

Touchline

Wootton Bassett Town FC Newsletter Issue No. 12

Chairman's Welcome

We are now into the winter and Christmas is fast approaching - the last six months have flown by.

Work has continued on the relocation as we look to refine our plans and operational budgets, and I am pleased to announce the Sports Association have just exchanged contracts. The next season and a half will be tough specifically for our senior section who will need to ground share. This will add stress for our volunteers, so everyone's support will be needed to ensure our club identity and our heads remain intact.

Commercially the club has had a better year although this has been very tough. We have had welcome support from Impact Decoration Ltd, Box and Seal Ltd, Cats, Computer World, CS Building Services, Allen & Foxworthy and - just recently - Charlie's Charity, to name a few. This sponsorship is so important, as without this support our senior section could not function. I thank you all for supporting our club.

The external sponsors funding has been supported by a fantastic FA Cup run, which itself brought well needed funds into the club and at the same time made club history - a great achievement and congratulations to all involved. I have seen positive moves in terms of player links between our senior sides, although there is still room for improvement around player interchange, so that is something to work on going forward.

Our youth section has restructured under the watchful eyes of Pete Yeardley and Gill Gascoigne. There has been no choice but to spread the administration workload across a larger number of volunteers, which has now been successfully implemented. Our club development is moving forward, specifically around coach education and our Saturday Skills Sessions and more recently we are taking a look at football for the disabled.

I'm already looking forward to the warmer weather, but I would suggest that we will have more floods and snow before then!

Lastly, I would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year on behalf of WBTFC.

Andy Walduck

Club Directory:

President: Ron Stone
Chairman: Andy Walduck (07980 730905)
Vice Chairman: Danny Groom (07500 764275)
Secretary: Ian Thomas (07714 718122)
Match Secretary: Paul Curtis (07801 836946)
Treasurer: Dave Topping
Development Officer: Jeff Tidy
Head of Senior Section: Chris Jones (07774 851563)
First Team Manager: Dave Turner (07710 350437)
Reserve Team Manager: Simon Paish (07919 483800)
Development Team Managers: Wayne Petrie and Dave Terry (07917 469344)
Head of Youth Section: Pete Yeardley (07778 936868)
Deputy Head of Youth: Nigel Deane
Youth Section Secretary: Gill Gascoigne (01793 840075)
Youth Section Database Administrator: Gill Welsman-Clarke
Youth Section Manager Liaison: Sarah Turner
Youth Section Pitch Bookings: Hayley Gillie
Head of Women and Girls' Section: Bryan Wood (07847 639406)
Ladies Team Manager: Ann Nicholas (07785 660236)
Soccer Skills Academy: Nick Bolton (07745 230226)
Press Officer: Stuart Smedley (07985 367772)
Website Editor: Scott Smedley (07849 334072)
Programme Compiler/Club Historian: Mark Smedley (07887 634887)
Head of Facilities: Steve Matthews
Welfare Officer: Maggie Amos

Life Members: Mick Woolford (1995), Rod Carter (2008), Roger Williamson (2008), Paul Harrison (2012), Pete Yeardley (2012)

Upcoming Senior Home Fixtures:

29/12 - WBTFC v New College Swindon (RW, 3pm)
05/01 - WBTFC v Carterton (RW, 3pm),
Development Team v Intel FC (BA, 2pm)
06/01 - Ladies v Bristol & West (RW, 2pm)
12/01 - Reserves v Old Woodstock Town (RW, 3pm)
13/01 - Ladies v Cheltenham Spa CS (RW, 2pm)
26/01 - Reserves v Cricklade Town (RW, 3pm)
03/02 - Ladies v AEK Boco (RW, 2pm)
09/02 - WBTFC v Cricklade Town (RW, 3pm)



Senior Section -

Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year from all involved with the senior section.

We will enter 2013 in what many will say is the most important time of the club's history, but interestingly not because of the results, but due to the relocation of the club.

If all goes to plan then we may be exiting Rylands Way at the end of the season. This will prompt many discussions and rumours around the club but there is nothing to fear as I'm sure that the relocation will allow Wootton Bassett Town to continue its growth and give it an even firmer platform to move on.

