

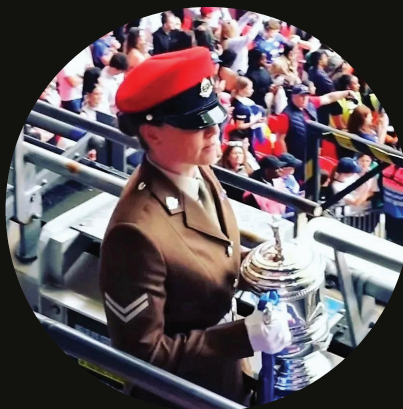


ARMY
FOOTBALL

THE SOLDIERS' GAME

ANNUAL REVIEW 2023

ISSUE 22





CEO/SECRETARY: Mr Graham Brookland

Email: graham.brookland@Armyfa.com

Graham joined the Army FA in 2007. He is Co founder of Aldershot Town Football Club, formed in 1992, for whom he served for 21 years in a variety of roles including as full time Company Secretary for a decade and later Head of Media when the club were in the Football League. Graham has received his 35 Year Service Award from the Hampshire FA and 20 Year Meritorious Service Award from the Aldershot DFA. In 2015 he authored a book "To Make A Dream Survive" reflecting on his time involved with football in Aldershot; over 1000 copies were sold. He was appointed CEO Secretary upon the retirement of Major Billy Thomson in August 2022.



ASSISTANT SECRETARY and REFEREES SECRETARY: Major Steve Clout

Email: steve.clout@armyfa.com

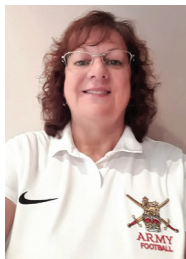
Steve commenced the role in August 2022. He joined the Territorial Army in 1986 and is also Secretary for Army Reserve football in addition to the role as SO2 of Army Reserve sport. Steve is also a Level 5 Referee. Steve completed his basic course in Grantham during the summer of 2021 after initially becoming a referee in 2009.



GOVERNANCE OFFICE/DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICER (DSO):

Jenny Payne Email: jenny.payne@Armyfa.com

Jenny has been in the role since 2013 having served 22 years in the REME. Jenny deals with all grassroots matters including affiliation, discipline and welfare. She is the Whole Game System technology lead for the county as well as the Designated Safeguarding officer.



ADMIN, MARKETING & SPONSORSHIP ASSISTANT: Kate O'Hara

Email: kate.ohara@Armyfa.com

Kate joined the Army FA in April 2019. A life-long follower of Farnborough Football Club, she played for the Women's Civil Service Football Team late 70's/early 80's and played for the MoD Royal Aircraft Establishment (mixed) 6 a-side team (against inter Depts and other MoD units). A supporter of local Youth Football club, helping with wellbeing Kate is a match day official to ensure respect to players/referee & linesmen from supporters is adhered to.



FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT MANAGER: Steve Stone

Email: steve.stone@Armyfa.com

Steve became the Army FA Football Development Officer in 2002. He has been a Coach Educator/ Tutor for the FA since 1996 and his extensive list of qualifications includes UEFA A, FA Academy Managers Licence and FA Youth award. A qualified teacher Steve's experiences include coaching both the Royal Navy and Army representative sides at all levels and extensive civilian team responsibilities including Southampton Ladies in the FA Women's Premier League. Steve has also worked part time in professional club academies.



ADMINISTRATOR/ACCOUNTS OFFICER: Gill Jones

Email: gill.jones@Armyfa.com

Gill has worked at the Army FA for 19 years having previously worked at Middlesex FA. Starting as a player with District Line Ladies in 1975 Gill shortly became Club Secretary and held this position through the club's transformation to Wembley Ladies in 1992 and Barnet Ladies in 1998. Currently Treasurer of the Greater London Women's Football League's Gill also served on the Management Committee of the FA Women's Premier League for several years. A member of the Middlesex FA Women's & Girls' Football Committee since its formation in 1998 Gill is now the current Chair of that committee. Gill is a proud recipient of the Middlesex FA Meritorious Service Award.

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BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Chair: Brigadier Andy Cox MBE (2023)

Became Chair in January 2023 replacing Brigadier Niall Stokoe OBE. In January 2022 he assumed the role of Chief of Staff, Home Command and the Standing Joint Headquarters (UK). Brigadier Andy also serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the Armed Forces Para-Snowsport Team (AFPST), and is a lifelong Southampton FC fan.



Vice Chair: Colonel Dave Jones MBE QVRM (2014)

Dave has been the Army Reserve Trustee since 2014. In addition too being the current Chair of the Reserve he also Chairs (and still plays) Army Crusaders (Officers) football and has been involved in significant overseas engagements that has included the promotion of football, most recently spending nearly a year in Baghdad as part of the NATO Mission Iraq and previously in Kosovo. Dave is also a Level 5 Army FA Referee.



Mr John Taylor (2013)

The longest serving Trustee, John is the Independent representative on the Board. He has served that position since 2013. An extensive football background is primarily through the Middlesex FA where he has been Chairman since 2011 overseeing the move to a new HQ in Northolt in 2018; a community development that includes two 3G pitches. He also serves as an FA Councillor too.



Lt Col Jim Fallon (2018)

Joined as a Trustee in 2018 Jim, an Evertonian, is responsible for Football Development. He has over 15 years' experience in a variety of coaching roles from junior to adult including Futsal and Mentoring adults. He originally completed his Level 2 in 2005.



Capt Kev Haley MBE (2022)

Kev has recently joined the Board of Trustees to represent unit football. He has represented the Army, UKAF and corps at every level having first played in the 1998 Inter Service tournament. He has also taken up the role as RAPTC Chair having previously been the manager. In addition to success on the pitch Kev has held administrative roles as Secretary of 2 Div and 4 Div Football Secretary whilst also holding the post of Army Men rep Secretary between 2018 and 2022.



Lt Col Chloe Plimmer-Sayce (2020)

Chloe replaced Trustee Col Ash Boreham as Women's representative in the early part of the initial Covid-19 lockdown. A player from corps through to Army level. In May 2022 Chloe was also appointed as the Chair of the Royal Engineers AFC. She was also RE AFC Secretary from 2015 to 2019.



Major Nigel Bamford (2020)

Nigel joined the Board in June 2020 with the responsibility for Army Referees. The Wolverhampton Wanderers fan has extensive experience as a player, coach, and Tutor. He was manager of AMS between 2015 and 2020 and also a Level 4 Referee and Observer.



Lt Col Tony Frank (2022)

Tony has been Football Officer for a number of units and was Massey League Secretary for a couple of seasons before handing over whilst attending staff college. Tony has also been the Chair of AGC football since 2014 and organised the Army Super Cup Final in Estonia in 2018 whilst there on operations. Still playing- although firmly in the Vets category for the Army Crusaders these days he has also recently taken over as General Manager of UK Armed Forces Football.



Major (Retd) Elizabeth Winfield (2023)

Elizabeth served with the Royal Logistic Corps for 18 years and has now transitioned into civilian life to find new ways to give back to the military community. With a passion for sport this has included many leadership roles in the Winter sports sector including support to the Armed Forces Para Snowsport Team, Invictus games, Olympics, and Paralympics. She now looks forward to supporting the Army FA

CO OPTED PLAYER REPRESENTATIVES:



Men: WO2 Keith Emmerson



Women: Cpl Imogen Fisher

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THE SOLDIERS' GAME ANNUAL REVIEW

Designed and published: esports Publications Editor: Graham Brookland



We were delighted to welcome **Brigadier Andy Cox MBE** as our new Chair in January 2023 replacing Brigadier Niall Stokoe OBE who left the Army after serving seven years on the Board and being appointed Chair in April 2020.

Brigadier Andy was commissioned into the Staffordshire Regiment of the British Army in 1996. Following graduation from the University of Wales and the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, he held multiple operational commands in Infantry, Armoured Infantry and Reconnaissance roles. He saw operational service in Northern Ireland, Kosovo and Bosnia followed by a series of tours to Iraq and Afghanistan. He also deployed to Kenya, Germany, Canada, Cyprus and Oman. Notable roles include Chief of Staff 12 Brigade and Task Force HELMAND, Strategic Plans in the Ministry of Defence, Command of the Army Training Regiment and Assistant Head of Organisation and Strategy at the Army Headquarters. He served as the Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff of the UK's Joint Force Headquarters, where he led a JTF in Iraq and latterly supported the UK's global repatriation mission during the COVID-19 crisis. In his previous appointment he served as the Deputy Commanding General for the 1st (US) Armoured Division, this included a tour as the JTF Comd for Operation Afghan Freedom (the resettlement of over 12,000 Afghan refugees into the USA).

In January 2022 he assumed the role of Chief of Staff, Home Command and the Standing Joint Headquarters (UK). Brigadier Andy serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the Armed Forces

Para-Snowsport Team (AFPST), and as a lifelong Southampton FC fan he has developed sticking power, a sense of humour and optimism!

There has also been a change at Vice Chair level. Colonel Sam Shepherd MBE stood down from her post after serving two years due to a posting in the USA. Colonel Dave Jones MBE QVRM, a Trustee for nine years has stepped into the role.

Lt Col Jill Rogers MBE has also left her post as Trustee. Jill, who joined in 2021, was the driving force for the Army FA to achieve the first level of the UK Sports Equality Standard award and was in the process of setting the foundations to reach the Preliminary stage; a requisite of the Football Association.

We express our thanks and appreciation to Niall, Sam and Jill for their dedication to Army Football and wish them all well in the future.

We also welcome a new Trustee, **Major (Retd) Elizabeth Winfield**. Elizabeth was appointed in March and, initially, will be focussing on the Media and Communications strategy.

We also thank Cpl Teri Harfield-Brown who has stepped down as the Women's player representative as a co-opted member and welcome **Cpl Imogen Fisher** as her replacement.

I'm delighted to write this foreword for the 22/23 edition of The Soldiers' Game. It is my first having taken on the role of Army FA Chair from Niall Stokoe in January 2023. I know we are all grateful to Niall for his hard work over seven years of service to the Army FA.

It has been a superb year in Army Football. Our Corps women's teams continue to compete strongly with the Adjutant Generals Corps (AGC) winning the Edwards Cup for the third successive time; the Army Medical Services (AMS) winning the Lily Parr Division 2 trophy; and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME) securing the Cpl Channing Day Division 1 title. We were honoured by Cpl Day's parents presenting the trophy on the day. The Army women also took part in the Williamson Inter Service Trophy while 1 Regt Royal Logistics Corps (RLC) won the Inter-Unit sixes.

In the men's game: the REME won the Quads; 4 RLC won the Army Super Cup (against 6 SCOTS); the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst PS (RMAS) won the Army Minor Units Cup; and 3 PARA won the Army Major Units Cup. They will now play 4 LANCS in the Super Cup Final with the latter having won the Army Reserve Challenge Cup. In the Massey League Trophy competitions Royal Signals won the 1st Division, and the Infantry Division 2. The RLC won the men's Woolwich Cup. At Army level, the men's team performed well in the Constantinople Trophy, narrowly losing the title to the RAF despite a convincing win against the Navy.

I was delighted to see Army representation at a host of major fixtures from the FA Premier League through to the EFL and the National League structure. This includes several serving soldiers officiating at matches, an area that we are well represented in by both our men and our women. We have been in the public eye for key events such as Armed Forces Day where the Army Reserve Mens, Women's, and Masters teams all participated in the Festival of Football representing the Army brilliantly.

It is our fantastic people, doing great things on behalf of the nation in uniform and on the football pitch that provides the inspiration to young soldiers, potential recruits, and the public. The women's team tour of the Balkans this summer was an incredible demonstration of this. They delivered Defence Engagement output in Bosnia, Montenegro, Albania and North Macedonia whilst also playing some fantastic football. Keep an eye out for the Australia tour this year which will continue the power of sport with Defence Engagement.

Football in the Army is alive and well. It is the most played, officiated and supported sport. It is the 'Soldiers' Game' and it is so successful because of the dedication and support given across the Army FA family. I must express heartfelt thanks and gratitude to our CEO/Secretary Graham Brookland, his assistant Major Steve Clout, and our Vice-Chair Colonel Davy Jones alongside all the team and everybody else delivering on behalf of the Army FA. I know we are very much looking forward to an action-packed season ahead.

Brig Andy Cox MBE
Chair





GRAHAM BROOKLAND REFLECTS ON HIS FIRST YEAR IN THE ROLE AS CEO

A busy year for Army football and plenty of activity in all guises of the game and something that I hope is well captured in this 2022/23 The Soldiers' Review. Since taking on this new role in August 2022 there have been many challenges. We have also overseen a change of Chair and Vice Chair midway through the season and changes of personnel within our Board of Trustees.

It has certainly been a challenging year but one that I hope has seen progression within the organisation. Throughout the course of the season, we have been and continue to review many procedures both internally and externally to ensure that we can provide efficiency and accountability. This remains ongoing but is necessitated to ensure that we have a support mechanism that involves our Trustees and volunteers in all areas of the

game. From standardising procedures through to providing clear and concise policies that will be consistent. Whatever decisions are made has to always be for the benefit of Army Football.

Another project that has been on the go for a couple of years now but is certainly now reaching its effectiveness is our relationship with **Football and War**. Project managed by Dr Alex Alexandrou we have recently seen our vast array of historical documents, programmes, medals, trophies, and memorabilia collected by the National Army Museum to whom we have reached a formal agreement with. As well as being displayed in the museum the items will be archived and digitised. This, however, is only the start of the project of which you will be able to read elsewhere in this publication.

I am certainly keen to emphasise the strength of our relationship with the Football Association (FA). We are one of 50 county associations throughout the country and one that we remain



rightfully proud of. It is with great satisfaction that we can provide soldiers to perform ceremonial duties at the respective Men and Women FA Cup Finals alongside over 200 flag bearers on these occasions and other roles that are partaken during the season. However, the relationship with the Football Association is much deeper. As a County Association we must comply to the many expectations and targets set by our governing body and meet with our Regional Manager on a quarterly basis. Indeed, we have been working to a business strategy that was implemented for the 2021/24 seasons; we are entering the final season of that strategy. It is pleasing that we are above the KPI targets for registered male and female players. Last season we had 8965 registered male players and 921 female players serving within the Army. We also achieved in the refereeing department too with 226 registered match officials against a target of 176 and a healthy rein of recruitment, promotion, and retentions. Overall, there were 632 teams registered covering 198 clubs.

However, as we look towards the next FA Business Strategy period of 2024 to 2028 there will be plenty of work required in preparation for the new period, tougher expectations, mandatory targets, and a firm presence regarding the efficiency of governance. It is important for me to identify to you exactly what work is required from our perspective.

We have three huge targets to focus on. By 1 July 2025 it will be mandatory for the Army Football Association to achieve the criteria set for the FA Code of Governance for County FA and become compliant. To this we are forming a Corporate Governance Project Team. The Code represents a 'Gold Standard' of governance, comprising of 65 requirements based on Sport England and UK Sport's Code for Sports Governance. It is a huge task but one we will be working closely with the FA to achieve. Failure to deliver will see a significant decrease in our funding provided by the FA.

After achieving the Sports Equality Standard Scheme Foundation Level Award, we are now working towards reaching the Preliminary standard; we must achieve this to the FA by the end of the 2023/24 season. To this, representatives to form an Inclusion Advisory Group (IAG) has been identified and we will be holding an inaugural meeting during the early part of the new season. Part of the process will be to connect football activity to external engagement opportunities whilst also engaging with Army Diversity Networks.

In October 2022 we had an FA "Safeguarding 365" Inspection at our Aldershot HQ and complied with the FA Regulations set. It is imperative that we ensure that all our CFA Workforce and Trustees have the correct qualifications and training relevant to their role. To achieve the above three is imperative to the future structure of our organisation.

