

SHAUNAGH
BROWN

STEFANIA
EVANS

VICTORIA
RUSH

ZAINAB
ALEMA

SUE
ANSTISS, MBE

UGO
MONYE

NO WOMAN NO TRY

NOT JUST A RUGBY
STORY, BUT A
HUMAN ONE.

#IAmEnough

KEHA MEDIA presents A CEN & JACK STUDIO PRODUCTION of 'NO WOMAN NO TRY' inspired by #IAmEnough
FEATURING SHAUNAGH BROWN, STEFANIA EVANS, VICTORIA RUSH, ZAINAB ALEMA, SUE ANSTISS MBE, and UGO MONYE
EDITED BY JACK TOMPKINS | DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY BEN MARLOW | EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS VICTORIA RUSH AND JACK TOMPKINS
MUSIC BY GREAT SCOTT | WRITTEN BY THE BRU GROUP | DIRECTED BY VICTORIA RUSH

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WORLD PREMIER PRESS NOTES

LOGLINE

Elite female rugby players often face their biggest challenges off the pitch. In this honest and confronting documentary, we look at the state of play of women's rugby and the things women must overcome to play at the highest level.

No Woman No Try explores gender inequality through the lens of rugby and the women and men championing change across the sporting community. Hear from professional rugby players, women's sport's advocates and male allies as they share their own perspective and experiences of the game.

SYNOPSIS

Rugby is a game for everybody. Born in the heart of south east England in 1823, it spread across the world to include ideals of diversity, community and inclusivity. There are now also 2.7 million female rugby players globally growing at a rate of 28% per year. Female players make up a quarter of the playing population, all while male participation figures are in decline.

Filmed through the 20/21 rugby season, *No Woman No Try* presents a portrait of the current status of gender, ethnicity and sexual equality issues through the lens of women's rugby players and discussing progress with women's sport pioneers and male allies. All of whom are championing change and inspiring a more diverse pool of role models for future generations.

Posing the question, "*how do you defeat the opposition when they're not on the field?*" the film is inspired by the global #IAmEnough movement, created in 2020 by Director Victoria Rush. It explores gender disparity and how important female role models are to the next generation; **if you can't see it you can't be it.** All themes that transcend sport, finding relevance in many of today's industries.

This is not just a rugby story, but a human one.



~~NO~~
WOMAN
~~NO~~
TRY



STARRING



SHAUNAGH BROWN

ENGLAND & HARLEQUINS
PROFESSIONAL RUGBY PLAYER

Shaunagh did not have a conventional road into the game. Before joining the sport in 2014 she was an Olympic Shot Putter and Hammer thrower. A natural sports woman she won her first cap for England in two years of playing.

Shaunagh's home life is a stark contrast to the intensity she faces on the pitch. Shaunagh comes from a large, modest family in the east of London. Growing up with 6 male cousins, she spent more time around boys than girls. Being a tom boy at school wasn't easy either, names like 'She Hulk' and 'He Man' still impact her today. Shaunagh will take us behind the scenes to show us what life is like at the top of English rugby today and how she sees the future for the sport.



STEFANIA EVANS

WORCESTER WORRIERS
PROFESSIONAL RUGBY PLAYER
FOUNDER OF RUGGETTE APPAREL

Stef Evans, Worcester Worriers professional rugby player, former Bristol Bears player and Founder of Ruggette RFC apparel, Stef is dominating the women's rugby space both on and off the field. Her business Ruggette is the first of its kind to create rugby apparel for only women. Stef will look at the game from a business perspective too, sharing her personal struggles with weight in women's sport as well as the 'clearly sexist' business decisions which lead to underfunding of women's sport.

Rugby isn't like other sports. In rugby there is a different mindset because there is a position for every-body. It is a popular sport because it is a safe space for women and girls of all shapes, sizes and backgrounds to be themselves without fear.



STARRING



VICTORIA RUSH

PRODUCER, RUGBY PLAYER,
DIRECTOR OF **NO WOMAN NO TRY**

Victoria Rush, Producer at O2, Ex-Harlequins player, Founder of #IAmEnough movement in 2020, Victoria sparked worldwide support for female rugby players from the rugby community, women and allies. Victoria's ambition is to build lasting change in women around the world by helping improve the access and visibility of real role models. She is a passionate advocate for the sport that saved her from the darkness of anxiety and depression.

