

6 X 60" zigzag  
Productions



*ANGEL CITY FC*

# THE SHOW

Your family, your social life, your relationships.

EVERYTHING is at stake when you dare to dream of hitting the heights of women's football – the National Women's Soccer League.

Now we're giving 30 young women the chance to do just that with the opportunity to live and train as professionals.

Selected from all over the US and Latin America, these hungry players will train and develop their silky skills at our academy with world class coaches, hosted at Angel City FC's elite training ground.

Then, at the end of the process, they'll have to dig even deeper, playing an 11-a-side match against top class opponents from a NWSL team! For those that shine brightest, a pro contract with Angel City FC awaits...

Will these young women have the mental and physical prowess to impress our team of expert coaches?

And can any of them score the ultimate goal of a pro contract with Angel City FC at the end of the process?







# WHAT WE SEE

- Across this compelling series we'll capture all the highs and lows, the successes and failures, as 30 young women fight to become future stars of women's football
- We'll see all the human stories tracked across the series, depicting the remarkable development of our players
- We'll capture in-depth stories of the players as they embark on a transformative and potentially life changing journey
- Along the way we'll gain an incredible insight into how the process is unravelling through candid and insightful interviews with experts – former players, coaches and other influential people from the world of football.
- We'll negotiate access to both retired and current professionals to act as mentors and provide essential guidance and exciting takeaway tips and tricks.
- Ultimately we'll capture all the tension and excitement as the academy hopefuls play the matches of their lives in an attempt to catch the eye of a professional scout!

# WHY NOW?

- 11.7 million viewers tuned in to watch England's Lionesses take on the USA's Stars and Stripes team in the semi final of the 2019 Women's World Cup\*
- The viewership for the 2019 Women's World Cup is estimated to reach 1 billion globally\*\*
- The NWSL salary cap is now \$650,000, up from \$421,000 – every year more money is coming into the women's game.
- The NWSL has the highest average attendance per game among all women's **professional sports leagues in the United States.**
- In 2019 attendance grew by over 20%





# THE FORMAT

In this series, we're giving 30 hopeful footballers aged 18-25yrs the chance to be noticed and recruited by a top team in the NWSL. This is an authentic opportunity - not a scripted reality show. We will inject some challenges and format beats, but overall this will be a real process.

Each episode will be well planned with story beats and a narrative arc across the series. The story telling is conveyed with a mix of testimony, interviews and actuality across our central characters. We will allow the characters to speak for themselves rather than imposing a voice-over narrator.

30 promising players are recruited for the opportunity of a lifetime; to receive 2 weeks of intensive training and mentoring from leading former players and football experts who will mentor them. At the end of the first week, 14 players will qualify for the second week and form the first team squad who will play an exhibition match in front of the Angel City FC coaching staff. The stakes couldn't be higher – for the best players will be asked to join Angel City FC on professional contracts!

Fantastic football on-screen talent will participate in the academy and guide the viewers through the process. But rather than working as presenters or sports reporters, these football experts will work as mentors, coaches and commentators on the process, we will film their interactions with the players in a documentary style.



# THE CONTENT

**In every episode we see:**

**Training sessions** (including games & exercises) – this is a serious opportunity and our hopeful stars will be put through their paces mentally and physically. How will these amateur players cope with proper training techniques and coaching sessions?

**Life in camp** (everything from hotel room conversations to cafeteria chatter) – we want to get to know our contributors and experience the dynamics between them during daily life.

**Player portrait scenes** (filmed in their home environment) – where relevant to the episode, we'll be expanding on a particular contributor's story by returning to their hometown and visiting family, friends and loved ones to expand and build on their character. We'll cover their personal stories, lives and key moments in their life. Where do they practice? Who do they support? Have they always loved football, or do they also compete in another sport? What motivates them and how would a professional football career affect their lives?