What was evident when we delivered our strategy presentation previewing our aims for 2023/24 to the FA was how impressed, and indeed unaware, of the external work that is undertaken under our guise. From our developing links with civilian clubs through to the recent Defence Engagement tour our Army Women undertook of The Balkans. Fascinating and something we should never take for granted as it is unique.

We receive superb support and funding from the Football Association and are grateful for the close involvement that we have in so many areas.

We have seen a change of policy and rebrand within what was formerly the Army Sports Control Board and now Army Sport under the direction of the new CEO (formerly Director, Army Sports Control Board) Major General (Retd) Darrell Amison. From my perspective it is important to emphasise the importance of our relationship within Army Sport.

Similar to the Football Association the support we receive from Army Sport cannot go unmentioned. From the wonderful sponsorship opportunities through Mongoose that we have through to the SOTR (Statement of Training Requirements) offer. This is a huge opportunity to encourage as many soldiers as possible to sign up to courses operated by our Governing Body, The FA. Completion of the courses enables the soldier to a 100% funding for the courses. It is our duty to ensure that this message is widened as far as possible.

We had a healthy number of sponsors during 2022/23. To Fujitsu, F5, Holt's Military Banking, Supacat, Royal British Legion, Towergate Insurance, Leonardo, Babcock, VIMA Group and Army Sports Lottery- thank you. Without you our organisation would not have the opportunities to provide football to the soldier that it currently has.

Finally, the assessment in this report is to provide you with an awareness that there is so much within our administration work that doesn't detail the preciseness of actually playing





football. Despite the obvious challenges and increase of expectations within units and the Army in general we had so much excitement last season. It was a pleasure and a privilege to get out, where possible, to watch some football at all levels. From the small sided competitions, to watching the Women and Men's Corps cup finals on the same day at the excellent facilities of Cirencester Town and Sutton United respectively. From being able to view some fantastic exciting last day drama in the Women's Corps matches at Harborough Town FC; what a superb facility that is too. From seeing our Men and Under 23 rep teams go so close to Inter Service success to seeing the delight on the faces in the photos of our Masters teams successes in the inaugural Major Billy Thomson Inter Services followed by gold medal in the European Masters Games. However, the highlight for me was undoubtedly the 2023 Army Challenge Major Units Cup Final played at our traditional Military Stadium home in Aldershot. There were some concerns at one stage as to whether the final would be played but assurances were met by both 3 Parachute Regiment and 23 Parachute Engineer Regiment that they would be in attendance despite both

squads being on operational duties in Sudan. Both teams arrived, some arriving back from Sudan the day before, and offered the best Cup Final in my 16 years of being here. It was a credit to all involved.

It was also pleasing to witness such camaraderie identifying the vast talent that is involved within The Soldiers' Game at the Annual Awards Dinner at RMA Sandhurst and a huge thank you to Nigel Adkins for his noticeable support to Army Football; the referees' annual awards dinner at Aldershot Town FC in the presence of officials Andy and Bobby Madley. The Crusaders 100th anniversary in January was also a fitting occasion to learn of so many experiences over the years and, importantly, the lifelong friendships formed too.

Football is our game; it is our responsibility to serve you. To provide any soldier the opportunity to play, to referee, to coach, to administer to volunteer. That, in my view, is what we are here for.

Graham Brookland
CEO/Secretary



The new Army Sport Plan detailing “Why Sport Matters” was released on 14 June. This also entails the 5 X outcomes of Army Sport, a new Mission and Main Effort alongside the Strategic Objectives for 2023-25. It is accompanied by a note from Commander Home Command and a Plan on a Page.

The new plan coincides with the re-brand from the Army Sport Control Board (ASCB) to Army Sport. The old ASCB logo is now no longer in use and all digital platforms were amended to reflect the new Army Sport brand.

The previous title of DASCBC (Director, Army Sports Control Board) has now reverted to Army Sport CEO. The current CEO is Maj Gen (Retd) Darrell Amison CBE who commented below upon the launch:

‘The Army Sport Plan 2023-25 reflects the importance and value the Army attaches to sport. Sport helps to prepare soldiers for operations by enhancing physical fitness, mental resilience, leadership, and teamwork. It fosters cohesion, pride, humility, the ability to thrive under pressure, and the courage to overcome fear, and helps to forge winning teams. Whilst competitive, sport should also be enjoyable and contributes to the ‘Offer’ to our people. It, therefore, plays an important part in Army life, including recruiting and retention. The Army Sport executive team look forward to delivering the Army Sport Plan in support of and in collaboration with the many dedicated, professional and enthusiastic volunteers across 44 Army sports. We will do all we can to maximise participation in sport through opportunity for all.’



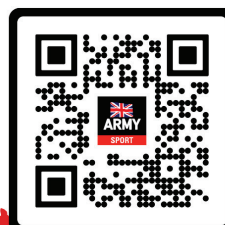
Why Sport Matters

Sport prepares soldiers for operations by enhancing physical and mental fitness, resilience, leadership, and teamwork. It fosters cohesion, pride, humility, the ability to thrive under pressure and the courage to overcome fear. Sport sharpens the competitive edge and inspires a will to win that enables us to meet our core purpose, to protect the nation by being ready to fight and win wars on land.

Sport contributes to the 'Offer' to our people; plays an important part in Army life, including recruiting and retention; and can provide excellent public visibility of the Army. Authorised sport is a Condition of Service with duty status and is a core activity that cannot be considered discretionary.



Outcomes of Sport "The Big 5"



Army Sport

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FOR ALL





ARMY FA COMMUNICATION STRATEGY & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2023

OVERVIEW

The communications strategy and implementation plan will provide the Army Football Association and the numerous stakeholders involved an overarching approach to both internal and external communications. The strategy sets out the enduring themes and objectives to define where responsibility and authority lies for communication activity. It also provides guidance on the structure and delivery of effective communications for the next four years, with an annual review.

All communication activity must be centred on the key milestones of the season and be focused on a deliberate effect and output. The cyclical nature of the season will drive communications activity and allow for deliberate planning and resource forecasting. The intent is to ensure content is collected and shared widely and quickly both internally and with partners to ensure deliberate and targeted engagement with the media and other stakeholders. Maximum use will be made of digital and social media channels, as well as local, regional and national agreed media platforms when appropriate.

ARMY FA COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES

Aligned to the Army Football Association Strategy the overarching communication objectives are as follows:

- **Objective One:** To promote awareness of the Army Football Association and the success of its Footballers, Teams and Referees whilst demonstrating the positive power of football within the military and beyond.
- **Objective Two:** To develop across all Teams a sustainable, consistent and regularly online social media presence to increase reach beyond the current audience.
- **Objective Three:** To recognise the continued support of donors and generate more income streams.

ARMY FA COMMUNICATION AIMS

The aims are to leverage primarily social media, but also other media outlets as well to;

- Build a positive brand image for the Army FA and Football in the Army
- Promote and Increase awareness among Army personnel about the opportunities to play, coach, officiate, and volunteer within Army Football
- Publicise Army Football events that are open to spectators
- Showcase Community Engagement activities in support of the “Engage to Recruit” campaign
- Align the Army FA with the National Governing Body; The FA
- Recognise and acknowledge the contributions of sponsors, the Army Sport, and ASL

SUMMARY

This communication strategy and implementation plan has outlined the Army FA's purpose and approach to improve engagement and maximise social media presence and reach. It will be under constant review to ensure it continues to align with the overarching communication objectives and aims.

Major (Retd) Elizabeth Winfield



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After the disappointment of last season's defeat in the Inter Service competition and my last-minute emergency deployment to Baghdad, Iraq on OP SHADER the 2022/23 season was approached with even more hunger and desire to succeed.

In October players and staff met for Training Camp 1 of the season, this year we had to find our competitive edge early as the Senior team were leading with the Army FA's representation in the Aldershot Senior Cup, entering this competition has been a massive plus to the season in so many ways but mostly to give us competitive fixtures throughout the season preparing us better for the Inter Service competition. Our training camp in October saw us continue to rekindle old links, this time with England's HM Prison service football team, a very competitive friendly played at Aldershot Military Stadium. With a strong squad committing early in the season we managed a comfortable disciplined and professional 5-1 victory.

Onto November's Training Camp, which saw our annual friendly versus Aldershot Town FC Academy Team, an organisation with whom we have strong links via the old Academy Manager Ross McNeilly, who also had a stint as full-time manager of the National League team last season. This fixture saw a 2-0 victory and another solid performance to continue our start to the season. We also saw a few new additions coming into the squad and adapting well.

December saw our first Aldershot Senior Cup game, away to Godalming Town FC of the Southern Combination League, a freezing cold dark December evening on what can be best described as an extremely difficult playing surface. We won 2-0 in the end in what was a competitive game against a team who play week in week out, another victory and through to the quarter finals of the competition. A second friendly saw the team play the Civil Service FC in another annual friendly, which we now play for the Servitium Challenge Shield, last





season's 1-1 draw still fresh in my mind I set the team up to win, of which on another freezing cold evening, this time at EFL League Two side Sutton United's ground. The pitch was immaculate, and we rolled to a comfortable 6-0 win with 4 goals for Harry Beckley.

In January we came together for another double fixture, away to step 4 outfit Harborough Town FC of the United Counties Football League Premier Division. This was, again a freezing cold evening, luckily their 3G pitch held up and allowed the game to take place. After taking an early 2-0 lead we were eventually beaten 4-2, which was again a great effort from my team of which I still had not been able to play my full-strength starting 11 due to work commitments of players. Sadly, our Aldershot DFA Cup quarter final game away to Fleet Town FC was cancelled with the freezing temperatures getting the better of us.

Our last training camp was in February and was the final preparation camp before the Inter Service competition and saw us with another double fixture scheduled, game one versus Fleet Town FC and the second away to step 4 outfit Didcot Town. First, the fiercely competitive quarter final fixture in the Aldershot Senior Cup against Fleet Town FC. With temperatures again

dropping below zero and, on a sloping pitch the team played out a 3-0 victory, which again, against a team playing together weekly was very satisfying. Some outstanding saves from Jordan Brooks, which included a penalty save at the start of the second half. Through to the semi-finals which was to be played in April at home to either Farnham Town FC or Westfield FC. Unfortunately, our scheduled away friendly with Didcot Town FC was cancelled due to a frozen pitch and deemed unsafe to play by the groundsman.

As we approached the Inter Service competition, my first as Head Coach, our preparation had gone well, Scott McCarthy, Jordan Brooks and Harry Beckley adding to the Army's contribution to the United Kingdom Armed Forces Football Team alongside our skipper Luke Cairney, Greg Peel, Sean Thomson, Matty Evans, Scott Hynd and Leigh Phillips. We also welcomed the introduction to the Army Men's Senior squad of Royal Engineer's skipper Craig Stevenson.

We came together for the Inter Service Camp on Monday 13th of March. The first week involved a mental resilience package for all the players and staff, various training sessions as well as a couple of team bonding events which included a trip to Farnham Golf Park and a tour of Wembley

Stadium. Week two saw us get stuck into preparing to face the Royal Navy at the EBB Stadium, home to Aldershot Town FC. As a team we took a bit of time out in the evening to watch the Women's Team on the Tuesday night, then it was our turn the next night. With two goals from striker Scott McCarthy and a penalty from Sam Atkinson we came out 3-0 winners to win the trophy for the individual match- Mercury Cup. The following day we had the pleasure as a team of visiting the Sky studios, which included a visit to the Sky Sports studio and meeting a couple of the presenters, we even managed to bump into Tubes (Peter Dale) from Soccer AM. The following week saw us travel to DMS Whittington where we based out of in preparation for our final fixture against the RAF at Montgomery Waters Meadow Stadium, home of league one team Shrewsbury Town FC where we needed to win or draw to be crowned champions. In a fiercely contested match, we unfortunately lost 2-1 with Andrew Matthews header being saved off the line by the RAF left back. Although we did not win the 2022/23 Inter Service competition, there was so many positives to take away from the season with how the team bonded together.

We then came back together for the semi-final of the Aldershot Cup away to Westfield FC; due to work commitments we were only able to meet up on the evening of the game. An extremely well organised step 4 side who play week in week out together saw us lose 4-0 to end our cup run for the season.

Player of the season was newcomer to the side, Craig Stevenson from the Royal Engineers, his positive attitude, and leadership qualities shone through throughout the season.

Captain Jimmy Blair

Army Men's Senior Team Head Coach
Coldstream Guards



**MEN
INTER SERVICES
RAF v ARMY**



SCAN ME



**MEN
INTER SERVICES
ARMY v RN**



SCAN ME



**MEN
INTER SERVICES
RAF v RN**



SCAN ME



**MENS
INTER SERVICE PROGRAMME
ARMY v ROYAL NAVY
23 MARCH 2023**



SCAN ME





Our season started in September 2022 and with an opportunity to add more talent to the squad. We received some excellent player recommendations by Corps and Regimental Coaches and our staff spent as much time as possible out watching matches and players. The new players have added great depth and value to this years' squad, proving that Corps and Regimental Football is a great steppingstone into representative level.

Our first training camp concluded with a tough test against Aldershot Town U21s, suffering a 2-0 defeat against a well organised National League academy side. We then suffered another defeat, 4-1, against EFL League 1 side Forest Green Rovers U18s, who gave us plenty to learn from. The calendar year ended with a 2-2 draw away at Farnham Town U23s, where an Arran Moore late header split the result.

Two fixtures in Jan 23 against Wessex opposition Amesbury and Bournemouth presented a great challenge and although both ended in defeats, it proved to be excellent preparation ahead of the Inter Service competition.

The first Inter Service fixture against the Royal Air Force saw a relentless display end in an excellent 3-0 win at the Military Stadium in Aldershot. Goals from Arran Moore REME, Owen James RLC and

Ryan Fagan RE put the U23s in a great position ahead of the Royal Navy fixture a week later, who had drawn 0-0 with the RAF in their opening fixture.

As expected, the Royal Navy were hard to break down and they opened the scoring 10 minutes into the second half. An excellent reaction saw Luke Trice R.SIGNALS, follow up a Calum Vincent RE free kick to equalise and put the game and IS championship back within the Army's grasp.

Just eight minutes from time, the referee deemed that the Navy's forward was tripped inside the box and awarded a penalty. The spot kit was converted by Royal Navy skipper Jack Wright and despite the added Army pressure, and penalty shout in the opposite box, the Royal Navy held on to the 2-1 result and to win the Inter Services.

With player development and progression being our primary purpose, we were delighted to oversee the selection of seven players from the current U23s squad into the senior team over the season. An additional eight players, who were only recently part of our squad had also been selected to represent the Army Senior side in this years Inter Service squad in March. It has also been a delight to see another two new players (Calum Vincent RE and Felix Norman RE) selected into the UKAF recent training camps. Within the past four seasons,



there has been six players progress from the Army U23s into the UKAF environment, demonstrating the clear pathway within Forces football. The Army U23's player of the year was recently announced as Alfie Moulding REME, well earnt recognition of his performances and attitude this season.

Overall, I am very pleased with this season. The level of opposition has been raised slightly this season and perhaps reflected in results; however, the benefits have been hugely valuable in player development returns. The pace of player development is genuinely pleasing to see and we hope to continue with our mission in progressing players into next season. We will be looking to welcome our current and new players into our talent ID training camp in September, ahead of the 23/24 season.

Any U23 player recommendations can be directed to our Twitter pages @ArmyU23 or @GerwynGriffiths.

