded via the Pitch and Club Preparation Funds through the Football Foundation

Positive impact

West Ham United's wide-ranging community programme delivers considerable economic and social benefits to the surrounding area, a study has found

The Players' Project

As West Ham United celebrated the one-year anniversary of their Players' Project, an EY study highlighted the initiative's wider economic benefits and demonstrated the club's value to the local community.

The Players' Project is split into 11 strands and delivers more than 30 programmes that span health, education, community initiatives and football development. Players from the men's, women's and Academy teams gave more than 300 hours of community time in the programme's first year, working directly with over 2,000 people from the local area.

On the anniversary, West Ham announced they had already invested half of the £10 million they planned to commit to local projects over three years and pledged an additional £5 million, with the club forecasting a total investment of £28 million throughout Newham, the surrounding Olympic boroughs and Essex by the end of 2021.

West Ham United Vice-Chairman Baroness Karren Brady said: "When we moved to the stadium, we came here with the aim of affecting change – bringing investment, making a positive economic impact, creating opportunities for people, for our community. This project has been and continues to be a fantastic achievement, from running days supporting homeless people in the community, to working closely with our fantastic Any Old Irons and Pride of Irons support groups."

Mark Gregory, UK Chief Economist at EY, said: "The club makes a significant socio-economic contribution to East London, Essex and beyond to a total value of £300 million, be it through, for example, £1.4 million of annual savings to the NHS delivered through diabetes prevention, the 281 school and educational partnerships or the fact there have been 50,000 participants in Club Foundation-led initiatives per year."

"One year ago we celebrated the launch of the Players' Project and I am immensely proud of everything we've done so far, and everything we have committed to doing in the future"

Baroness Karren Brady
West Ham United Vice-Chairman

£300m

Socio-economic contribution made by West Ham United to the club's surrounding areas

Premier League Final standings 2019/20

Pos	Club	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
1	Liverpool	32	3	3	85	33	52	99
2	Manchester City	26	3	9	102	35	67	81
3	Manchester United	18	12	8	66	36	30	66
4	Chelsea	20	6	12	69	54	15	66
5	Leicester City	18	8	12	67	41	26	62
6	Tottenham Hotspur	16	11	11	61	47	14	59
7	Wolverhampton Wanderers	15	14	9	51	40	11	59
8	Arsenal	14	14	10	56	48	8	56
9	Sheffield United	14	12	12	39	39	0	54
10	Burnley	15	9	14	43	50	-7	54
11	Southampton	15	7	16	51	60	-9	52
12	Everton	13	10	15	44	56	-12	49
13	Newcastle United	11	11	16	38	58	-20	44
14	Crystal Palace	11	10	17	31	50	-19	43
15	Brighton & Hove Albion	9	14	15	39	54	-15	41
16	West Ham United	10	9	19	49	62	-13	39
17	Aston Villa	9	8	21	41	67	-26	35
18	AFC Bournemouth	9	7	22	40	65	-25	34
19	Watford	8	10	20	36	64	-28	34
20	Norwich City	5	6	27	26	75	-49	21

Premier League Season 2019/20

Clubs

AFC Bournemouth
Arsenal
Aston Villa
Brighton & Hove Albion
Burnley
Chelsea
Crystal Palace
Everton
Leicester City
Liverpool
Manchester City
Manchester United
Newcastle United
Norwich City
Sheffield United
Southampton
Tottenham Hotspur
Watford
West Ham United
Wolverhampton Wanderers

UK Broadcast partners

Sky Sports
BT Sport
Amazon Prime Video
BBC Sport

Official UK Radio Broadcast Partners

BBC Radio 5 Live
Talk Sport

Official Partners

EA Sports
Barclays
Budweiser
Cadbury
Coca-Cola
Nike
Tag Heuer

Official Licencees

Avery Dennison
Panini