We are a club that is run by volunteers and it is going to be essential that we embrace these efforts over the coming two seasons whilst we have no direct home.

I'm sure that we can count on the continued support from all.

On a footie note, we have had a great start to the first half of the season with the first team putting themselves in a good second position - having lost just two league games - giving themselves every opportunity for a promotion finish.

The Reserves, who are currently sixth, and the Development, fourth in Wilts League Division One, continue to support this effort and we have seen a number of younger players given their first team debuts, including Lewis Petrie, Aaron Dainton and Scott Walduck.

There will be a lot of time to give you further updates as the season progresses but please ask if you have any questions.

Finally thank you to all the back room volunteers, the managers and players.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a very successful 2013.

Chris Jones

Relocation update: a Christmas present to savour

It is pleasing to announce that a significant step in the Sports Association's relocation was taken on Friday afternoon when signed land contracts were exchanged.

The news is a great Christmas present to all and means that the move is now all systems go, with the next step being the finalisation of clubhouse and site designs, which hopefully should be completed in January.

Sports Association chairman Pete Yeardley emphasised that members are indebted to Paul Harrison, who has led the relocation project for over a decade, for the effort, commitment and personal sacrifices he has made to complete the deal, and the football club echo those thoughts.

The end goal of being able to house all teams at a single, purpose-built, modern facility is now firmly in sight. There are numerous challenges still ahead, which will require the support of everyone involved with the club as we make the transition.

Those stresses will all be worth it though once the new facility opens.

Youth Section - As we now approach the dismal, dark, wet, cold months of an English winter can I extend seasonal greetings to ALL members within our club.

This is always the most frustrating period in the football calendar as some teams can face weeks without a competitive fixture due to continual match postponements thanks to either waterlogged or frozen pitches.

The season's results across all age groups are progressing well with some notable achievements to date and also several teams handily placed for an extended cup run.

As a club we are still fielding questions from parents regarding payments/ team selection procedures etc.

I will therefore once again remind you of the most commonly raised points.

What are the monthly payments to WBTFC for?

This is a training fee only! Players selected to play for a team will play free of charge.

As stated the club is run solely by volunteers and the one fixed fee per registration is by far the simplest to administer.

Why do we pay for 12 months and not just the season?

It is felt that spreading the net cost over a 12-month period would ease the financial burden on the parents. It is also simpler to set up one standing order with your bank rather than a stop/start system.

What are these monthly direct debit payments used for?

The bulk of our annual expenses are taken up by facilities hire (pitches for training and playing) – the cost for this season is in the region of £21,000! Another £5,000 will be spent on referees, league fees and insurance policies. With a further £10,000 attributed to kit, footballs and equipment you will quickly see how the bulk of the income is spent.

Why does the manager rotate players and not play his "strongest team" or why does the manager always play the same players and not rotate?

As an FA Community Development club we only utilise qualified coaches, and not only follow the FA Long Term Player Development philosophy but also our own in-house club development plan.

Each child will progress at different rates and therefore coaching and playing requirements should be adapted to meet those needs. We are attempting to introduce a "play without fear philosophy" within the club. Players need to feel confident to express themselves on the pitch without the fear of "letting down" their manager or parents.

In youth football the winning at all costs mentality must be driven out..... We should be giving the players all the tools and skills required to progress in the game and above all "To play for maximum enjoyment with the full support of all."

What can I do if I have a question/reservations regarding my child's progress?

In the first instance fully discuss the matter with your child's manager/coach. Ask questions and attempt to receive answers/reassurances regarding the problem.

Lack of dialogue or clear communication is usually at the crux of most misunderstandings.

If you still feel as though the matter has not been addressed, please feel free to escalate within the club.

As a reminder all of our club policies (Welfare, Social Media, Escalation) are available on the excellent club website.

Finally a big thanks to all our parents and players for their continued support of the club. Challenging times both on and off the field lie ahead but I am convinced by all of us working together we can retain our position as one of the biggest football clubs in Wiltshire.