WO2 Gerwyn Griffiths
U23 Head Coach



**MEN
INTER SERVICES
RN v ARMY U23**



SCAN ME



**MEN
INTER SERVICES
ARMY v RAF U23**



SCAN ME



**MEN
INTER SERVICES
RAF v RN U23**



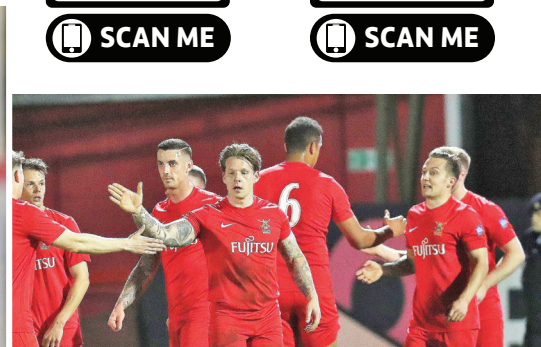
SCAN ME



**MENS
INTER SERVICE PROGRAMME
ARMY v RAF U23
15 FEB 2023**



SCAN ME



**Kit Man WO2 Nathan Franks
awarded Chair of Trustees coin
for consistent outstanding work**





PRE-SEASON AND PREPARATION

Season 22/23 has been a remarkable success for Army Masters' Football. After final agreement from all Service partners to join the drive to deliver an Inter-Service Masters' Competition, encouraging our Service Personnel to play on beyond the normal player opportunities.

Equally important, in a season that offered great promise, was our invitation to attend the European Masters' Games 2023 (EMG23) at Tampere, Finland. As the Army are still the World Champions from 2017 (COVID Cancellations) this was an unmissable opportunity and generated serious interest from over 35 footballers across the Service.

As a management team, we quietly worked away on EMG23 in the background, whilst continuing to cultivate existing links with teams across the UK, which gave us an early chance to test our mettle against the NW Fire Service and the Welsh FA. Both games were highly competitive and finished 1-1 with Sgt Matt Radley scoring early against the Fire Service and the Fire Service scoring with the last kick of the game. The Welsh FA fixture was a closely played event with Sgt Lawrence scoring for the Army. A really close game, with both coaches appearing happy with the draw.

INTER SERVICES COMPETITION

The Interservice Competition began in earnest with the initial fixture being Navy v RAF.

The second fixture saw the Army v Navy at Aldershot on the Wavell Pitch Aldershot on 22 Mar 23. A competitive game saw both sides look

to exploit opportunities from the outset, with the Army breakthrough coming early, scoring first through an Own Goal (OG) from a deflected cross from the Army's right-hand side, as the Navy tried to clear their lines. The game was relatively even throughout with both coaches and spectators urging their players on from the side. The fixture quickly grew into a typical Inter-service game, with no quarter asked or given. Possession passed from one team to the other and the goals began to flow but ultimately, the Army had the better quality throughout their squad and their tactical substitutions meant that every player had more rest time. At the final whistle the fixture finished Army 4 – Navy 3. Army goals (not including the OG) from WO2 Neil Reilly, SSgt Ebrima Jallow, Sgt Matt Radley. An end-to-end game that had everything you'd want from an IS Fixture.

The final fixture of the competition saw the Army, hosted by the RAF at The New Saints FC in Oswestry on 29 Mar 23. A great ground with a small but voluble crowd that added real value to what was the winner takes all fixture. The game began pretty even and the tension was etched across every player's face as the game began to develop. Ultimately, the Army struck first with a cracking effort from SSgt Kev Cameron who struck from inside the box to open the scoring. This gave the Army some serious impetus and they began to play with a tempo the RAF could not compete with. Wave after wave of Army attacks added significant pressure on the RAF defence and once again, they caved with yet another strike from Sgt Matt Radley, who had now scored in three out of four matches for the Army. The Army managed to fashion another goal through Sgt M Marriot, to take us in 3-0 up at Half Time. There was more to come.



The second half started with further pressure from the Army and what could only be described as some bickering amongst the opposition, which gave the impression that they were done and the Army could relax. The game lost much of its momentum and for the next 20 minutes it was a quiet affair. Then the RAF Scored in the 71st minute and the whole game changed. All at once it became a die for the cause event for the RAF, who threw everything they had at the Army, then they scored again, what was a walk through the last 20 minutes for the Army became a nightmare. Eventually they began to compose themselves with a bank of 4 and 4 blocking the RAF's efforts to break through for a third time. One last chance nearly ripped the cup from the Army's hands as a corner was headed goal wards and the Army Keeper tipped it onto the bar and over. The whistle went immediately and the Army became the first IS Masters' Champions aptly named the Major Billy Thomson Trophy in recognition of Billy who stepped down as Army FA Secretary in 2022 after 21 years in the post.

EMG23

With the IS Competition over, focus quickly shifted back to EMG23. With three months to go and players pulling out almost daily, the management team were working hard to find suitable replacements, who could perform at this level. The background management activity continued unabated and the Coach transport, Kit, Hotel, flights, insurance, feeding, pre departure accommodation, and everything else that needed to be delivered, were being swept up frantically as we grabbed our last two remaining players and headed for Tampere.

Tampere is a beautiful city, a marvel of forests, lakes and a bustling city of 226,000 people who all speak English and engage whenever they can.

DAY 1

The first recce took us to the Football event's site, which was well put together and prepared for the competition. We were then told that a number of sides had pulled out and their only option was to leave the over 60's teams to play between



themselves and everyone else would go into the 35/40/45/50/55 group (a total of 6) and then play a round robin with the top two moving into the Final and 3rd and 4th would play off for bronze. This gave us a slight advantage as we played an Australian team of mostly 50 to 60 first. They gave a thoroughly good account of themselves and worked incredibly hard to compete but ultimately the Army walked away with a significant win (which I won't expose as it's ungentlemanly to do). After our game we did get an opportunity to watch, what would turn out to be our nearest rivals Ilves FC of Tampere. An ex-Pro over 35 side with a strong reputation, who looked to be a capable outfit.

DAY 2

We identified our next fixture 1530, in the heat of an afternoon of relentless sun. We were matched against a Brazilian side called Larancia Mechanica Brasil, they had played Ilves the previous day and been significantly beaten. Under the tutelage of Capt Joe Collins, the Army Coach, the team had been set up specifically to dominate possession, retain the ball and wait for opportunities to exploit errors, in order to provide the best chances of getting into scoring positions. It worked perfectly from the start, after three minutes of play, the Army took control of the ball and worked an opportunity down the right to cross, where Sgt Mo Morris headed in to score 1-0. Nine minutes later, the Army nicked the ball back from Brasil and again escaped down the right, where SSgt Steve Ward struck the ball across the box and the defenders trying to clear, put it through their own net 2-0. Three minutes later through the same route Sgt Rory Barker outpaced the defenders and delivered the across the box for the 3rd time and SSgt Colin McCabe tapped in from six yards. On 27 mins, WO2 Griff Griffiths picked up the ball 30 yards out and drove into the penalty area, beating 3 players to slip the ball past the hapless Keeper. Half Time 4-0 GAME OVER (you would think).

The Army came out in the 2nd half to what was already a dead rubber, 4-0 up was surely enough if we retained possession. The Brasil side had different ideas, they worked hard down the right in the 53rd minute and a useful ball was struck into the penalty area where an unlucky WO2 Rizza was unsighted, when he swung to clear the ball, a player on his blind side, stepped across and was caught by his attempted clearance, Penalty Brasil, scored despite the desperate effort of the Army's Keeper Lt Col Tony Frank, who managed to get a hand on

it. 4-1. This buoyed the Brasil Team into action and within four minutes they had scored again, a throw from the left was controlled on the edge of the box and struck with power into the net despite another great effort by the Army Keeper 4-2. This was now leadership time and the Captain, Maj Kev Haley calmed his players and then quickly won back control of the ball which they pretty much kept for the remaining 25 minutes. The match was clearly over, when Sgt Rory Barker closed it down with a great run from the halfway line into the box to score. Final Score Brasil 2 Army Masters' 5. This left two fixtures to play, both against the same team, Ilves of Tampere, our round robin game Friday and the Final on Saturday.

FRIDAY came and Ilves FC turned up with some notable absences from the first match we had watched back on Tuesday. All of a sudden we are smelling conspiracy theories, were they going to run us ragged on Friday and swap their entire team on Saturday with the fresh players. I asked the Tournament Director, who confessed it was within the rules as they had registered 30 players for the tournament. Suffice to say we were not happy, but rules are rules and we put it behind us and set about them from the Kick Off. They could not match us for pace and power and were clearly not fit enough. On 14 Mins Maj Kev Haley burst into the box and was brought down, Penalty, scored Haley. 1-0. The game settled for a short time until 20 mins in, the Army having not learned from the Brazilian 2nd goal, allowed Ilves to use the same set piece to equalise. 2 mins later, Barker breaks away and puts the Army back in front. 2-1 This sucked the life out of the Ilves Players and the game continued to see the Army dominating possession and play. On 36 mins, Cpl Daz Clarke scores with a great volleyed strike and on 40 mins SSgt Matt Glass, smashes a right foot shot past the hapless Keeper. No further action as the Army played keep ball through to the Final Whistle. Bring on Tomorrow.

THE FINAL

Final Day came, looked like rain. Good for us or good for them? As suspected, there were 11 changes to the team of the previous day. Secretly though, we were all confident, we'd discussed it as a team during the warmup and were quietly confident. The game started and was cagey at first, Army keeping possession and moving the ball and opposition around the pitch probing for opportunity, after 9 mins, SSgt 'Jockey' Ward linked up with SSgt Matt Glass to engineer an

opportunity down the right, 'Jockey' beats his man and crosses for Sgt Rory Barker to rise and head the ball into the net. 1-0. The next 16 minutes are dominated by the Army's ability to keep possession and remain patient. Finally, an option appears and after a cleared header, Maj Kev Haley hit a left footed volley from the edge of the box which found its way in off of the post. Half Time 2-0 Army .

The game restarted and immediately the Army are back in possession, SSgt Ebrima Jallow stays high, but onside and receives the ball on the run, with only the keeper to beat, he passes it neatly round the Goalie and turns away to his roaring teammates. 3-0. From here it's all about controlling the ball and keeping it. A long period of play passes with Ilves struggling to close us down or gain possession. Eventually on 47 mins, the Army see an opportunity as SSgt Matt Glass cuts in from the right and drills a shot past the keeper from 18 yards.3-0.

2 minutes later Sgt Mo Morris scores the Army's 5th and 4 mins after that SSgt Matt Glass gets his second of the day, to make it 6-0. The last few minutes are spent with the ball securely in Army possession.

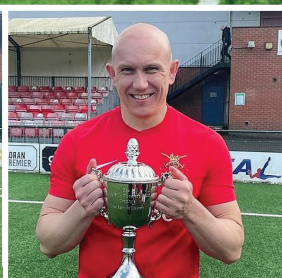
**World Champions, European Champions,
Inter Service Champions.**

**What a great experience this year and a
tremendous effort from all the players and staff
throughout this season.**

R A Bell MBE

Lt Col

Army Masters' Football





Yet again we have enjoyed some excellent women's football this season and despite the demands of Regimental life, the Corps managed to play 18 of the 24 fixtures across the two leagues. Due to both busy footballing and regimental calendars, we do not reschedule matches if a Corps cannot field a team and any side who cannot play will cede a 2-0 win to their opponent. Results like this can change a season and underlines why the relationship and support of the players CoCs and Corps Committee is so key. Due to the success last year, we decided to again hold all four final league fixtures on the same day and in the same location.

This time Harborough Town FC were our excellent hosts and the day did not disappoint. The Club staff made us feel so welcome and facilities were great but it was definitely the quality of the football which stole the show, all four matches were competitive, hard fought and passionate with the results especially affecting League One as they determined who lifted the trophy and who was relegated to League Two.

We were again honoured to have Cpl Channing Day's parents, Rosemary and Leslie, and best friend WO1 Jody Mardling AGC (SPS) in attendance to present the Cpl Channing Day League One trophy and our Sponsors Rep, Grant Martin - F5, who presented the Lily Parr League Two Trophy.

In addition, we were also honoured to host Maj Gen Darren Crook, Maj Gen Aidan Smyth and Brig Simon Stockley who all commented on the level and intensity of the football matches.

The league competitions are covered in more detail later in the review but I would like to congratulate the REME on winning League One and the AMS on winning League two and gaining promotion.

I would also like to extend my commiserations to the AGC who were relegated to League Two. Lastly, I would like to congratulate the AGC on retaining the Edwards Cup in a thrilling match which went to extra time against the RLC, the weather was fantastic and it was great to see a good crowd there to witness some superb football being played.

Cirencester Town hosted us impeccably again and it was fantastic to have John Edwards in attendance to present his trophy and Player of the Match award to Capt Krissy Wright AGC (SPS), whose hat-trick secured the victory. We still need to work on developing grassroots football at Unit level which remains a challenge due to the lack of numbers within Units in a lot of locations, however my Committee has welcomed SSgt 'Kempy' Kemp on board this season to continue to drive the initiative which is looking at the formation of Garrison teams amongst other things.

Both the Army Snr and Dev teams have had a good season which is covered later on in the report. The build up to the Inter-Services went well with both teams yet again displaying a fantastic and joint work ethic however unfortunately the competition did not go our way again this year but our opposition were fantastic and lessons have been learnt to take forward to next season.

On competition of the Inter-Services the new Head Coach took over the reins following Sgt Lee Barry's move to the US to coach football, we wish him all the best and know that he will be a great success. WO2 Ryan McDowell (Snr Team Hd Coach) and Sgt Craig Parker (Dev Team Hd Coach) are now fully immersed in their new roles and have already made a very positive impact. I look forward to the Army Talent Week, our participation in the Southern Counties League and the Inter-Services where I am confident we will reverse the results.

This season our Dev and Res teams were also fortunate to conduct a joint Defence Engagement Tour to the Balkans which was a complete success. The team faced some high level opposition which resulted in some very tough games but they were hosted impeccably throughout the visit and a full tour brief is contained within this document.

The other massive positive from the tour has been the strengthening of the relationship with the Army Women's Reserve and I am really pleased to announce that Capt Laura Alldritt now sits on my Committee as the Res Rep which is fantastic news.

Our beautiful game thrives on Sponsorship and this season we were fortunate enough to welcome F5 on board for the next three years. I am really grateful for their support and would like to thank F5 and their representative, Grant Martin, for being so involved and seamlessly becoming one of our 'Team'. It has been fantastic to have Grant at so many of the matches this season and I would like to personally thank him for helping to make that relationship so special, I look forward to sharing the delights of Inter-Corps football with him again next season.

Finally, I would like to say a massive thank you to Maj Mark Normanton RLC who has now left his role of Director of Women's Football as he is due to retire shortly. Mark has been a major player within RLC and Army football for a long time, he is a keen supporter of the women's game and throughout his time has striven to develop the game and provide opportunities for players. He continues to organise competitions in his role within LONDIST and remains a key ally of the women's game. A massive thank you from us all Mark for all you have done.

Lt Col Chloe Plimmer-Sayce RE
Trustee, Women's Football





ARMY WOMEN'S SENIOR AND DEVELOPMENT 22/23 SEASON

The season, for both teams, started in late September 22 with the Trials Week in Aldershot. Several players were identified for both squads and the week culminated with a fixture against Moneyfields for the Senior Team and Swindon Town for the Development Team. Hugely contested games saw the representative sides put to the test against well-developed teams.

October saw both teams come together working collectively on a Defence Engagement with Tottenham Hotspur Women's Team. This involved the teams going to Sandhurst, listening to briefs from guest speakers and working on physical sessions with the WSL side. The presented the team with fostering enduring relationships but also to collaboratively work towards further opportunities. Once this was complete the group headed to Aldershot to join collective sessions with the Tottenham Coaches. Following this both teams headed back to Aldershot in November for another joint camp by the Representative Sides.

November quickly followed with both teams playing Southampton Women (Southampton Won 10-0) and Salisbury Women (Army Won 10-0).

Both games were played in horrendous weather after a glorious few days of training. The contest was fierce and saw both teams come away with learning opportunities to aid development ready for the Inter Services later in the new year.

December saw a break in the programme where the players were able to rest and recuperate after Corps Fixtures and previously arranged fixtures were cancelled by opposition at the last minute.

February was an ideal opportunity for the teams to come together with the Army Women's Reserve for a competitive fixture in Aldershot. As always, the game was hugely contested and saw the Regular Side win 2-1. This was an improvement from the previous year when they were beaten by the Reserves 2-0.