Victoria's passion for global change is driven by a personal understanding of professional and emotional effect working in male dominated environments.

Victoria created and directed No Woman No Try to stimulate the conversation needed to breakdown barriers in sport. To destroy systematic bias and bring sport back to its open, diverse and inclusive roots. To remind us that equality isn't one side attacking another, but all sides coming together for the greater good. For those in decisions making positions to make difference decisions than before. Because the more visibility we give to role models now the more our children will believe they can be whoever they want.



ZAINAB ALEMA

NEONATAL NURSE & ASPIRING
PROFESSIONAL RUGBY PLAYER

In December 2020, Zainab won The Times Grassroots Sports Woman of the Year for her work building two fundraising charities; one to help more Muslim women find rugby and two, to bring rugby kit to those in third world countries. Now her dream is to be the first Muslim Black women to play for England Rugby, creating a path for other girls and women to believe that can do it too.

Zainab is documenting her journey of fitness and to England Rugby in the hope to inspire others she represents to follow their dreams.



STARRING



SUE ANSTISS, MBE

PIONEER OF BRITISH WOMEN'S SPORT

Sue is author of “Game on: the unstoppable rise of women’s sport”, she is a member of the newly created RFU D&I board, and Founder of The Women’s Sports Collective.

Sue brings a broad understanding of the women’s sport landscape across the country and an understanding of how all sports have tried to further their respective women’s games. She has a deep understanding the inequalities women have faced outside of rugby and sport.

In November 2021 Sue was a nominee for The Times “Changemaker” Sport Woman of the Year for her work across the women’s sporting landscape.



UGO MONYE

FORMER PROFESSIONAL RUGBY PLAYER, BRITISH AND IRISH LIONS, ENGLAND & HARLEQUINS. BROADCASTER & MALE ALLY

When speaking with any female rugby player, it’s unanimous that for the women’s game to develop quickly, the support of male allies is invaluable. Ugo Monye is a former Harlequins, England and British & Irish Lions player, now a leading broadcaster and board member. He speaks of wanting to now ‘be of service’ to the game he loves, pushing forward to more equality and diversity at all levels of the sport.

Ugo will talk us through what it takes to be a key ally to women’s rugby while showing us around his old stomping ground, The Stoop. He will also discuss his newly formed foundation to help more diverse communities access rugby.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

When the #IAmEnough movement began on 28th August 2020 I could never foresee where we stand today. Women and girls from across rugby, across the world and cross-code took to social media in the biggest online one-day movement of the history of the sport.

Women and girls, from grassroots to international level, flooded social media with empowering images of themselves in their rugby kit. Women with bulging muscles, messy hair and cellulite were among the diverse spectrum of photos which were accompanied by the hashtag, 'I am enough.'

It was so powerful because they all had, at one point or another, shared the same feeling of not belonging. In rugby, in sport, at work or in life, they had been continually dominated by a one-dimensional male view point, one that never took them seriously or valued their contribution.

At the time, I naively believed our world had changed since I was younger. That girls weren't bullied for going to the gym, and that the next generation are doing it better than we did. But in reality it hasn't. Social media is putting more pressure on how we look. Anxiety, depression and eating disorders are at their highest, while social media allows nameless, faceless bullies to belittle anyone online.

I started this movement because I have, all my life, felt this feeling of inadequacy. But, to have

it so close to home in rugby, a game known for being for everybody, this felt like the final straw.

For those who don't know, Canterbury launched a new Irish international kit with male players, in their full jersey, shorts, boots. For the new women's kit, they superimposed the jersey onto female model, in trousers and relaxed clothing. Overlooking the entire woman's team as female rugby players and role models.

As a female who has worked in numerous male dominated industries, I empathise with this and understand the frustration on a practical and emotional level. Women are all too often overlooked for what we can do *with* our bodies, for what it *should* look like. We owe it to the next generation to offer them another way of accessing power in this world, other than just through what we look like.

At the time of the movement many questioned the significance of this social media frenzy. It had a global reaction in one-day, with the good in social media bringing together a community of women, showing them they never have to feel inadequate or alone again. The message was shared by brands like Canterbury, pledging to do more and be better in the future. But, social media only goes so far. I want to translate that change across the world for women everywhere.



