

**BEFORE YOU READ:** Look at the photo of Lucy. What's your impression of her character? Read the article. Was your first impression correct?

Lucy will play for England at the Women's World Cup this summer from the 7th of June > 7th July. The tournament is being held in France.

**T**ough'. You may think that's England player Lucy Bronze's nickname, but it's not. Says the half-Portuguese half-English player: "In Portugal, you take your mother's maiden name and your dad's surname. My mum's maiden name is 'Tough'. So it is actually my middle name!"

And how she's lived up to that name. From playing in her thick glasses, being banned from the boys' team to overcoming serious injuries, the 27-year-old is now England Women's Footballer of the Year. "I've never been that person who has a lot of self-doubt when it comes to football," she says.

CURRENT talks to Bronze about her journey from working in a pizza parlour to the pitch.

# Lucy Bronze



## LUCY BRONZE: FACT FILE

**Full name:** Lucia Roberta Tough Bronze

**Born:** the 28th of October 1991

**Roots:** Her mum is English and her dad is Portuguese.

**Position:** Defender

**Football CV:** She's played for Sunderland Women, Everton, Liverpool, Manchester City and is currently at Olympique Lyonnais.

**Accolades:** UK Professional Football Association's (PFA) Women's Player of the Year in 2014 and 2017, and the BBC's Women's Footballer of the Year in 2018.

**Idol:** Tennis champ Serena Williams

**Treasured possession:** Her glasses. "I don't care about trainers or phones, but I'm as blind as a bat without my glasses."

**Guilty pleasure:** "Cake. Tiramisu, chocolate cake, carrot cake, lemon cake – anything."

**Insta:** @lucybronze

## CURRENT PERSON

**CURRENT:** Have you had to sacrifice a 'normal' life for your love of football? Yes, definitely. At 11, I was banned from my local boys' team – I was a year too young to play in the mixed team. So I had to train with Sunderland, which was 45 miles [72 kilometres] from my home. That was hard for me. My dad used to drive me for an hour and a half to go training. I used to finish school, jump in the car, come back and go straight to bed. So I missed out on socialising with my friends.

**CURRENT:** You say playing football has helped you overcome your shyness.

**"I once worked in Domino's<sup>1</sup> and I now play for England."**

I was a really, really shy child. I was in my shell<sup>•</sup>. But as soon as I started kicking a football, I was fine. I'm still shy. I don't have that natural instinct<sup>•</sup> to be able to let my guard down<sup>•</sup> and start speaking to people. People think you feel the pressure playing football, but I always feel more pressure talking to strangers than I do playing in stadiums full of 50,000 people.

**CURRENT:** What would you change about yourself? Well, I bite my nails and I fiddle<sup>•</sup> with my hair. I just can't sit still. Even now, I've taken my shoes on and off ten times. I'm really fidgety<sup>•</sup>. People always ask me why I bite my nails and it really annoys me, because I don't know why! I wish that I could stop.

**CURRENT:** You've had to overcome a lot of injuries. How did that affect you? I've had four knee surgeries in my career. I don't do small injuries. The highs of winning are always balanced out by the lows of being injured and missing games. But injuries weren't the problem. It's more the fact that I didn't have any support ... well, I only had it from my mum. I felt like no one really cared about me. That they [club owners and FA officials] didn't think I would make it, that they thought I wasn't going anywhere. That was the



hardest thing: being left alone by the people I thought were meant to be supporting me. But it's made me<sup>•</sup> in a way, because I've not had to rely on anyone. I always know how to look after myself.

**CURRENT:** You've moved to Olympic Lyonnais. How have you adjusted to life in France? I'm enjoying the weather, for starters! I'd probably be sitting in Manchester in the pouring<sup>•</sup> rain right now instead of the sunny French countryside. The football is a little different, the culture is very different, the food is very different, but I'm enjoying it, settling in well and it's a good experience. I'm hoping to learn lots, not just football-wise, but also the language. I've picked up<sup>•</sup> 'pass' and 'shoot' from my teammates on the pitch and I've started French lessons now too.

**CURRENT:** You'll be playing for England this June in the Women's World Cup. What's your advice? Well, I once worked in Domino's<sup>1</sup> and I now play for England! All you can control is yourself ... and be determined to succeed. I think it's important that women are now empowered to do anything they want. But that message is for boys as well, because ultimately it's society that we try to change.

## FOOTBALL IDIOMS

Many common idioms have their roots in the language of football. Finish these sentences with the correct form of the idiom:

*score an own goal*  
*get a kick out of something*  
*keep your eye on the ball*  
*move the goalposts*

- "I think he enjoyed seeing the other team losing, he "
- "Every time I think I've finished the exercise, my teacher sets me another assignment – I'll never succeed if he "
- "She  by not helping her colleague. Now no one will help her now!"
- "You really need to , driving in London, or you'll have an accident – there are so many people and cyclists to watch out for."

See answers on page 23 ->

## WORDWISE

**banned (adj):** not allowed, forbidden

**CV (n):** short for curriculum vitae, a list of qualifications and work experience

**accolade (n):** praise, or a prize or award

**guilty pleasure (phr):** something you enjoy but feel you shouldn't, because it's bad for you or because others don't think it's good

**to sacrifice (v):** to give up something you like in order to have or do something else

**in my shell (idiom):** a shy person, not outgoing

**natural instinct (n):** the way you behave without having to think about it

**to let (one's) guard down (exp):** to stop being defensive and relax

**to fiddle (v):** to touch in a nervous way

**fidgety (adj):** restless in a nervous or impatient way

**it has made (someone) (phr):** an event so important the person would be very different if it hadn't happened

**pouring (adj):** raining heavily

**to settle in (v):** to become comfortable and familiar in a new home / country / job

**to pick up (phr v):** to learn something