INTER SERVICES

This year's competition started with the Navy at Aldershot Town. The game started with the Army being up against it going down 3-0 within the first 22 mins. A fight back was on the cards with Cpl Imogen Fisher scoring not long before half time. Following the break, the Army scored again with Imogen before the Navy eventually won 5-2

leaving it a tall ask to beat the RAF by 4 clear goals to win the Inter Services.

A week later the RAF hosted the Army at Leek Town and within 15 mins and the comeback was on. The game ran away quickly and ultimately saw the RAF win and retain the title of Inter Service Champions. Both games were a revelation for the team and left something to consider going forward. This was the last game for Sgt Lee Barry as Manager before heading off to America to coach and W02 Ryan McDowell was due to take over the team for the next campaign

Both games were hugely contested and unfortunately the Army were unsuccessful in the pursuit of the trophy. Highlights were the inclusion of the Amazon players in the Senior Squad (6 in total) for the Inter Services. This bodes well for the development of Army Football as well as going forward into the new season.

HIGHLIGHTS

Throughout the season various players and staff have developed themselves both personally and professionally. SSgt Yvette Kemp and Rfn Sinead Bushell have both completed their Referees course and assisted during the Women's Sixes. Cpl Imogen Fisher and Bdr Anna Birtwistle have both passed their All Arms PTI course. Cpl Lois Jacobs has participated in the Representative Party at the Women's FA Cup Final, between Manchester United and Chelsea. A massive well done to all of them for their time and effort in assisting and developing themselves for the good of the Women's Game.

W02 Ryan McDowell
Head Coach Snr Team.



**WOMEN
INTER SERVICES
RAF v ARMY**



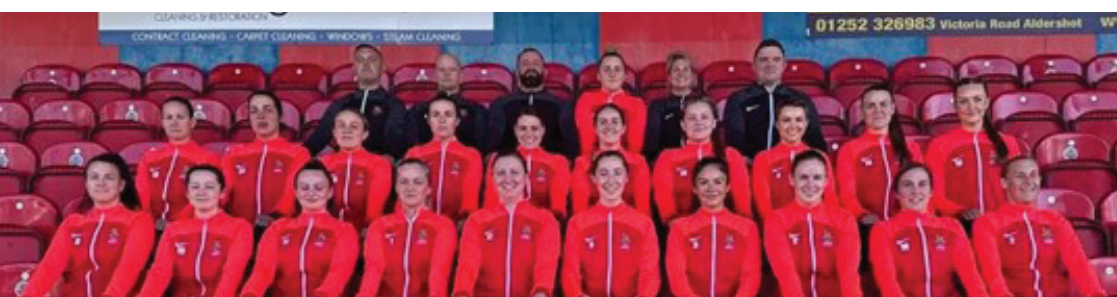
**WOMEN
INTER SERVICES
ARMY v RN**



**WOMEN
INTER SERVICES
RAF v RN**



**WOMEN'S
INTER SERVICE PROGRAMME
ARMY v ROYAL NAVY
22 MARCH 2023**





The Army Football Association (AFA) was invited to send 25 participants to the Western Balkans (WB) as part of a Defence Engagement (DE) initiative over 3 – 16 Jun 23, to promote women in sport. This was a unique opportunity offered to Regular and Reserve soldiers to visit five countries across the region, linking with Defence Attaches to promote women in sport and the presence of the British Army with NATO allies.

During the visit, the group visited community projects in towns and cities across Serbia, Bosnia & Herzegovina (BiH), Montenegro, Albania, and North Macedonia, all aimed at developing sport for all; women's sport, women in Defence and sport for those with disabilities. Each project displayed the absolute best of how sport can build bridges and reduce barriers, irrelevant of language, ability, gender, or race.

In Belgrade, the Army Women's Football Team (AWFT) and coaches were greeted with smiles and excitement when they visited the Evo Ruka education project for young people with extensive Special Education Needs who were often unable to access regular education provision. Staff and players played football and coached some of the students and support staff with ideas that could be used in their sports programme. The next day the team played Zfk Sloga Zumen Women and came away with a very credible 1-1 draw.

The next leg of the trip took the team to Sarajevo where they were pitted against a well-coached and drilled BiH women's team who had been coached four years previously by some of the current visiting AWFT players. It was great for them to see how football in BiH had progressed, with a reciprocal visit by the BiH Armed Forces team discussed. Prior to the game the AWFT coached

40 school children who were enthusiastic and full of energy, delighted to be able to watch the BiH Armed Forces beat the British Army on home soil. An invitation to speak to the staff and players of FK Sarajevo followed; 21 times National Leagues Champions and Champions League regulars with a number of international players, overseen by the teams coach, Samira Hurem, who double hats as the National team coach also. It gave an excellent insight into the development of women's football in BiH that has many similarities to the historical barriers faced by women footballers in the UK. A walking tour of Sarajevo rounded off the visit which left everyone speechless with the breadth of history and culture that the city has to offer. A poignant moment for a member of the tour who was deployed to the Balkans on Op GRAPPLE.

The team then moved to the Fudbalski Savez Stadium in Podgorica and delivered coaching sessions to groups of young players from many ethnic minority groups who are often isolated from mainstream sport in Montenegro. This was another fantastic evening for all concerned and led up to the AWFT playing professional team, FK Ekonomist from the Montenegro National League. A tough game with the hosts fielding a fresh XI in the second half before all staff and players enjoyed some local hospitality and some well-earned rest in a beautiful city.

The team then travelled south to Tirana and were able to train at the Albanian FA Headquarters which started with glorious sunshine and soon descended into a thunderstorm but again, it was all smiles as players from local teams trained alongside the AWFT including more Albanian national team players. Later that day the team attended an event promoting and supporting Women in Uniform, an initiative aimed at promoting the role of women in the Armed Forces and civil authorities. We were joined by players from FK Villaznia who had progressed through the Champions League rounds to play high calibre opposition such as Paris St Germain, Chelsea, and Real Madrid. Players from other Albanian teams also joined the event to share stories on developing women's sport.

The following day the AWFT played FK Partizani Tirana, who finished top four in the professional league in Albania and were a good match for the AWFT. Again, the hosts fielded a fresh XI in the second half to really test the AWFT. From Tirana, the team moved to Skopje and a second game in less than 20hrs against the Macedonia National team, who have also played the England Lionesses

in recent months in World Cup qualification and were preparing for more Nations League games. A tired AWFT, patched up with tape, gave one of their best performances of the trip. The opponents again fielded a completely new XI in the second half to really test the AWFT. Later the same day the team were guests of the British Embassy at the King's birthday celebrations and to commemorate the 30yr anniversary of cooperation of Britain and Macedonia.

All staff and players were full of praise for their hosts in each country and many are already planning to return to their units to highlight the fantastic opportunities the Western Balkans has for Adventurous Training, STTT and longer deployments. The support from Embassy staff and Defence Attaches in each region really displayed the opportunities and supportive relationships that exist between the military and their local counterparts in the Western Balkans.

This was the first visit for most of the group to this part of the world and provided a rich and valuable experience both in terms of history and sport, but also how each member can enhance the experience of sport for those we work with.

Lt Jim Hepworth RE

Tp Comd
ATR (G)

ALBANIA VISIT



**BOSNIA/
HERZEGOVINA
MEDIA**



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The 2022/23 season has once again displayed Corps football at its finest. The dedication of staff, players, and officials to ensure the season is successful is second to none and a huge thank you goes out for their efforts. Corps football continues to make leaps forward and the introduction of Holts Military Banking as sponsors for the next few seasons has helped elevate the first rung of representative football on to new plains. Holts have been huge supporters of our endeavours and were in attendance to present the Woolwich Cup at our blue-ribbon event. Many thanks to Jules and the team.

DIVISION 1

A fiercely competitive Division 1 got underway in September, reigning champions the Royal Engineers were hoping to win back-to-back league titles, while the Woolwich Cup champions REME were hoping to translate cup success to the league. One thing was clear at the start of the season it was going to be yet another cracking year with all teams having a shot at the title.

The Royal Signals excellent start to the season saw the club top the table after the first few fixtures. REME despite success in the QUADS had found themselves continuing the theme of last year with another slow start. As the season progressed the Royal Engineers just like last season after a steady start picked up a strong run of form which kept constant pressure on the league leaders.

The Royal Signals however did not let up and eventually won the league with a game to spare finishing four points above second place. A late purple patch for the Royal Logistic Corps showed

promising signs for next season while, the REME failed to recover from their slow start and were relegated to Division 2. Throughout the season the Royal Army Physical Training Corps and Royal Artillery battled to avoid the play off, but once again the Royal Artillery found themselves navigating the fixture and came out on top defeating the Adjutant General's Corps in a tightly contested fixture.

TABLE	P	W	D	L	GD	PTS
C- Royal Signals	10	7	2	1	24	23
Royal Engineers	10	5	4	1	12	19
RLC	10	3	3	4	2	12
RAPTC	10	2	4	4	-11	10

*Royal Artillery	10	3	1	6	-15	10
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R- REME	10	1	4	5	-12	7
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DIVISION 2

Division 2 was poised to be an exciting season, the Infantry, after a disappointing campaign the year before looked to return to winning ways and bounce back up to Division 1. While the Royal Armoured Corps who narrowly missed out on promotion last season in the play off fixture were hopeful of going one better this year and securing promotion to the top flight.

It was the Infantry who started the season sharpest and were clear league leaders at the halfway stage, winning all but one of their fixtures when they were held to a draw by the Intelligence Corps. The Royal Armoured Corps started well but operational commitments had impacted their campaign. Steady starts to the season for both Adjutant General's Corps and Intelligence Corps saw them locked in a tight battle for the play off place.

The second half of the season saw much of the same in Division 2, the Infantry maintained their strong grip on the league table finishing the season undefeated going on to win their remaining league fixtures, a remarkable achievement.

The Intelligence Corps and the Adjutant General's Corps battle for the play off place went down to the last day where the Intelligence Corps knew a point against the Infantry would be enough but unfortunately it wasn't to be their day and the Infantry ran out winners. The Adjutant General's Corps narrowly missed out on promotion in the play off hosted at Whitchurch United.

TABLE	P	W	D	L	GD	PTS
C- Infantry	10	9	1	0	23	28
*AGC	10	6	0	4	8	18
Int Corps	10	5	1	4	-2	16
AAC	10	4	0	6	-1	12
RAC	10	2	1	7	-10	7
AMS	10	2	1	7	-18	7

*Play Off Final- Royal Artillery 1-0 AGC



WOOLWICH CHALLENGE CUP

The Woolwich Challenge Cup continues to grow in prestige year on year since its introduction in 2007. Last year's champions REME were looking to defend their crown. It was set to be another excellent tournament, knockout football brings out the best in every team.

The first round saw the defending champions REME crash out losing to the Royal Artillery, while the Adjutant General's Corps, Royal Army Physical Training Corps and Royal Engineers were also successful, meaning they joined the Intelligence Corps, Royal Signals and Army Medical Service in the next round.

In the Quarter Finals the Royal Logistic Corps put on a dominant performance to cruise into the semi finals while in perhaps the tie of the round the Royal Army Physical Training Corps defeated the Adjutant General's Corps on penalties after an exciting 3-3 draw. The Royal Signals and Royal Engineers made up the final four after both securing wins.

The semi finals produced two excellent matches, The Royal Signals were too much for the Royal Army Physical Training Corps and booked their place in the final with a convincing win. A much tighter affair saw the Royal Logistic Corps and Royal Engineers lock horns with the Royal Logistic Corps winning 4-2 to make the final for the second year running.

The setting for this year's final was the VBS Community Stadium home of Sutton Utd who currently play in the Football League 2. Flying out of the blocks in the first half the Royal Logistics Corps raced into the lead and were looking comfortable at half time. After the break the Royal Signals looked to get back into the game but on the night the Royal Logistic Corps just had to much for them and the game finished 4-1 to the Royal Logistic Corps crowning them Woolwich Cup winners 2022/23.



**WOOLWICH
CUP FINAL**

**WOOLWICH CUP FINAL
PROGRAMME
23 MAY 2023**



 **SCAN ME**



 **SCAN ME**





WHY THE MCBEAN TROPHY IS SO SPECIAL

By Lt Col Simon Smith

I've been in the Army for almost 25 years and football, the beautiful game, has been a significant part of my military career, literally from the very first day as a fresh faced 19-year-old Troop Commander, playing with my Squadron and then for the Regiment in my first week in the job. The opportunity for every background and ability level to come together, where your rank doesn't matter on the pitch and the lifelong friendships it generates remain extremely special. Football has a rich history in the British Army, but my focus is on my own cap badge, the Royal Corps of Signals and specifically the latest McBean Trophy Final.

It is an absolute privilege to continue to be part of this amazing sport in so many different ways. I didn't make it to the highest levels as a player (due to a distinct lack of ability) but I'm lucky to play for the Army Masters, support the development of Army grass roots football as the Chairperson of Royal Signals Football and, as a Commanding Officer, support my own Unit, 30th Signal Regiment.

The key competition in the Royal Signals calendar is the McBean Trophy (previously known as the Signaller Cup). It is a simple knockout event featuring all units from across the Royal Signals and is played out over the course of the season. It sums up everything about Army sport; the ethos, the team spirit and ultimately the desire to win. It remains an important part of my life and is named after a Corps footballing legend, Major Tony McBean who sadly passed away some 6 years ago. Tony was a friend to all, a fierce competitor but always ensured he demonstrated the highest levels of sportsmanship both on and off the pitch.

Renaming the competition in his honour was an easy decision to make and it is great to be able to welcome his wife Claire and daughters Jess and Becca back each year. To continue his legacy is essential, to be able to play for a Trophy in his name is special and to have the chance of winning it amazing.

Thankfully that is exactly what my Unit, 30th Signal Regiment, did on Thursday 1 June at Stafford Town FC. After the annual Royal Signals Veterans Vs First XI game, bringing together our retired footballing family, the main event – the McBean Trophy Final – was played in front of a crowd of 150+. The game featured the 2nd Signal Regiment and 30th Signal Regiment, and after a tight 1-1 draw over 120 minutes penalties would decide the result. A missed 4th penalty and a saved 5th was the difference between the two sides and 30 Signal Regiment were crowned champions! As an ex-goalkeeper, Tony would have been proud of the result and the 'cat' in the nets who received the Person of the Match award, making two vital saves during the game and saving the final spot kick. The Person of the Match is awarded a goalkeeper's top, one of Tony's from his playing days and each successful winner since his passing now has their name sewn into the shirt – a great legacy. The post-match celebrations were as enthusiastic as you'd expect, and it remains clear that football is so much more than just a game!



SCAN ME



ROYAL SIGNALS -
MCBEAN TROPHY



INTRODUCTION

The greatest game in the world is ever evolving. Whether it be changes to its Laws, the tactics applied, or societal influences, football does not stand still. In this vein and in seeking to support the broadest Army Football community, the Development strand of our game is changing. Yet whilst we must be adaptable with our development methods for growing the game, our bedrock remains in serving all levels of Army Football players, coaches, and facilitators.

- Increased participation with more formats of the game which are widely accessible (including Futsal, Small-Sided-Games, Walking Football and Master's events).
- Coach education relevant to the requirements of the adult 11 v 11 game at Unit, Corps and Representative level.
- Support and mentoring of new coaches incorporating 11 v 11 and other formats; with positive action to enhance diversity and engage our wider communities.

ARMY FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Army Football Development (AFD) seeks to create an environment for learning. The values and requirements of our football people must be embedded in this construct. To this end an AFD Committee has been established with regional representatives garnering the views of the football community (at time of writing a Northern Regional Lead is still available). This should influence what and how our future game is delivered, as well as enabling regionally based events.

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Our initiatives are bound with other County FAs. This was evident during the FA's National Learning Conference earlier this year. The idea of personalising learning from a landscape of delivery options, highlighted opportunities in having a flexible approach to development. Traditional type courses can hone a coach's practical ability on the grass, whilst online webinars and CPD events with suitable topics can help people reflect on what type of coach they would like to be. The aspiration is to bring this all together with a Football Development Conference in May 2024.