Seeing the shared plight of women I felt it was necessary to take this message into a medium where it could have a much bigger impact. To transcend rugby and even sport and speak to the collective experience of so many women everywhere.

While *No Woman No Try* is a film about women's rugby, it is also about equality, perseverance and overcoming adversity. The symptoms of inequality are systematic, generational, and built into society from the day we are born. Progress comes in small steps and behind closed doors. It comes from those who stand up and say "wait a minute, this is wrong", helping other people do the same.

During filming, I saw a group of women who's love for sport propels them forward, even in the face of constant rejection. The players choose to focus on their dreams regardless of the obstacles. Most of them balancing full-time careers too. And, when they aren't doing that, they are doing whatever they can to secure pathways for the next generation. Hosting training, workshops, panels, challenging stereotypes and creating role models for future generations.

Why does it matter? It matters because women's rugby is growing at a rate of 28% each year. It matters because in this country, participation in the female game at grassroots level is now accelerating faster than men's.

It matters because using overtly feminine, skinny models in place of powerful, robust strong women not only sends completely the wrong message to young girls, but it denies the sport vital exposure.

Visibility of female role models for the next generation is quite simply how we inspire them.

When young girls consume content that continues to show only men succeeding in sport or boys praised for what they can do with their bodies not what it looks like, what options do you think they see for themselves?

For the women in rugby, it is no longer a silent fight. Movements like #IAmEnough and #iCare help to being voices to those who did not previously think they had one. To show the power of the community around them.

Since August 2020 there have been incredible steps forward for the game; Wales women have been offered professional contracts, South Africa have their first ever female professional rugby player, and Canterbury now have 3 female ambassadors, Zainab Alema being one of them.

Through this journey I have realised that the more women are finding their voices, the more they have used them to raise awareness for other marginalised and underrepresented communities from all orientations, genders, ethnicities, disabilities.

I created *No Woman No Try* to stimulate the conversation needed to breakdown barriers in sport. To destroy the systematic bias and bring rugby and sport back to its open, diverse and inclusive roots. To remind us that equality isn't one side attacking another, but by all sides coming together. For those in decisions making positions to make difference decisions than before. Because the more visibility we give to role models now the more our children will believe they can be whoever they want.

If you can't see it, you can't be it.

~ Victoria H. Rush





VICTORIA RUSH

From London, England, Victoria is a young filmmaker who is dedicating her work to philanthropic causes. Her goal is to create more opportunities for women and underrepresented communities through emotive storytelling. *No Woman No Try* is Victoria's first feature length film.

No Woman No Try explores gender disparity in sport and how important female role models are to the next generation. All themes that transcend sport, finding relevance in many of today's industries. if you can't see it you can't be it.

VICTORIA RUSH
JACK TOMPKINS
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

GREAT SCOTT
SONG TITLE BY

HERA MEDIA
BEN & JACK STUDIO
A PRODUCTION BY

HERA MEDIA

Hera Media pioneering production on a mission to become the world's leading investment portfolio for content dedicated to women and marginalised communities. By investing in the visibility of role models in these communities through powerful storytelling. The goal; to inspire and empower.

BEN & JACK STUDIO

Fresh off producing the acclaimed Amazon Original Rugby Documentary 'Everybody's Game' featuring England Internationals Maro Itoje, Beno Obano, Anthony Watson and Ellis Genge, production company "Ben and Jack Studio" bring their experienced team to this production.

BEN MARLOW
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Ben is widely renowned for his ability to bring the cinematic look to any production regardless of location, equipment and budget. Having shot documentary content worldwide for an extensive client list including the BBC, Amazon, NHS along with major agencies, Ben's talent behind the camera accompanied by his infectious charisma guarantees great results every time.

Ben is also a member of Great Scott and the writer of the main song title *No Woman No Try*.

JACK TOMPKINS
EDITOR & PRODUCER

Graduating Loughborough University with a First Class Sports degree led Jack into his dream of a career in sports media production. Having started his career at Seb Coe's London Sports Agency CSM, Jack has gone on to produce content for the LTA, GB Boxing, British Swimming, England Netball and GB Snowsport, as well as winning film festivals with his sports documentary work.