**A masterclass from a top professional** – we'll bring in professional players and coaches to put the players through their paces with masterclasses in defending, striking, tactics, mental toughness and more.

**Manager and coach perspectives** – after a training session or practice match, we'll see our coaching staff's immediate reaction and reflection on what they've seen. Who impressed? Who's slacking? Who looks certain to make the grade and who's not meeting expectations?

**Master interviews** – through extensive master interview coverage on the key topics of each day we will be able to piece together the story from the point of view of each player without VO.

**A key and topic-related activity** – each episode will feature a non-football activity to highlight a certain story beat and episodic topic. It could be an obstacle course, paintballing or a ping pong tournament – its intended to add some diversity to the episodes whilst offering a chance to analyze a different part of our contributors' character.





# THE CORE TALENT

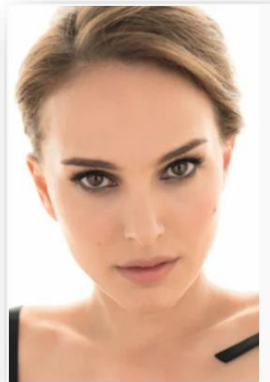
- Technical Director – Eniola Aluko – 107 national team appearances for England and Team GB. Former Chelsea, Juventus star.
- Eni will be Supported by a charismatic and professional coaching staff.
- Angel City FC owners – Natalie Portman, Eva Longoria, Serena Williams feature throughout the series.



100k



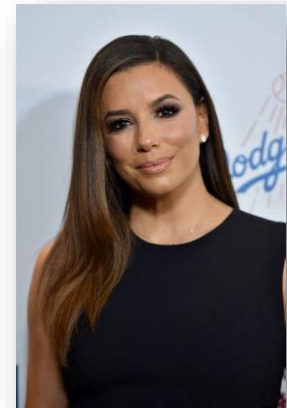
7.4M



13.6M



8.2M





# MASTERCLASS TALENT

- Top professionals in the men's and women's game will be invited to host 'masterclasses' passing their skills along to the academy players.
- We will approach legendary players such as Mia Hamm, Megan Rapinoe and Alex Morgan to each host a 2 hour masterclass at the academy, so each episode has a fantastic guest.







# **EPISODE 1**

## **OVERVIEW**

### ***"Build from the back"***

This episode focusses on the first steps of scouting, as well as the main priority for our manager when building their squad: don't concede goals.

We're beginning the process by building a solid defense, so our profiled characters could feature the central defenders, the fullbacks, the goalkeepers and the defensive midfielders.

# EPISODE 1 KEY BEATS

**Meeting our manager and coaching staff** – first up, we need to establish what the challenge is (assemble a squad and give them the chance to earn a place at a top academy) and also get to know our manager and coaching staff. Who are they? Why are they excited about the challenge? How did their own career unfold and what would they have given for this kind of opportunity when they were 18?

**Scouting process** – we'll film for a single day some weeks before the training camp begins. During this session, our management team will discuss who the type of player they're looking for and analyze some video submissions from hopeful players. There are skills tapes; Sunday league footage; interviews; YouTube channels and Instagram accounts etc. It's tough to judge on this evidence, but that's what the camp is for. The goal of the scouting is to select players for the initial 30 -person squad (which will be whittled down to a 15-strong team at the end of ep3).

**Arrival at training camp** – our hopefuls all arrive, which represents a good point to start getting to know them. We should use this beat to cut back to one of our profiled contributors from this episode (a defender).

**Actuality around camp** – whether it's in the boot room before practice or the cafeteria at lunch, we get candid and unscripted moments from all the contributors as they talk and forge friendships with the other members of the squad.

**Player profiles** – we explore the lives of some of the key contributors in this episode. It could be a goalkeeper from Seattle or a fullback from Denver – we talk to friends, family and loved ones whilst exploring the places that played an important part in their footballing career to date.