A COACH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

There is no football without players. Facilitators are key to enabling the game. Though in terms of the development of all football participants, coaches are pivotal.

Ideas have been explored as to how we can help coaches and what to commit to for the most effective results. Going forward this requires a collaborative approach, creating an environment where the benefits of sharing ideas is captured. We must be creative with establishing a package of coaching support.

Our Football Development Manager, Steve Stone, continues to provide opportunities through UKAF UEFA C and UEFA B courses; will facilitate suitable support and mentoring where requested; and will lead on CPD events (coming up in September and November 23, and March 24).

FUTSAL

The game of futsal could be likened to the street football some may have played in their youth. Players require great speed of thought and coaches an ability to prepare their teams effectively.

Under the recently constructed 'England Futsal' the sport could be establishing a basis for a position like it holds in more successful footballing nations such as Brazil, Spain and Argentina. We are fortunate with the facilities across many Army sites to enable the football community to experiment with the game.

A Futsal Lead position is available and will be connected to the AFD Committee; the growth of the sport may be challenging though its opportunities could be the most expansive for AFD.



Yours in football (and futsal),
Jim Fallon



OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE THROUGH HQ ARMY SPORT FOR SERVING MEMBERS OF THE REGULAR ARMY AND THE ARMY RESERVE. PERSONNEL TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING FROM ARMY SPORT'S STATEMENT OF TRAINING REGULATIONS (SOTR SCHEME).



 **SCAN ME**

Only those qualifications delivered or recognised by the respective sport's National Governing Body (NGB) will be eligible – for the Army Football Association that is the Football Association:

Where a pre-requisite qualification is necessary to achieve a coaching, officiating or safety-related qualification, then the pre-requisite qualification could also be funded, examples include:

1. Safeguarding & Child Protection qualifications.
2. First Aid qualifications.
3. Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Checks

SOTR funding for sports qualifications must only be used where the individual is expected to provide a minimum of two seasons' return of service by utilising the qualification in the conduct of sport at Army, Corps or Unit level.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
PLEASE VISIT:**



 **SCAN ME**



INTER CORPS LEAGUE

The 2022/23 season saw the second iteration of the 2-tier league system and another year of quality and progressive sporting challenge and competition. With 8 teams across the different Corps making up The Cpl Channing Day and the Lily Parr League there was truly all to play for in the respective battles to avoid relegation and achieve promotion.

The eight major Corps teams have been reaping the benefits of increasing collaboration with soldiers hailing from smaller cap-badges; including the RAPTC, CAMUS, Infantry and Cavalry Regiments. All players sharing their passion for the sport, adding diversity and strength to the respective teams they represent.

It was unfortunate that the tempo and operational commitments of the Army this season had a disruptive effect across both leagues. With a number of walkovers (including the cup), it was an albeit disappointing reminder of the utterly important roles the soldiers play across the Army. As the player availability troubled fixtures throughout, it was at the core of some of the unexpected results, keeping the competition alive.

Despite insufficient numbers for the Intelligence Corps to field a team in their Edwards Cup Quarter Final against the REME, the opportunity was seized to integrate the players and hold a friendly fixture. The day may not have resulted in any true competition, but it was a worthy training opportunity, extending relations and fully enjoyable for all involved.

Several close fought games in League 1 saw some 9 and 10 goal score lines, alongside League 2 racking up some record worthy numbers. In total there were 107 goals scored across the 8 teams this season; a real testament to the lively and clever attacking play that was so prominent throughout.

The Blue-Ribbon event for the season was the League Final, with all four fixtures hosted at Harborough Town FC. Some brilliant facilities, combined with high quality coordination brought players, management, committee, and supporters together for a real show of sporting excellence. The first kick off of the day saw the winners of both leagues decided. An intense League 1 battle between the RLC and REME saw the latter return from 2-0 down in the final 25 minutes, to secure a 3-3 draw and snatch victory in the league on goals scored. In League 2 the AMS were hunting for another high scoring victory, but the final score line of 2-0 was more than enough to seal the deal. Into the second fixtures of the day the AGC needed a substantial victory to save themselves from relegation against the Engineers. Unfortunately, the 3-1 victory was not enough and the Royal Engineers remain in League 1 for another season.

The 22/23 season was not just a success on the UK pitches. The Royal Artillery and the Royal Logistic Corps both began their season in Lisbon, Portugal playing teams and receiving coaching with the infamous Benfica. The Intelligence Corps Women had three fixtures in San Francisco, USA and the Royal Signals ventured to Canada, where they played four competitive international fixtures. All teams absorbing invaluable opportunity and leaving the stamp of British Army Football across the world.

CPL CHANNING DAY WOMENS CORPS LEAGUE DIVISION 1

After narrowly retaining their position in the Corporal Channing Day League at the close of the 2021/22 season, the REME team were desperate to re-establish themselves and leave their mark on the Army FA. The start of the season brought with it a new Secretary and assistant coach, whilst the steadfast keeper had to step back through injury. A shaky start saw the team losing 3-1 to the RLC at home, before they found their flow and began to deliver goals and clock some points in the table.

As with all other teams in the league, individual availability added consistent challenge for the REME. However, remaining undeterred, and with a core of senior players continuing to be employed at their Phase 2 establishment, a continual flow of recruitment allowed them to keep growing their squad. Some of the new girls establishing themselves as permanent fixtures in the team from the off.

Towards the end of the season the homogeneity was restored as the long-term goalkeeper Katie O'Brien returned from injury in time for February's

home fixture against the AGC. The game was hard fought and two late goals from the AGC saw the 10-goal battle end at 5-5: taking the league title down to the final fixture.

The tense final saw the team, captained by Jemma Dinning, return from 2-0 down to conclude at 3-3 and the REME rained victorious in the League 10 years after their last title in the 2012/13 season. With plans already in motion to build on this season's success, it can be expected that the REME will be bringing the fight to the top league again in the 23/24 season.

TABLE	P	W	D	L	GD	PTS
C- REME	6	3	2	1	4	11
RLC	6	3	2	1	4	11
ROYAL ENGINEERS	6	1	2	3	-3	5
R AGC	6	1	2	3	-5	5





LILY PARR WOMENS CORPS LEAGUE DIVISION 2

The season opened with a 9-3 score line for the AMS at home to the Royal Artillery and from the outset their aspiration to win the league and return to the top tier was set and clear. Amongst their series of impressive score lines this year the team clocked an 11-0 victory before closing the season with 27 goals from just 4 fixtures (*2 walkovers).

The team only saw one dip in an otherwise expertly strong season. An unfortunate need to concede a technical victory to the Royal Signals in their second fixture meant a 2-0 loss was awarded. The return to play after this was formidable and the team continued to deliver high quality football for the remainder of the season.

At the League Final the team just needed a draw or win to seal victory in the league and promote back to the top. A 2-0 final score against the Intelligence Corps was enough, but for the team itself they would have liked to see a greater victory after swathes of attempts during the 90 minutes.

In a successful season credit must be directed towards the tireless efforts of Sgt Hayley Sloan. Throughout the season she single-handedly delivered in the roles of Secretary, Treasurer and Management, her output bringing together the girls across the AMS to compete for success. Competently and brilliantly supported by the Team Captain, Sgt Jade Ives the combined effort deserves credit from beyond their own Corps. Moving forward Sgt Sloan is poised to return to play in the coming season and as such the AMS are looking to build their coaching and management team ready for the Corporal Channing Day League 23/24 season.

TABLE	P	W	D	L	GD	PTS
P – AMS	6	5	0	1	25	15
Royal Signals	6	3	2	1	5	11
Royal Artillery	6	1	2	3	-9	5
Int Corps	6	1	0	5	-21	3



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EDWARDS CUP FINAL AGC VS RLC

On the 24 May 23, the Adjutant Generals Corp (AGC) won their third consecutive Edwards Cup against a well organised Royal Logistics Corp (RLC). The game took place after a disappointing end to the league season for both teams – with the AGC relegated to the Lily Parr league by one goal and the RLC missing out on the Channing Day league title by the same margin! Both teams therefore had something to prove.

On route to the final, the AGC beat both the Royal Artillery (RA) and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME).

The final itself proved to be a tightly contested game throughout with both teams battling through the heat into extra time. The AGC arrived at the final with a strong squad and were confident following some excellent training sessions and despite the disappointment following the final league result, were keen to set a record of winning the Edwards Cup for a third year in a row.

An early goal by the RLC rocked the AGC to start and allowed the RLC to set the tempo early on. The AGC, although well organised, struggled to gain any momentum in the opening third and chances were not taken. Keeping their composure and the organisation, the breakthrough came just before half time, when a corner allowed LCpl Forrest-Blake to equalise with a terrific header and brought the AGC back into it after some sustained pressure.

Half time allowed for some formation changes for the AGC, and Capt Krissy Wright was moved from right back into a more advanced forward position. Despite the changes, the RLC came out the quicker of the two for the second half, with the AGC once again conceding early into the half with a second goal by the RLC - allowing them to reclaim the lead following a defensive mix up. The AGC, not being deterred, regrouped, and started to press forward – with Capt Krissy Wright latching onto a brilliant through ball from Cpl Cooke to round the goalkeeper and equalise levelling the game at two all.



Both teams looked capable of finishing the game in the 90 minutes, with chances for both sides. But the now well-matched game moved into extra time. This challenged all players involved given the heat with the toll of a heavy season now showing. Both teams continued to press, not wanting to end with the roulette of penalties and the game became stretched with neither team sitting back. It was the AGC that broke the deadlock, with Capt Krissy Wright again chasing down a long ball, lobbing the RLC goalkeeper to make the score 3-2 to the AGC. Not one to leave things to chance, Capt Krissy Wright completed her hat trick following some intricate play down the AGCs left hand side by LCpl Appleyard – making the score 4-2. The RLC did not give up, but the AGC controlled the last half of extra time, with little to trouble the soon to be crowned three cup champions.

The classic comeback win against a tough RLC side reflected the effort, determination, skill and capabilities of the AGC squad and ensured the AGC retained the Edwards Cup for the

third year in a row – with the trophy lifted by Sgt Portas-Rooney – ending the season on a high that the team and all involved deserved following a complex and testing season.

Capt Kristina Wright
Manager AGC (W)



**EDWARDS
CUP FINAL**



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23 MAY 2023



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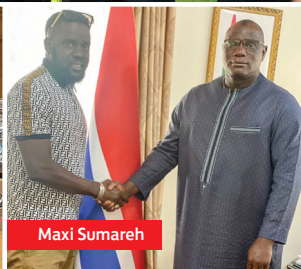
Calberth Charles



David Johnston



Jenny Payne



Maxi Sumareh



Yvette Kemp



Capt Lakh Gurung

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

One of the criteria that we must achieve as a mandatory task set by the Football Association is to complete the Preliminary Stage of the UK Equality Standard by the end of the 2023/24 season.

Led by Lt Col Jill Rogers MBE (who has recently stepped down as her role as a Trustee) we

previously achieved the Foundation Stage.

The Equality Standard was launched by UK Sports Councils in 2004 as a framework to guide sports organisations towards achieving equality. Reaching the Foundation Stage meant that, as an organisation, we have shown that we are committed to equality and that commitment is communicated to all staff and volunteers.

The Preliminary level will be confirmed when we have proven that, as an organisation, we are clear about what we need to do to achieve equality with an understanding of the issues and barriers that are faced by under-represented groups in sport and have a robust equality action plan that all staff, volunteers, and key stakeholders understand. As an organisation we want to make the Army FA as possible so that football can have the broadest reach across the Army population.

Part of the process to reach the next stage is the introduction of an Inclusion Advisory Group (IAG). The inaugural meeting will be held during the early part of the 2023/24 season. Members of IAG will offer their experiences, ideas and feedback meeting up to four times a year. With the departure of Jill Rogers a new Chair for the IAG will be nominated.

IAG Group:

Jenny Payne is the Army FA disciplinary Officer and Safeguarding Lead.

Sgt Sada Sumareh (AGC) (SPS), joined the Army in 2008. He is Personal Assistant to Director Personnel in Andover. He originally hails from Churchills Town, The Gambia and is featured on pages 104/105 on this review.

Sgt Yvette Kemp (RAPTC) joined the Army in 2008 as a REME vehicle mechanic. Now an Instructor in the RAPTC she has a huge presence within Army Football as player, coach, community engagement activity and this year, completing a referees course.

W02 (QMSI) Sgt Calberth Charles (RAPTC) originates from St Vincent. He is currently UK North Secretary a role he took over this summer having previously been UK South Secretary where he did an outstanding job.

Cpl David Johnston AGC (RMP) is an active Referee commencing 2021. He won the Le Breton Trophy last season having officiated in 60 Army matches and 100 civilian games. He is also a volunteer mentor and Matchday Coach with significant potential.

Capt Lakh Bahadur Gurung (King's Gurkha Orderly Officer (KGOO) joined the Army in 1999. On completion of basic training at Church Crookham he joined 2nd Battalion the Royal Gurkha Rifles (2RGR) currently based in Shorncliffe. He promoted through the ranks and commissioned in May 2019. He has deployed on 8 operational tours and completed more than 9 overseas exercises. A former centre half and avid Arsenal fan he is happily married to his childhood sweetheart Mamata and they have 3 sons aged 20, 15 and 12.



REME win 2022-23 Quads



1 Regt RLC the Army Women's Inter Unit Football Champions



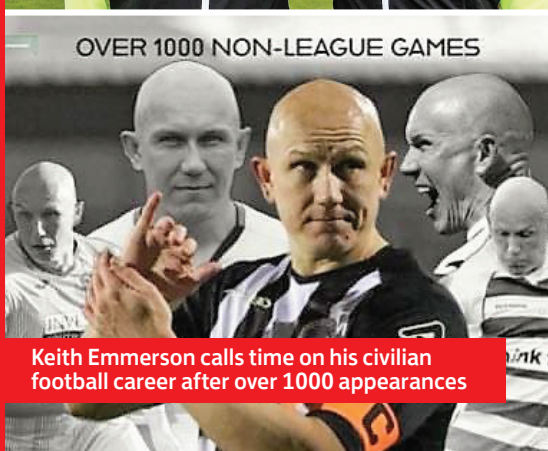
Sheffield UOTR - the Army Women Football Plate Winners



Former Referee Chair Lt Col (Retd) Pete Conn and son Aaron officials - National Lge match - Aldershot T v Altrincham



Vice Chair Col Dave Jones presenting kit in Kosovo on a Defence Engagement visit



OVER 1000 NON-LEAGUE GAMES

Keith Emmerson calls time on his civilian football career after over 1000 appearances



Army Trustee Capt Kev Haley was honoured at Buckingham Palace by HRH The Prince Of Wales presented with MBE

The tradition of football in the Gurkhas begun in 1948 following the formation of the Brigade of Gurkhas in the British Army. His Royal Highness Maharaja Mohan Shamsheer Janga Bahadur Rana GCIE CBE, who at the time was the Prime Minister of Nepal and Colonel-in-Chief of the Gurkha Brigade presented the Nepal Cup (NC) to the Headquarters Brigade of Gurkhas (HQB) to be competed for annually in an inter-unit football competition. Since then, Nepal Cup has been the major sporting event in the Brigade of Gurkhas and ever year, it continues to evolve showcasing the proud traditions of the Gurkhas, as well as celebrating together as a Brigade.

On the 8th of Jul 2023, NC final was played at the Queen's Avenue, Aldershot which was the culmination of three weeks of group stage matches which were played in various BG unit locations across the UK. On the day of the NC Final, the grounds of Queen's Avenue transformed into a great spectacle with colourful Nepali food stalls, garments and funfair attracting vast number of audiences from across the Brigade, Gurkha veterans and wider Nepali community. The Gurkha Brigade Band displayed a marching band and the new Gurkha Intake 2023 demonstrated Khukri Pattern demonstration prior to the NC final match. This year, The Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment (QOGLR) and The Queen's Gurkha Engineers (QGE) made it to the finals.

