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Fashion Briefing: The Women's World Cup is drawing fashion brands to soccer

BY DANNY PARISI | JUL 28, 2023 

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Suzanne Mckenzie, CEO of the soccer-themed sustainable fashion brand Able Made, said a variety of factors within the last year have contributed to soccer's growing popularity in the U.S. That includes big events like the Women's World Cup; successful American players in major European soccer leagues, like Christian Pulisic and Matt Turner; and legendary player Lionel Messi coming to play in the American soccer league MLS.

"There's been a big change in how popular soccer is in the U.S. since we first started [in 2013]," Mckenzie said. Able Made relaunched in 2022 with a focus on ready-to-wear fashion, moving on from a collaboration-focused model that included collections with Puma, among other brands. McKenzie has been involved in soccer since 2009 when she founded the Ucal McKenzie Breakaway Foundation, a Boston-based non-profit soccer academy for youths, in honor of her late husband, semi-professional soccer coach Ucal McKenzie.

Earlier this week, Able Made announced a collaboration with British luxury brand Burberry to upcycle Burberry fabrics into soccer apparel. The brand opened its first permanent store in Connecticut this year, plus it maintains an ongoing presence via pop-ups in Brooklyn Columbus Circle. In April, it launched its first soccer-themed ready-to-wear collection, which sold out in a day.