**Masterclass** – we bring in a top defender to showcase some skills and give a brief masterclass to our squad.

**Manager's office** – we join our manager and coaching staff in their office as they reflect on events in training that day. Who's standing out? Who's still not showcasing their true talent?

**An 11 v 11 match** – this match is intended to highlight the contributors who immediately jump out. Who impresses? Who struggles? It's only day one, but impressions are already being made.





# EPISODE 2

## OVERVIEW

### *"High Pressure"*

We've started to teach the team how to defend as a unit, but though you can't lose a game if you don't concede, you also can't win if you don't score. We need to find the star attackers and goal scorers currently within our 30-strong squad.

However, life on the cutting edge of a football pitch can come with added bonuses. Fame. Recognition. Adoration. These are normally amplified when it comes to star attackers, but what kind of ego, determination and focus does it take to step out on a pitch and own the space? What kind of a person loves the glory and the glamor? And how do you deal with the pressure?

This episode is about how our players deal with that pressure and how much desire they have to win.





**Press packet** – we’re inviting journalists and photographers onto site to give our players a taste of the limelight. They’ll be photographed for ‘player profile’ pictures as well as interviewed. Whilst it’s a taste of the media life top professionals deal with, it’ll also serve as a bio and character reference for scouts interested in taking each player into their academy.

**Ping pong tournament** – to add an element of fun and to diversify the episode slightly, we’re holding a tournament which highlights how our squad deal with pressure as individuals. They’ll be going head to head in a knockout ping pong tournament. Who keeps a cool head with the squad watching on? Who refuses to lose? And who loves the limelight and gloats all the way to the win?

**Scouting process** – we return to the scouting table as our manager and coaching staff analyze submissions, this time for attackers. Who impresses? Who is too much of a showboat? Who looks raw but clearly talented? We cut to the selected players running drills on the training pitches – these are our glory hunters.

**Training** – who scored the most in ep1 match? Are they gloating on the pitch or is their head down as they practice their technique? Are they working to get on the end of every ball or complaining that the delivery isn’t up to standard?

**Masterclass** – we get a top ex-professional striker or winger in to talk to the squad. Whether it’s Kristine Lilly, Abby Wambach or Megan Rapinoe, it’ll be an experience our contributors won’t forget.

**Candid moments around camp** – as always, we film before practice and at lunch to get some candid moments from our contributors. Is everything harmonious in camp or are tensions building between rival players?

**Player profiles** – as always, we head to the homes of some of our star contributors to explore their lives away from the training ground.

**Manager’s office** – we join our manager and coaching staff in their office as they reflect on events in training that day. Who’s standing out? Who’s still not showcasing their true talent?





# EPISODE 3 OVERVIEW

## ***“Engine Room”***

Defense and attack are the two main principles of football, but there are players who have to handle both in every game: the midfielders. This episode focuses on the workhorses, the marathon runners, the engine room.

One thing is necessary for a great midfielder: stamina. You need to run tirelessly, especially in the modern game when so many teams play with such high intensity and press the opposition into mistakes.

This week, there’s also a big decision to make for our management team: they’ve got to send half of their 30 -strong squad home to focus on the final 15 who’ll feature in the big match and showcase their skills for selection day.

# EPISODE 3 KEY BEATS

**Scouting process** – we return to the scouting table as our manager and coaching staff analyze submissions, this time for midfielders. Who impresses? Who doesn't? Who looks raw but clearly talented?

**Obstacle course/endurance race** – to find out who's got the engine to play in midfield, we're putting the entire squad through a rigorous training session designed to separate the strong from the weak. Whether it's an intense cross-country triathlon or a military obstacle course, it's something which will leave some unable to cross the finish line. Only the physically and mentally strong candidates will impress.

**Refining the squad** – at the end of the day, we're sending 15 players home. Whoever doesn't make the cut will be packing their bags and hanging up their boots.