The reigning champions QGE were looking to retain the NC trophy for the second year in the running

while QOGLR posed a greater threat with their new rising stars in their team.

The highly anticipated NC 2023 final match was broadcasted live on BFBS and Gurkha Brigade Association social media platforms which made it possible to reach to the audiences even in Nepal. The final match between QGE and QOGLR was spectacular to watch. Both teams displayed grit, sportsmanship, and a great fighting spirit. The match went to extra time and in the dying minutes of the second half of extra time, QGE scored a late goal to claim the NC trophy for the second consecutive year. The final score was 2-1 to QGE.

The Army FA have been once again instrumental in the success of the Nepal Cup. This year, Corporal Harry Scott AGC played a crucial role in support of the organiser and the HQBG by nominating referees and assistant-referees for the NC Group Stage matches and the NC Final. His work has been highly commendable and a great asset to the Gurkha Brigade.

Major JP Gurung MVO RGR



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COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARDING

The Army Football Association is committed to safeguarding and protecting children, young people, and adults at risk in youth and adult football and across all our programmes and activities.

Individually and collectively, we are signed up to Affiliated Football's Policies and Procedures and we are committed to achieving The FA's Safeguarding 365 Standard for County FAs.

We recognise our collective and individual safeguarding responsibilities and accountabilities.

Our overall aim is to ensure the County FA:

- Implements and maintains preventative safeguarding measures
- Creates fun, safe, and Inclusive youth and adult football environments to support the best outcomes for children and adults at risk
- Acts to ensure that children and young people have a voice and are heard
- Makes the reporting of concerns as easy as possible

- Ensures safeguarding and child protection concerns are investigated swiftly and thoroughly in conjunction with statutory agencies, The FA and other organisations as appropriate
- Ensures concerns about adults at risk are managed swiftly and in conjunction with the adult concerned, The FA, statutory agencies, and other organisations as appropriate.

This commitment is made by our Board, CEO or equivalent and Senior Safeguarding Lead where this is not the CEO and applies to all our staff, including part-time, County FA volunteers and members.

If you have any safeguarding concerns or queries, please contact the following:

Jenny Payne - Designated Safeguarding Officer
jenny.payne@armyfa.com

Graham Brookland – Designated Safeguarding Lead
graham.brookland@armyfa.com

We understand the landscape of football is changing and with that, some of our processes have to change with it. We recognise teams can start at any time during a season, especially in youth football which our current affiliation process via Whole Game System, makes very difficult for clubs.

From June 2023 onwards, your affiliation will be available in <https://clubs.thefa.com> without a 'window' to complete your affiliation as we move to managing your club and teams year-round. This means you'll be able to add and fold teams when your competitions require and means any teams which aren't yet ready to affiliate, will not stop your club from affiliating!

WHAT'S NEW?

Affiliate team by team

Moving to affiliation by team means that when a team is ready, they can affiliate at the touch of a button. For the purpose of military, you are required to affiliate a first team, all sub teams (i.e. squadrons, Coy's, Batteries etc. This is required in order to maintain team numbers so we can continue to receive maximum funding from the Football Association.

All teams can be managed by the Club Secretary and all players can be registered to all sub teams if you do not have coaches/managers etc for all teams.

Insurance

This option has now been removed for the Military as it is classed as a duty.

Fold Team

Please do not fold teams without discussing it with the Army FA. It is important that we maintain our team numbers.

Automated Approval

Once your team is fully compliant to affiliation regulations, your affiliation will be automatically approved so you will no longer have to wait for your County FA to manually review and approve, meaning you'll have more time to spend elsewhere in your club!

The exception to this is if you have an outstanding Debt, You will then go to pending until the Debt is cleared.

Safeguarding

Clubs will be asked to confirm they understand their safeguarding responsibilities when affiliating. The 'Safeguarding Declaration' reflects footballs safeguarding policies and procedures and the club's commitment to create an ever-safer culture. For more information on safeguarding in football please visit:

www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding

ARMY FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION - APPLY TO BECOME ENGLAND FOOTBALL ACCREDITED

The Club Accreditation dashboard is now available within Club Portal for non-accredited clubs that are eligible to become England Football Accredited. (For more information on the eligibility criteria please visit www.EnglandFootball.com/Accredited.

As with existing England Football Accredited clubs the dashboard will show where non-accredited clubs do not meet or satisfy criteria under each tab.

Once non-accredited clubs meet the minimum criteria for their club and teams an 'Apply For Accreditation' button becomes available to them

PLEASE NOTE: Clubs can only apply to become England Football Accredited once they meet the minimum criteria and your accreditation checklist is complete.



ACCREDITED
PART OF ENGLAND FOOTBALL

To apply for accreditation, go to your Club Portal <https://clubs.thefa.com>, click on "dashboard" on the left hand side. Then click "Apply for Accreditation".

For full Guidance please go to:

<https://grassrootstechnology.freshdesk.com/support/login> and search Accreditation.

AFFILIATION REQUIREMENTS

Depending on the type of teams that make up your club, your requirements will be slightly different. Details of what you require to affiliate for the 23/24 season can be found below, including what's new.

Adult Team Clubs Only

Club Ground – It is a requirement for clubs to state their main home ground. You can do this ahead of affiliation opening in your 'My Club' tab. You can find guidance on how to complete this in the FA's Grassroots Technology Support

If you are a unit outside of England, then please use the default ground, Aldershot Garrison.

Key Officials – Clubs are required to state their key officials. All adult clubs must have at least a Club Secretary. Club Secretaries are the POC for the club and the only official that will receive notifications from the Army FA and the FA. It is therefore important that you add a Temp Secretary via the portal, for any period the Secretary is away.

If you have difficulties with this, please contact the Army FA.

Safeguarding Declaration – Every club will be required to accept a Safeguarding Declaration. Where clubs have teams that play across different levels of the game, multiple declarations will need to be accepted.

Named Manager or Coach – Every team must have a minimum of one Manager or Coach. This can be completed in your 'Officials' tab. Duplicates of officials is accepted.

Welfare Officer - Clubs with adult teams require a named 'Welfare Officer (Adult Teams)'. For the 2023/2024 season, no qualifications are required for this role.

Guidance on all of the above can be found on the FA's Grassroots Technology Support
<https://grassrootstechnology.freshdesk.com/support/login>



Army FA Referee Steve Finch, an RLC Captain serving with the 3rd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment, was selected as part of the FA Cup award ceremony at the Emirates FA Cup Final played in early June. His primary role was to place the trophy into the Royal Box after the match and give a salute to HRH the Prince of Wales to present to the winning Manchester City captain after their 2-1 victory versus neighbours Manchester United.

Steve was joined by the Royal Navy's Chief Petty Officer Marc Fewghery and from the RAF Corporal Christian Paulat-Brigg who placed the match official, runners-up and winners medal for presentation to the teams.

Earlier around two hundred Service personnel had taken part in the pre-match activities with music from the massed military band and bearers rolling out giant flags for each team.

A Football League official Steve spoke about how the opportunity arose. He said, "I received a phone call from the Army FA CEO Graham Brookland who asked me if I would represent the Army FA for this prestigious occasion. He confirmed that it was for my work and dedication to the Army FA having been on the Army Referee Executive committee for 10 years and also serving the role as Promotions Officer.

"I was fortunate that it was the Army's year to deliver the FA Cup to the Royal Box. Placing the trophy down in front of and giving salute to HRH the Prince of Wales whilst representing the Army was a humbling and proud moment. It will live with me for my lifetime."

The Army Football Association was also involved in ceremonial duties at the Vitality FA Women's FA Cup Final at Wembley Stadium between Chelsea and Manchester United, played in May.

In front of a record 77,390 attendance Cpl Lois Jacobs (AGC) was part of a team of three that were responsible for the placement of medals and the trophy into the Royal Box as part of the pre and post-match ceremony. A representative from each service was selected which also included Cpl Rachel Howes (RAF) and LH Kiera Boylan (Royal Navy).

An enthused Lois spoke after the event and said, *"Being able to speak with William, Prince of Wales followed by the walk out onto the pitch carrying the FA Cup in front of a sold-out Wembley is nothing short of amazing."*

"The pressure was on because as soon as the cup touched the plinth, that indicated the start of the whole set up, to pitch walks and kick-off. Whilst I was nervous, I loved every second of it, the only thing that would beat this experience is being able to play a fixture at Wembley (which at my age will never happen)."

It's certainly a moment I'll not forget."

Chelsea were 1-0 victors to retain the trophy. The attendance set a world record for a domestic women's competition which was previously 60,739 for the 2019 Spanish Primera Division match between Atletico Madrid and Barcelona.







In the 39th year of sponsorship of the Army Unit Cups Towergate Insurance, represented by Pam Howson, witnessed one of the most pulsating Cup Finals during that period.

The 2022/23 Army (Major Units) Challenge Cup Final was a remarkable event for a variety of reasons. 3rd Battalion the Parachute Regiment saw their name added to the honours board for the first time in a pulsating final at the Aldershot Military Stadium in a 3-2 victory v 23 PARA Engineer Regiment in May.

Remarkable because both teams had been deployed in Sudan in the build up to the final. Indeed, as 3 PARA's Capt Stu Mott explains, "From a 3 PARA perspective the entire battalion/battlegroup (and therefore pretty much our entire football team including manager and coaches) was deployed to Sudan between the 21-24 April and 4-9 May.

"The team returned to the UK iteratively between the 4-9 May. There were two players, including incidentally Cpl Keelan (who scored the winner in the 93rd minute) and Pte Mann (another influential substitute) that returned from Cyprus two days before the final.

It was a final where something would have to give. 3 PARA entered the 122nd Army Challenge Cup Final having not conceded a goal on route whilst 23 PARA Eng were the top scorers in the competition having netted 25 goals.

23's Spr Callum Vincent, who also plays for the Royal Engineers, ended that impressive defensive record opening the scoring on 10 minutes after

a productive opening. Cpl Mark Kenny levelled matters for 3 PARA to ensure honours were even at half time.

23 took the lead just past the hour with a stunning strike from LCpl Ash Tandy, who serves in 51 Para Sqn RE. The match turned soon after when 3 PARA keeper, and eventual Player of the Match, Pte Reece McNab, made a stunning save from a penalty kick.

3 PARA started to insert some pressure and PTE Ryan Waterhouse equalised.

With the match seemingly heading into extra time a 92nd minute goal from Keelan confirmed a 3-2 victory and scenes at the end.

The match was a credit to Army Football from players, management and officials, a point noted in the post-match gathering from Army FA Chair, Brigadier Andrew Cox MBE.

ROAD TO THE FINAL

3 PARA				23 PARA ENG			
R1	A	2 PARA	3-0	R1	A	3 Regt AAC	8-1
R2	H	30 Signal Regt	7-0	R2	A	22 Signal Regt	6-2
R3	H	13 AA SR RLC	H-W	R3	H	QRH	H-W
QF	H	2 Signal Regt	3-0	QF	A	11 Signal Regt	9-1
SF	H	22 Engr Regt	6-0	SF	H	8 Bn REME	2-2 (5-4pens)

There were 95 units who entered the Major Units Challenge Cup in 2022/23.

A further 32 teams entered the Minor Units Cup. It was retention of the trophy too for RMA Sandhurst (PS) as they defeated Wimbish based 29 EOD and S GSU, 4-1 in the final courtesy of a brace each from Pte Fenton Andrews and LCpl Stu Lea. The youngest player in the 29 EOD squad, Spr Finn Lloyd-Butler, netted their goal. RMA's CSgt Ferg Harrison was awarded Player of the Match which was presented by Towergate Insurance representative Pam Howson.

Capt Kev Haley, Trustee for Unit Football, hosted the post-match presentation. It was also poignant for RMA Manager/Coach WO1 Gav Bloomfield who added a successive Minor Units Cup medal to his Major Units Cup medal having led 7 Regt RLC to victory in the Army Challenge Cup previously.



CHALLENGE CUP FINAL



MINOR UNITS CUP FINAL



ARMY CHALLENGE CUP FINAL PROGRAMME
10 MAY 2023



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ROYAL BRITISH LEGION



We remain ever so grateful to the fantastic support we receive from BFBS and Forces News. Over the course of 2023 Jon Knighton and his team have covered via the BFBS Facebook and You Tube streams 11 Army related cup finals and Inter Service matches from the Super Cup played in Glasgow in February through to the Infantry Cup Final in Bulford in July.

Overall covering service football during this year alone there have been just short of 200,000 viewers through the various combinations.

This enabled the organisation that has been broadcasting since 1943, to be able to give soldiers all over the world, both at home or abroad, the opportunity to view the matches providing a true connection and a sense of community for all. To Jon and all who have facilitated this we thank you and look forward to continuing our relationship with you during 2023/24.

For further information please visit:

<https://www.forces.net/sport>



Event	Sport	Date	You Tube	Facebook	Total
Army Super Cup Final	Football	04.02.23	5 200	1 300	6500
IS U23 RAF v Navy	Football	08.02.23	8100	2300	10400
IS U23 Army v RAF	Football	15.02.23	5900	2900	8800
IS U23 Navy v Army	Football	22.02.23	5800	4400	10200
IS Navy v RAF Women	Football	14.03.23	5300	6400	11700
IS Navy v RAF Men	Football	15.03.23	6400	7400	13800
IS Army v Navy Women	Football	21.03.23	6100	3100	9200
IS Army v Navy Men	Football	22.03.23	5800	3300	9100
IS RAF v Army Women	Football	29.03.23	5400	9600	15000
IS RAF v Army Men	Football	29.03.23	11000	3700	14700
Army Challenge Cup Final 3 Para v 23 Eng Reg	Football	10.05.23	10000	3300	13300
RAF Cup Final Cosford v Boulmer	Football	11.05.23	8100	2200	10300
Army Womens Edwards Cup Inter Corps Final AGC v RLC Women	Football	24.05.23	4300	4300	8600
Army Mens Woolwich Cup Inter Corps Final RLC v Royal Signals Men	Football	24.05.23	4600	2800	7400
UKAF v Irish Defence Forces Women	Football	08.06.23	6100	3500	9600
UKAF v Irish Defence Forces Men	Football	08.06.23	6600	3400	10000
Royal Navy Cup Final CLR v HMS QE	Football	14.06.23	11000	2100	13100
Infantry Cup Final 1 Mercians v 5 Rifles	Football	12.07.23	4200	5500	9700
Total 2023			119 900	71 500	191 400

For the second successive season the 2023 Army Men's Sixes were staged at the home of Northern Premier League East Division Grantham Town Football Club in May.

Approximately 180 soldiers were involved throughout the day including a team of officials being mentored whilst attending the Army FA Referees' course.

In total 59 matches were played with 182 goals scored. 5 FS Bn REME reached the final after topping Group 1 with a faultless record and then defeating 32 Engineer Regiment 3-2 in the semi-final.

1 Mercian also reached the final after a penalty shootout success versus 1 Regiment RLC after the match itself ended in a goal less draw.

However, the final saw 5 FS Bn REME's first defeat of the day with 1 Mercian recording a 3-0 success to lift the trophy.

Thank you to the following competing teams:

- RTR
- 2 R Anglian
- 1 Mercian
- 7 AVS REME
- 2 Signal Regiment
- 1 Rifles
- MOD Kington
- 5 Bn REME
- 3 Rifles
- 7 Regt RHA
- 32 Engineer Regt
- 28 Engineer Regt
- 1 Regt RLC
- ITC Catterick
- 10 QOGLR
- 2 R Anglian "B"

Army Trustee Major Nigel Bamford presented the Trophy to the winning captain of 1 Mercian.

We are grateful to the support of Grantham Town FC during the course of the day.



The 2022/23 UK South football season was an eventual success after navigating initial issues relating to player participation with Corps fixtures being played on Wednesday afternoons. Teams were eager to resume competitions after the summer break, but some were restricted due to several of their players participating at Corps level.