Pete Yeardley



Women and Girls' Section - In my last piece for Touchline I mentioned that myself and Greg had both stepped down and the Ladies team would be under a new management team of Ann and Becky. The remit for them this season was simply to keep the team up in Division One of the Gloucestershire County League. They should be very happy with the start the team has made in the division, whilst not getting carried away, as the team is looking well placed to finish in the top half of the table come the end of the season. Ann and Becky have added a couple of new faces to the Ladies team, along with the added bonus of last season's top scorer and the League's Golden Boot winner April Polden re-signing. April's commitment to the team has given all a lift and we are hopeful that she will continue to travel back at weekends and play for the team whilst still being away at Birmingham University during the week.

Another person who I would like to thank for his work and commitment is Andy Townsend, the U16 Girls' manager. Pre-season things were not looking good for the team as they only had seven players and were stepping up from 7 to 9 a side. Andy should be happy with the team, who have made a steady start to the 9v9 format. Credit must go to Andy who has been able to find new players, with 13 girls now signed on, and they are currently mid table in the Wiltshire County League.

This last month we have again started running training for U11 Girls, moving the training night from a Thursday to a Friday in the hope that we could attract more girls to enable us to field a side and play some friendlies in the New Year. We are also looking to open this training slot to other younger girls down to the age of 8.

If you would like more information about the Ladies and Girls teams you can contact me via my mobile 07847 639406 or use the "Contact Us" link on the club website. All the teams have spaces and would welcome new or old players. Training is held on Thursday nights, 6 till 7pm for U16s and 7 till 8pm for the Ladies. U11 Girls sessions are 6 till 7.30pm on Fridays.

Bryan Wood

Youths Enjoying Cup Success - Not since the 2008/09 season have Wootton Bassett Town had a representative reach the final of a North Wilts League Cup competition. That year the under 9s, 13s and 16 Bs all worked their way through to secure a date at the County Ground, with the youngest of that trio being the only side to taste cup glory.

This year that disappointing run could end, with seven teams across various age groups having reached the quarter finals. The under 18s, 16, 13, 12, 11, 10 and 9 Blues are all just two wins away from the chance to appear at the home of Swindon Town.

It's a fantastic, unprecedented achievement for the club to have that many teams left at such a late stage of the knockout competitions. And we wish them the best of luck for their quarter final ties, all of which are due to take place on 20th January!

Our youth sides have enjoyed plentiful success in County Cup competitions too. Back in 2006/07 the under 11s became the first team in the club's history to win a Wiltshire County FA knockout cup, while the under 18s have twice fallen short in the Wiltshire Youth Cup showpiece.

Four teams are still alive at their respective age groups. The under 18s take on Salisbury City and the under 11 Blues travel to Devizes Town Youth with quarter final places at stake on 13th January. In the under 13 competition, meanwhile, Bassett's Blues host Devizes Town Youth 'A' and the Yellows travel to Wroughton Youth with a semi final place available for both. Those two games are scheduled for 27th January.

With a number of teams also in contention at the top of their respective divisions, it has been a fine start to the season for our youth section sides. Here's hoping that continues into the New Year!

Barnes chasing history

Wootton Bassett Town owe plenty to forward Mark Barnes for their early season success, which has seen the first team solidify their current top two spot in Hellenic League Division One West and venture to the FA Cup second qualifying round.

The forward, signed in the summer from Highworth Town, has so far struck 24 goals, 18 of those coming in the league and four in the history-making FA Cup run. Barnes' tally includes five two goal hauls and a pair of hat-tricks. If he carries on at the rate he is going, he is certain to crack the 30 goal barrier and potentially reach 40 come season's end.