**Training** – we pick out a few of the chosen midfielders during drills. They're running, they're tackling and they're laying up assists for the strikers – they're everywhere. But are some still struggling to find their feet?

**Masterclass** – we get a top ex-professional midfielder in to talk to the squad.

**Candid moments around camp** – as always, we film before practice and at lunch to get some candid moments from our contributors. Is everything harmonious in camp or are tensions building between rival players?

**Player profiles** – as always, we head to the homes of some of our star contributors to explore their lives away from the training ground.

**Manager's office** – we join our manager and coaching staff in their office as they reflect on events in training that day. Who's standing out? Who's still not showcasing their true talent?







# EPISODE 4 OVERVIEW

## *“Captain Fantastic”*

The squad has been halved. Only 15 remain – our final team plus 4 substitutes. After the drama of the last episode, everyone is in need of some downtime to reflect.

Some will have seen friends sent home, while others might be celebrating their own success. But now they need to come together. This team is also in need of a captain.

To help both issues, we’re sending the entire 15 players and the coaching staff on an away day to build bridges and analyze their leadership skills: paintballing. It’s all in good fun, but we’ll also see who steps up and controls the situation and who is happier sitting back and taking orders.

# EPISODE 4 KEY BEATS

**Paintballing** – we're rebuilding bridges in the squad and identifying the leaders in the group by taking everyone paintballing. Managers, coaches and players alike are put into two teams, while the manager picks one member from each team and gives them the role of squad leader. Who will win the game? Who will lose? And most importantly, how will the squad recover from the shock of last episodes' elimination?

**7 v 7 game** – at the end of the paintballing, still wearing army combats, we're throwing around some bibs and having a fun game of football between the remaining players. It's all in good nature, but it's still competitive.

**Manager's draft** – we're leaving the door open for our manager to make an emergency addition to her squad. It could be an ex-pro or another unsigned talent she has scouted – it's a chance to draft in the missing piece of the puzzle who'll help the rest of the squad lift their games for the trial.

**Captain announcement** – at the end of the episode, our manager will reveal who they believe should wear the captain's armband during the trial match. It's only a single game but wearing that band will help a player stand out for the scouts. It's an advantage during the trial, but it's given to the person who will do their best to make sure all succeed.

**Candid moments around camp** – as always, we film on the coach to the paintballing session and at lunch to get some candid moments from our contributors. Is everything harmonious in camp or are tensions building between rival players? Are some still reeling from their friends being sent home, or have they already found new allies in the squad?

**Player profiles** – as always, we head to the homes of some of our star contributors to explore their lives away from the training ground. We'll profile the players who have been nominated as captains and explore where they developed those natural leadership qualities.

**Manager's office** – we join our manager and coaching staff in their office as they reflect on events in training that day. Why have they selected the captains they have? Who were the best captains they played with? And what skills makes a good captain?





# EPISODE 5

## OVERVIEW

### *“Squad Goals”*

We’ve got a squad. We’ve got a captain, but who are the final 11 starting players?

A lot is on the line: who starts during the trial match?

It’s the last chance for our 15 finalists to shine and earn a spot on the starters team sheet so they can showcase their individual ability in front of the scouts.

Alongside this, we’ll also contrast the tension with some lighthearted fun: player ratings. Similar to FIFAs player stats, we’ll be asking the squad to rate and review each other’s abilities and assign themselves skill ratings on everything from strength to passing to finishing, as well as transfer value.





# EPISODE 5 KEY BEATS

**A NWSL match** – We’ll take our hopefuls to one of the final matches of the NWSL league to get a taste of the professional game.

**Meeting the fans** – whilst in the stadium, we’ll also experience how the fans and crowds engage with the players. It’ll be a taste of life in the big time for our squad, and will expand their knowledge of the role they play on and off the field.

**Candid moments around camp** – as always, we film on the coach to the paintballing session and at lunch to get some candid moments from our contributors. Is everything harmonious in camp or are tensions building between rival players? Are some still reeling from their friends being sent home, or have they already found new allies in the squad?