Given the spread of Units across the UK South, the region is divided into eight leagues to minimize the weekly travelling distance. Each league contains eight teams, and they play each other at home and away throughout the season. The winner of each league is awarded with a trophy as well as the winners of the Minor and Major Unit League Cups. There have been over 1200 Player Registrations in the UK South region and due to the number of fixtures played this season, it is safe to say that a large proportion of this number participated in all UKSFL competitions.

There were 332 scheduled fixtures for the 2022/23 season with 212 being played. The remainder were not played due to player availability, unit forecast of events and the weather. The winners of the leagues were as follows:

Central Prem Winners - 1 RSME

Central Div One Winners - 5 RIFLES

Central Div Two Winners - 1 Regt RLC

Eastern Prem - No fixtures played

Western Prem Winners - 8 Bn REME 'A'

Western Div One Winners - QRH

Western Div Two Winners - 1 MERCIAN

Western Div Three Winners - 14 Regt RA

The winners of each league will then compete in a knockout to find the overall UK South FL winner. The final was contested between 1 RSME and 1 MERCIAN with 1 RSME being the eventual winners. Special thanks to our officials on the day, referee – Ryan Hetherington, assistant referees – Lee Davison and Sheridan Grant.



2023 UK South Play Off Finals Officials

One of the aims for the season was to enhance the female participation within the UK South by commencing an all-Female League. This gained momentum in early September as the Secretary approached several Units and agreed amalgamations (sanctioned by the Army FA), however, Unit commitments proved to be an obstacle in commencing this.

The UK South successfully delivered the 6-A-Side Competition on Wed 29 Mar 23. With 36 male teams and 2 female teams participating. This was a keenly contested competition which saw several new teams entering and some of the favourites being eliminated at the early stages. This event saw the newly badged Army FA Referees (course conducted at Abingdon) officiating the tournament, well done team! The results were as follows:

Male Winners - 1 Regt RLC (A)

Male Runners-up - 1 MERCIAN (A)

Female Winners - 1 Regt RLC

Female Runners-up - 9 Regt RLC



**2023 UK South Female 6s Winners
1 Regiment RLC**



**2023 UK South Female 6s Runners Up
9 Regiment RLC**



**2023 UK South Male 6s Winners
1 Regiment RLC**



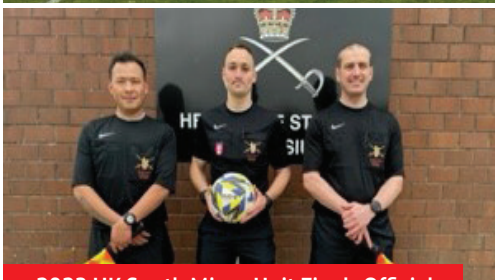
**2023 UK South Male 6s Runners Up
1 MERCIAN**

The Major and Minor Unit Cup competitions were contested over the season with some teams concentrating on these fixtures as opposed to the league. Nonetheless, it was a chance for teams to 'be on the road' to compete against other units who were not a part of their league. The Minor Unit League Cup finals saw Hermitage Station pitted against RMAS with the team from Sandhurst winning the cup for the second year running.

Not only that, but they also went on to lift the Army Minor Unit Challenge Cup for the second year running. Many thanks to our officials for facilitating a keenly contested match. They were referee – David Johnston, assistant referees – Graham Gore and Kabir Rai.



**2023 Hermitage v RMAS UKSFL Minor Unit
Cup Final**



2023 UK South Minor Unit Finals Officials

The Major Unit Finals was contested between GRENADIER GUARDS and 1 RSME with the GREN GUARDS defeating 1 RSME 3-1.

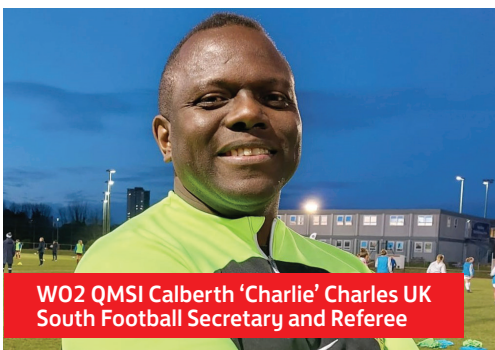


**2023 UK South FL Major Cup Winners
GREN GUARDS**



**UK South FL Cup Finals - Half time talk by
the Gaffer SSgt Boyd**

The UK South League has once again delivered a competitive and successful season as per previous years. The number of Units within the region participating in football has grown during my tenure. With a posting to Catterick, it brings my tenure as the UK South Football Secretary to an end, and I hand over the baton to Sgt (SI) Bolstridge RAPTC. However, I will not be leaving the secretarial role just yet as I have been asked to take on the role of the UK North Football league Secretary. I wish all the teams the best of luck for the new season and hope you continue to support the football representatives.



**W02 QMSI Calberth 'Charlie' Charles UK
South Football Secretary and Referee**

W02 (QMSI) C Charles RAPTC
Army FA UK South Football Secretary 2022/23



32 Engineer Regiment were the overall winners of the Army North Football league, closely followed by 21 Engineer Regiment which was decided in the last couple of weeks in the season.

Unfortunately due to numerous commitments, units in the large part have found it difficult to complete their arrange league fixtures but with WO2 Calberth Charles recently becoming the League Secretary, he is bringing fresh ideas to revitalise football within the North. This involves smaller leagues, but play off games in the end for the overall winner.

The Army North had good representation in Corp competitions, with 21 Engineer Regiment reaching the semi finals of the Sapper Cup, with 32 Engineer Regiment reaching the final and 2 Signal Regiment beaten on penalties in the McBean Trophy final. 32 Engineer Regiment were successful in HQ 7 LBCT Festival of Sport.

With the season starting soon, and with the new format for the season, we're hoping to see more football this season. The UK North Sevens will take place in Catterick Garrison on Wednesday 20th September which is always keenly contested and will be concurrent with the Referees Course.

With regards to referees, we implore units to identify future referees so we can strengthen within this area and direct them to the Army FA for further information



WO2 Andy Halliday MBE & Officials

With the 22 / 23 UK Scotland League Season gaining momentum from a successful previous campaign, the main intent from the Scotland Committee was to improve participation, establish a Challenge Cup and 6-a-side competition and to improve numbers for qualified Officials for the Region.

The 22 / 23 Season commenced in Aug 22, with the Scotland League hosting 10 teams from tri-Service Units and 74 league fixtures scheduled. The Scotland Premier League afforded the opportunity for all Major, Minor and Reserve Units the to affiliate, register and compete for silverware throughout the year. The introduction of a Challenge Cup and 6-a-side competition has been instrumental in promoting Army Sport in Scotland but increasing the number of fixtures played at grass roots level. A League Cup and 6's competition had previously

never been established, so this was a huge step forward in trying to place Army Football in the region back on the map.

The 6-a-side Competition was hosted at The Powerleague, Edinburgh on Wed 15 Feb 23 and hosted 14 teams, facilitated 28 fixtures, and provided a Cup and Plate knockout format. The Army FA Midlands Referees' Basic Course hosted by WO2 (QMSI) Andy Halliday MBE RAPTC, utilised the opportunity to officiate and conclude the course with the newly qualified Army FA Officials.

After a highly competitive competition, 2 Bn REME were crowned the Cup Winners triumphing over 39 Engr Regt. 154 (Reserve) RLC were the Plate Winners after a keenly contested final against 39 Engr Regt (B), a fantastic achievement for the only Reserve team entered into the competition.



Cup Winners - 2 Bn REME



Cup Final - 2 Bn REME v 39 Engr Regt (A)



154 RLC - Plate Winners



Plate Final - 154 RLC v 39 Engr Regt (B)

The Challenge Cup Final concluded on Wed 28 Jun 23 at The Regional Performance Centre, Dundee hosting 2 Bn REME and 3 RIFLES. 3 RIFLES looking to add silverware in an eleven's competition as the reigning Army 6's and Midlands 6's Champions and 2 Bn REME aiming to complete the Scotland League treble after securing the League and Scotland 6's titles.

After an excellent game of football, Colonel Phillips (51X COMD) was the special guest to commend and congratulate both teams for a well contested Final and award 2 Bn REME the crown and bragging rights after a superb 6 - 2 victory. 2 Bn REME had collected all silverware on offer for the 22 / 23 season and etched themselves in the regional history books being the first Scotland Unit team to achieve the treble.



UKSL League & Cup Trophies



Col Phillips & 2 Bn REME Captain LCpl Higgins



UKSL Cup Champions - 2 Bn REME

Furthermore, there has been some outstanding achievements from teams within the Region over the Season; most notably with 3 RIFLES winning the Army 6's and Midlands 6's Competition and 2 Bn REME progressing to the Final of the Craftsman Cup. Within the last 12 months, various players have been capped by their Corps Teams at Representative level and earned Army and Army U23 caps; highlighting talent, supporting progression, and enhancing Army Football in Scotland.

The main aim for the 23 / 24 Season is to maintain a competitive League and Cup structure, highlight talent for UKAF, Army and Corps level representation and try to establish Female teams within Scotland based Units.

SSgt (SSI) Pete Noble RAPTC
Army FA UK Scotland League
Football Secretary



Army FA UK Scotland Secretary - SSgt (SSI)
Pete Noble RAPTC



The UK Midlands football 22/23 Season was primarily aiming at reintroducing football to the Midlands region and give the opportunity for Units to get back to playing football.

The annual 6-A-Side football competition was intended to bring units back into competitive football in a competitive manner. Hosted at Beacon Barracks, Stafford eight teams took part in the event which was supported by W02 (QMSI) Andy Halliday MBE RAPTC who ran the Army FA Midlands Referees basic course prior to the event, with the testing of the students carried out throughout the competition.

The event was an intense day with a few last minutes additional teams arriving which saw some re-jigging of fixtures and a few back-to-back matches which was a true test of endurance, this proved vital towards business part of the day. 7 RHA who had travelled over three hours proved their class through the league and into the knockout stages only to be pinched on penalties by 28 Engineers after a heroic save in the final by the goalkeeper.



The event also saw the opportunity for females to attend with a full team or as an individual and join in with units around the AO. 5 Medical Regiment female football team were also invited down from the Catterick to bolster the female attendance and subsequently were the only females that attended. Having liaised with WO2 Andy Halliday as well as

the team and coaches, it was agreed they would be offered the opportunity to play amongst the male league, in which they were more than happy to join. Having performed bravely throughout the tournament their efforts were rewarded with a late 2-1 win over 16 Signal regiment in which the whole event was able to spectate and applaud.



The event itself was successful with over 34 matches played throughout the day and the opportunity for the newly qualified referees to get a lot of early match experience was left hopeful for a promising season.

The 22/23 11 a side season has struggled for matches. With the UK Midlands being split into two leagues, East and West to reduce the amount of traveling time this still showed limited matches being played. Although 23 Engr Para Regiment did manage to get some intense games against some of the other units in Colchester and have won the 22/23 East Midlands League. No matches were completed in the West League.

The 23/24 season will look to push the fixtures and strongly encourage all units to participate, regardless of the “prime players” being available. With a huge amount of talent on display during the 6s and many individual players representing their Corps there is no excuse for 23/24 UK Midlands seasons fixtures to be completed and competition to be at the highest level.

SSgt Jimmy Hull RAPTC
Army FA UK Midlands League
Football Secretary



What Andy Halliday is for Army Referees take Major Joe Collins for the world of Army coaching. During the course of the 2022/23 season Joe led his teams to win a hat-trick of trophies.

Joe has seen and done it all within the Military world. From playing 169 matches for the British Army, over 50 for the Combined Services to winning the Army Player of the Season Award on five occasions. Five years as Head Coach of the Army Representative team followed by spells as Head Coach of the Army Reserve before the most recent involvement in charge of the Army Masters and combining this whilst also leading 4 LANCS in the Army Reserve Cup.

The first trophy of the season saw success in the inaugural Army Masters Inter Services competition, aptly named the "Major Billy Thomson Masters". The maximum points total was secured with victories versus Royal Navy (4-3) in Aldershot followed by success versus the RAF (3-2) in Shropshire. The only Army team to win both their Inter Service matches during the season. Joe was jubilant at the time and said, "To be able to lift the Billy Thomson Trophy aloft will be a memory that will stay with me and the lads forever".

This was followed in May as Joe led 4 LANCS to the Army Reserve Challenge Cup winning a feisty match at Aldershot Town FC, 2-1 versus 6 SCOTS; it was their fourth successive Cup Final too.

The trio was completed in June with the European Masters Game Trophy where Gold was achieved with a faultless campaign throughout the competition and building a fantastic camaraderie within the squad.

Joe announced that he was stepping down from his role at the conclusion of the tournament needing a thoroughly deserved break after 35 years of outstanding service.

Joe was awarded a Service to Football Award in 2015 for his "sustained and selfless dedication to Army Football over a quarter of a century and invaluable and dedicated service to the Association."

There is nobody to match in Army Football his achievements as a player, coach, and manager. Importantly too as a fantastic Ambassador for Army Football. We hope the break is not too long.

Thank you, Joe.



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In an attempt to change local youth perception of the Army in London, whilst focusing on our inclusive culture and sporting/educational opportunities a football initiative was planned in collaboration with Haringey Council and Haringey Borough Women's FC. The plan itself was to run a women's tournament where teams would play for the GOC's Coronation Cup and Walter Tull Plate

As expected, the community were quite sceptical at the beginning due to a clear mistrust in the uniformed services, however this was overcome by the constant use of the term collaborative planning and an in-depth explanation of my background and previous roles within Army Football. In the end the joint passion for both football and growing the women's game ensured all previous mis trust was cancelled out. Due to the event being advertised as a joint concept Haringey Council offered the brilliant facilities at The New River Sports Complex at nil cost.

After months of careful negotiation and planning the day started, luckily WO1 Sharrett and SSgt Price-Berridge, AGC Men's Management Team had agreed to assist, both keeping the games running and more importantly showcasing professionalism within Army Sport. With the teams ready, the Officials from the Army FA introduced themselves and highlighted the rules. After the required medical brief teams were also a briefed-on Walter Tull and how this extraordinary gentleman bonded us together.

From the minute the first games kicked off, it was clear the standards were very high. The football on show from all teams was exceptional and played in the right manner. The Royal Engineers and Army

Medical Services were giving it their all, however the greatest thing about their involvement was the questions being raised by both civilian players and parents about their trades, careers, and sporting opportunities.

At mid-day the two resident MP's and the mayor arrived to support as did the Deputy Lord Lieutenant and Col Forsythe OBE. The MP's and Mayor were really impressed and asked nonstop questions about service life and sport. It was clear the teams were impressed local dignitaries were in attendance supporting, this of course was nothing to the reaction of Ledley King arriving (ex Spurs and England). Both Ledley and Dave Knowles, the Spurs Foundation Community Officer were very keen to understand the concept of the tournament when greeted. They questioned the Army Offer, how football works in the services and our historic links to Walter (first black Spurs Player). Ledley and Dave stayed throughout the afternoon and were very complimentary of Army Football whilst posing for none stop selfies with players and families alike.

With the tournament split after the league stages, both military teams found themselves in the two bespoke competitions. After fighting to the final whistle, they were both eliminated, that said they can hold their heads up high. The GOC Coronation Cup saw Haringey A play Haringey B in an outstanding game. At the final whistle Haringey A team had come out the winners. The Walter Tull Plate Final was equally good with Cambridge City narrowly beating Greys Athletic.

Maj Mark Normanton



It has been another busy twelve months with football continuing to be at the forefront of Sport in the Army Reserve. Pre-Season started with the annual six-a-side tournament in August. 15 teams competed over the two days in Grantham with 156 Regt RLC lifting the cup and 5RRF winning the Shield.

The Army Reserve Corps Competition was held over the two wettest days of October. The finalists were the Infantry, unbeaten in the previous three finals and the RLC who entered for the first time. In a very closely fought match the RLC came out on top to lift the Jones Cup.