During the club's long history, Bassett have often struggled to find a prolific centre forward and are therefore fortunate to have Barnes at their disposal. Listed below are some of the top season performances from goal-getters who have graced Rylands Way since 1950:

- 1952/53 - Tony Skull - 34 goals (31 league)*
- 1958/59 - Ray Young - 40 goals (34 league)*
- 1960/61 - Micky Jefferies - 26 goals (25 league)*
- 1961/62 - Micky Jefferies 28 goals (24 league)*
- 1969/70 - Roy Blackburn - 24 goals (all league)
- 1971/72 - Derek Powell - 26 goals (all league)*
- 1989/90 - Damon York - 25 goals (19 league) - finished joint top-scorer in Hellenic League Division One
- 2000/01 - Lee Stoddart - 25 goals (20 league)
- 2008/09 - Shaun Terry - 26 goals (16 league)
- 2010/11 - Sam Collier - 26 goals (15 league)

*Figures for those marked with an asterisk could be higher



He scores when he wants: Mark Barnes



WBTFC receive £2,500 funding from Charlie's Charity

Wootton Bassett Town are pleased to announce that they have been awarded £2,500 of funding from Charlie's Charity.

The charity was set up in the memory of sport-loving Charlie Lamb, who tragically died in a car accident in September 2009 aged just 18, and works to raise funds for young people in clubs and organisations in Wiltshire, to help them make the most of their sporting abilities and opportunities.

The club will use the money mainly to grow disabled football, and are looking to start an under 16s Disability team which will compete in the 2013/14 Wiltshire and Dorset Ability Counts League. To that end, starting 12th January 2013 free training sessions will be held on Saturday mornings from 10-11am at Ballards Ash for 12-16 year old football players with a disability. Throughout this season the team will train and hopefully play in some friendly festivals.

Funding will also be used to help provide new kit for youth teams, 9-a-side steel goals and support coaching in local schools.

To raise further money for Charlie's Charity, Bassett will host a charity match.

As a club, we are proud to be working with such a worthwhile cause and are grateful for their assistance with funding.

An expression of interest form for the Ability Counts training sessions can be found at: <http://wbtfc.co.uk/assets/pdf/development/ability-counts.pdf>

For more information on Charlie's Charity please visit:

<http://www.charliescharity.co.uk/>



Website Photo Gallery

A photo gallery has been added to the website, which will feature photos from the club's history as well as recent events.

If you wish to submit photos for inclusion in the gallery please contact **Scott Smedley**.



Saturday Morning Skills Sessions

The club's free Saturday morning skills programme has been growing week by week, with between 20 and 25 youngsters taking part in each session.

Held at Ballards Ash from 10-11am, sessions are managed by Ryan Venner, Lewis Tidy, Martin Bates, Liam Guy and Ryan Dowse, all of whom have progressed through the club's youth section and are working towards their coaching badges. All boys and girls aged 5 to 12 years old are welcome.

WBTFC Soccer Skills Academy Holiday Fun



The next Soccer Skills Academy Holiday camp will run from Monday 11th February until Thursday 14th February and takes place at Rylands Way. Daily sessions will last from 9.30am to 2.30pm.

Boys and girls from school years one to eight are welcome. Cost will be £60 per child for the four days or £17 per day, with additional children from the same family costing £55 for the week or £15 per day.

Weekly Monday sessions continue to run. Sessions for children in reception and year one are held indoors at the Lime Kiln Sports Centre from 5-6pm. For children in years two to eight, sessions are held outdoors on the astroturf at Royal Wootton Bassett Academy from 6-7pm.

All courses are now regularly oversubscribed and a first come, first served policy is therefore run. So please book early to avoid disappointment!

For more information and to book your child's place please contact **Nick Bolton** or visit <http://www.advancedsportscoaching.co.uk/>

WBTFC Archive

The history section of our website has seen much development since the start of the season and now contains far more detail on the club's rich, intriguing past.

Our archive has details of results and league tables for over 60 first team seasons, while for more recent years there are reserve, youth and ladies section results, scorers and tables.

Information relating to Bassett's first ever season in competitive league football has also been recently discovered. Back in 1898/99 the club played in the Vale of the White Horse League alongside current fellow Hellenic League members Highworth Town (who finished as champions), Purton and Cricklade Town. The story of that season, when Bassett finished fifth, was recently published on the website and makes fascinating reading. Similar articles relating to interesting parts of our history will hopefully become a regular feature.



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all players, coaches, parents and fans!