**Player profiles** – as always, we head to the homes of some of our star contributors to explore their lives away from the training ground. We’ll profile the players who are standing out with the end in sight, or the ones that the rest of the squad clearly rate highly. These are the final few profiles – by now, we’ve had a glimpse into the lives of almost all the starting 11.

**Manager’s office** – we join our manager and coaching staff in their office as they reflect on events in training that day. They’ve a big decision to make: who makes it into the starting 11 for the trial match, and who’s got to start on the bench?

**Final lineup tease** – right at the end of the episode, we tease the reveal of the final 11. All our contributors have fought to prove themselves in the trial and starting the match can only give you an advantage to show what you’re made of. Who makes the cut, and who’s going to start off by sitting on the bench?



# EPISODE 6 OVERVIEW

## *"Game Face"*

The final episode is all about the big match. Our team of hopefuls are taking on NWSL professionals in a highly competitive friendly.

We follow in ob-doc style from the moment the players get up, head for the ground and get themselves prepared. We also go behind-the-scenes to talk to scouts from major WSL teams, and discover the type of players they're looking for.

All 15 players will be involved – whether it's as a substitute at half time or as an impact sub for the final 30 minutes of the match. But starting the game gives a player the best chance of making an impression, and some lucky players will be able to last the full 90 to give a proper account of themselves.

After the match, we reflect on the success stories and the failures. Nothing is guaranteed in the trial, but our contributors will be given every chance to make an impression.



# EPISODE 6 KEY BEATS

**Manager's office** – we join our manager and coaching staff in their office as they run through the final starting 11. Which combination do they think will give them the best chance of success? What are their biggest weaknesses?

**Final lineup** – we teased it in the last episode, but we open the last episode by revealing who will feature in our final 11. Who is starting? Has anyone had their position shifted? Is anyone unhappy?

**Scouts perspective** –

**Travel & build up to the game** – we're on the coach with the players – seeing how they calm themselves from nerves or watching as they listen to music and get themselves pumped up for the match. For local players, perhaps friends and family have come to the ground to show support. For foreign contributors, perhaps success at the trial also brings about more worries – would they relocate? Would they have to leave family and loved ones behind to make the most of the chance?

**Pre-match and half-time team talk** – we're in the locker room as team talks are given. Final advice is shared, criticism given, and support provided. Our managers and coaching staff know how much this game means to our players, but the best way to make a good impression is to win the game.

**The results** – as the final whistle blows, we share in the relief, the disappointment or the excitement of our players. Did anyone make a terrible mistake to rule them out of contention? Or did a striker net a few goals to give them a good chance of a contract? Will any of them make the grade?

**Profile scenes** – after it all, we head home with the players to see the reaction and reflection. For any successful players, we'll be there the moment they share the news with their family. For the unsuccessful ones, we'll see them returning to their neighborhoods and streets to play with their friends again. They'll be back.

**Manager sign off** – we'll also share the final thoughts of the manager and her backroom staff. How did they deal with rejection and failure in their own career? And if anyone was successful, what do they hope they'll go on to achieve?





# ULTIMATE GOAL



## KEY LEARNINGS AND SUCCESSES

Zig Zag productions produced the Sky Sports series The Next Jamie Vardy, based at Manchester City's Etihad Campus, Manchester.

Following 2 successful V9 Academies in the men's game, 14 players from tiers 5-9 of football achieved professional contracts, having been scouted at the event.

Off the back of the successful series, BT Sport and Insight TV commissioned Ultimate Goal, featuring Eni Aluko and top football stars including Rachel Brown-Finnis, Mollie and Rosie Kmita, Rio Ferdinand, Jens Lehmann, Freddie Ljunberg, Peter Crouch, Fara Williams and more.

The series was a critical success with 3 players gaining professional contract moves off the back of the showcase final game.