Our representative teams had a mixed season, after another successful overseas visit to Cyprus the men's team had two of their three fixtures in 2023 called off due to weather. In the match that did go ahead they were beaten by a very strong United Hospitals Team. The women had an excellent season building on their training camp in Cyprus where they had played a newly set up Combined Services team and took part in a 5-a-side tournament. To help the newly formed team the Army FA donated a set of balls, cones and bibs before they left. In the autumn they played Rushmoor Ladies, and after the new year played Surrey Police Women, and Spencers Wood, before playing the Army Women's team losing by one goal in a very competitive match. The team were invited to Jersey FA to play their representative team and in June they made up 50% of the squad on a very successful Engagement trip to the Balkans (see pages 27 to 29 for a full report).

The Army Reserve Challenge Cup first round kicked off in September with 25. In May 4 LANCS secured the 2022/23 Army Reserve Challenge Cup with a 2-1 victory versus holders 6 SCOTS in a match played at the home of National League Aldershot Town. A feisty opening in a match refereed by Army Trustee Colonel Dave Jones saw LCpl Jake Swarbrick take the lead for Lancs in the third minute. The match was level at the interval due to Marin Orr's goal just before the half hour mark. Chances at either end after the break were to avail and, with a penalty shootout seeming likely, Kgn Dave Mann popped up with a header from close range to secure the trophy for 4 LANCS with just six minutes remaining. Head Coach Joe Collins also secured the second of three competition successes during the season alongside leading the Army Masters to two gold medals. 4 LANCS will play the new Army Challenge Cup winner 3 PARA in the Super Cup Final which

will be held on the 10th September at the home of Bamber Bridge FC, Lancashire.

Herefordshire Football Association hosted this years Armed Forces Day Festival of Football in June. The event saw Wellington Vets, Hereford Pegasus Mens and Hereford Pegasus Ladies play the Army Reserve Masters, Mens, and Ladies teams. Over 600 people attended the event throughout the day. A range of activities were well-attended, with the Lord-Lieutenant of Herefordshire represented by Air Commodore Tim Howson DL, the Chair of SSAFA in the county. Also present were the Right Worshipful the Mayor of Hereford, Cllr Jacqui Carwardine, and Colonel David Jones OBE, Vice-Chair of Army Football. Also, on the day there were stalls from a range of partners including 6 Rifles, The Royal British Legion, Hereford FC, Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service and SSAFA Herefordshire the day was a fantastic occasion and one that it is hoped will become an annual event.



**SUPER CUP FINAL
(GLASGOW)**



SCAN ME



SCAN ME



**WHEN THE
ARMY SUPER CUP
WENT ON TOUR
(TALLINN)**

**RESERVE
CHALLENGE
CUP FINAL
PROGRAMME
13 MAY 2023**



SCAN ME



4 LANCS Cup Winners



AFD 2022



Army Reserve Men 2022



Army Reserve Shield Winners



Kit Handover



Army Reserve Women's Team Cyprus 2022



Cyprus 5-A-Side



Hereford AFD - Men



Hereford AFD - Women



Sixes Winner 152 Regt RLC

ARMY OFFICERS FOOTBALL (CRUSADERS)

Army Crusaders is the Army Officer Corps' representative football team. Formed in 1922 it consists of a First Team and a Masters (Over 35s) Team. Our last article described the planned events to celebrate our Centenary season and this article will describe their successful completion along with a season report.

TEAM ETHOS

Army Crusaders maintain and support the One Army One Team concept with Regular and Reserve players playing for both sides. Further, both the Chairman and Secretary are Reservists.

It should also be recognised Army Crusaders sits at the heart of Army Football with former and current Crusaders in major roles, namely:

- Retiring Chair Army Football. Brig Niall Stokoe. Former Firsts Captain and Masters player.
- Vice Chairman Army Football. Col Davy Jones. Masters player and Crusaders Chairman.
- Vice President Army Football. Maj Gen Darren Crook. Former First player and Crusaders President.
- Army First Team Coach. Capt Jimmy Blair. Current Masters player.
- Reserves Chair Army FA. Col Davy Jones. Former First team and Masters player and Crusaders Chair.
- UKAF General Manager and Representative Trustee. Lt Col Tony Frank. Current First and Masters player.
- Referees Chair Army Football. Maj Nige Bamford. Current Masters player.

ARMY CRUSADERS 100TH CELEBRATION

Army Crusaders FC celebrated its landmark Centenary during the 2022 / 2023 season.

- The Overseas Tour took place in Canada in Sep 22 and a Centenary Dinner was held at Aldershot in Jan 23. More to follow below.

General Update. Separate reports follow for both teams but there are several collaborative events that took place which are noted below.

TRIANGULAR TOURNAMENT SEP 22

The annual Over 35s triangular tournament played between Army Crusaders, AGC and RAF ICARUS

in commemoration of former AGC player Jack O'Regan took place in Sep with narrow defeat in the first game v AGC and a heavier defeat in second against a very youthful RAF side who went on to win the trophy after beating AGC as well.

OVERSEAS TOUR TO CANADA SEP - OCT 22

A very successful tour with 18 mixed Firsts and Masters players deploying to Canada, based upon CFB Kingston with a couple of days in Toronto. Overall results were 3 wins from 3 matches.

CFB KINGSTON KNIGHTS. Fri 23 Sep. Won 3-1.

Scorers: Chris Chant – Pen, John Fraser, Max Harper

RMCS KINGSTON. Mon 26 Sep. Won 6-0

Scorers: Jamie Pratt 2, Max Harper 2, Chris Chant, John Fraser.

CFB TRENTON. Thu 29 Sep. Won 4-1

Scorers: Jamie Pratt, Ben Carter, Oli McAfee – Pen, Ben Thorpe.

The tour highlight was the victory against RMCS Kingston. Despite the opposition being a high-quality outfit, with a whole backroom staff and 30 man squad, Crusaders came from under the cosh and 0-0 at halftime to turn the fixture around and win 6-0.

Jamie Pratt was rightly awarded player of the tour for his outstanding efforts in each of these matches.



UK PARLIAMENTARY FC FEB 23

Our traditional Over 35s showcase game against UK Parliamentary FC took place later than planned in Feb 23 resulting in a 4-1 win. The game was played at Burton Court with celebrity Referee Dermot Gallagher officiating. Post-match was held in the Chelsea Pensioners Bar at the Royal Hospital. It is planned to hold this year's game in the usual Nov Remembrance Slot at HAC.



Referee Dermot Gallagher with Army Crusaders L-R John Donaldson Andy Campbell Davy Jones



Mixed First and Masters Team at CFB Kingston

CENTENARY DINNER JAN 23.

The Centenary Dinner took place at the Irish Guards Mess in Aldershot on 27 Jan 23 with Crusaders past and present in attendance. This was preceded by the Presidents v Chairmans match in the afternoon with the First Team winning a hard fought game.



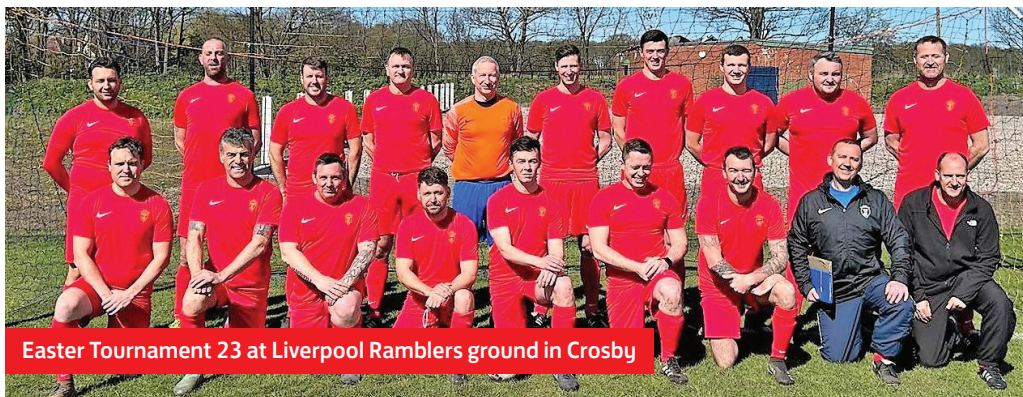
First and Masters Teams ahead of the Presidents v Chairmans match at Aldershot Military Stadium Jan 23

ANNUAL EASTER TOURNAMENT

This traditional event once again took place at the Liverpool Ramblers ground in Crosby. On paper, we had a strong and plentiful squad, and the difficulty was finding the right blend of youth and guile whilst getting everyone time on the pitch. Unfortunately, we don't play on paper, we play on grass so whilst we had a great start in our Tournament Opener v Ramblers, the wheels fell off in the second half and we were beaten comfortably.

The second game on the Sat looked like going the same way; albeit with much fewer players. This was a rather ill-tempered affair, which is unusual for this tournament and could easily have led to the opposition losing a couple of players to red cards. A hard-fought draw prevented the opposition from winning The Boot Trophy which in itself was a moral victory.

The Tournament is always great fun and (usually) played in the right spirit; so, although we were not able to capture the Boot Trophy, I hope those attending will return for many future years.



Easter Tournament 23 at Liverpool Ramblers ground in Crosby

FIRST TEAM UPDATE

In a season of transition, the team have not played as many games as intended due to commitments of key team members but have performed well on the few occasions they did play with some good results. An informal 6 a side team has also been established this season in the Andover area.

Our regular fixture against the Defence Academy resulted in a convincing victory, following by a hard fought but convincing win for the Presidents Shield against the Masters. Another of our regular fixtures against RAF Icarus was played in Jun, a tight 3-0 loss where the score line did not accurately reflect the game.

Oli McAfee will continue to captain the side for the coming season.

Looking forward, Crusaders Firsts have plenty of fixtures planned for the season and with a younger cohort of players the future is bright.

FIRSTS MANAGEMENT

This season has seen the transition of management from Maj Joel Springall to Capt Ben Carter, with Maj Oli McAfee and Capt Chris Chant as assistant managers. Army Crusaders would like to thank Joel for the past couple of seasons; balancing OC Workshop, a young family and football management has certainly been a busy time for him!

DEVELOPMENT

A new initiative to increase players for the team has resulted in Corps Reps for recruiting, which soon should see a significant increase in player numbers and quality. This will be tested in our pre-season match v Army Reserves at Aldershot on 26 Jul 23.

MASTERS UPDATE

Division Two of West London Vets League (WLVFL). This was a mixed season which started badly but ended up very successful. There was a delayed start due to the Canada Tour along with the Queen's Mourning period, so it was into Nov before we kicked off in earnest. Once again, we had a good League Cup run, beating teams one and two leagues above us which ended with a penalty shoot out loss in the Quarter Final.

The Division Two campaign started with a couple of losses, but we then went on an 8-game unbeaten stretch which saw us sat just below the promotion places with games in hand. The last few games were again unbeaten, except for a 3-point loss for not being able to field a team – very frustrating! The last game was a double header which we were fortunate to play at the Aldershot Stadium and cemented promotion to League One. Overall, a great season ending with the right prize.

WHITCHURCH FC YEAR 2 FIXTURE JUN 23.

For the second year, which now makes it a traditional annual event, we were invited, through Ali Beard to play Whitchurch FC as a precursor to their annual Charity Grudge match in Hampshire. After our convincing 2-0 victory in last season; Whitchurch seemed more determined with a much larger and dare I say younger squad. That said we finished the first half 2-0 up but a game of 2 halves ensued. Crusaders were under the cosh for the latter part and conceded 2 goals; the equaliser being scored by Ali Beard to rub in in even further for a 2-2 draw.



Crusaders Masters v Whitchurch FC Jun 23

MANVFAT FIXTURE

Danny Bishop, formerly APTC and Crusaders Masters player invited the Masters to play a late season game against the Hampshire ManVFat team whom he has a physical training and mentoring role. The aim is mainly a weight loss programme interlinked with sport and in particular football.

The game took place at the Aldershot 4G pitch with both sides sporting large squads. It was clear from

the start that the ManVFat team had a number of extremely good players with close control and passing range in their armoury. It took more than 20 minutes for Crusaders to score which resulted in a further 3 goals before half time. The second half took the same form with another 4 goals to Crusaders before a last-minute penalty award by Ref Steve Clout got ManVFat on the score sheet.

This was a delightful event which we aim to continue for the future.



ARMY FA AWARDS DINNER

There was a strong contingent of Army Crusaders attending the Army FA Awards Dinner on 29 Jun at RMAS and this year was the first opportunity for both Teams to award their respective players of the season.

FIRST TEAM

Capt Oli McAfee is the Army Crusaders First Team Captain and leads by example. His defensive strengths are evident whenever he plays but he will always look to get the team up the pitch at the first opportunity. He was Captain for the mixed Crusaders team which was unbeaten in three matches during the Centenary overseas tour to Canada. More recently he has volunteered to be part of the management for the First Team.

MASTERS

Lt Col Ali Beard migrated from the Army Crusaders First Team to Masters in the last 2 seasons. He was a proven Centre Back for several years but unlike most players whose age dictates a fall back towards defence he has elevated his status to Striker. He has not only been the Masters top goal scorer in the WLVFL but has scored crucial goals in matches which have sealed victories; contributing to the Masters promotion to Division One.



ENGAGEMENT

The Secretary and Masters Team Manager remains Maj Andy Campbell should anyone wish to engage / enrol with Army Officer's Football?

Major Andy Campbell

Secretary Army Crusaders FC

andrew.campbell691@mod.gov.uk

Armycrusadersveterans@hotmail.com

Twitter @ArmyCrusaders



FOOTBALL AND WAR ARMY FA HISTORY PROJECT – 2022-23 ACHIEVEMENTS

The 2022-23 season has been a busy one for the Football and War Army FA History Project. Along with the Army FA team, we have completed the task of collating, listing and boxing up the Army FA historical documents, programmes, medals, trophies, artefacts and memorabilia, in readiness for our National Army Museum colleagues to collect in July 2023. We have reached a formal agreement with the National Army Museum to transfer all these documents and objects to it, so they can be archived, digitised, preserved and be made available for research purposes, as well as being displayed as part of the Museum's permanent and rotating exhibitions.

I have given presentations on the purpose and progress of the project firstly, to the War and Peace Research Cluster, School of History, University of Leeds in 2022 and secondly, at the Football and War seminars run in partnership with Exeter City FC, Maidenhead United FC and Dulwich Hamlet FC in 2023.

Outside interest is growing in the project firstly, in relation to De Montfort University seeking to develop two potential PhD projects linked to various aspects of the project. Secondly, the Western Front Association has awarded the project a small grant to run a series of three seminars with the Association on aspects of the Army FA and Army Football linked to World War One.

The culmination of our efforts this season have led to the curation of two banner exhibitions that have covered topics such as the History of the Army FA Challenge Cup, History of Army FA Challenge Cup Final Programmes, Army FA Relationship with the Royal Family, Army Football and National Service,

Army FA Referees, Army FA-FA Legends 125th Army FA Anniversary Match and the Development of Army FA Women's Football. The first exhibition took place in May, on the day of the 2023 Army FA Challenge Cup Final and the second took place in June on the evening of the Army FA Annual Awards event at RMA Sandhurst.

Dr Alex Alexandrou



ARMY FA TEAMS UP WITH NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM TO PLACE ARMY FOOTBALL MEMORABILIA ON PUBLIC DISPLAY



UKAF FA MEN

We came back together post Kentish Cup in September 2023 to play Hartbury College in a friendly. The early autumnal sunshine was a great background for a 4-1 win over a young and very talented side, and allowed LCpl Jordan Brooks to make his first appearance.

A New Year training camp at RRC Crickhowell included a couple of team building days leading into a fixture against our old friends the University of South Wales. Another solid performance from UKAFF against some very strong footballers saw us come out on top with a 5-1 win. It was another chance for the management to have a look at some new players and saw first appearances for Gnr Harry Beckley and LCpl Greg Peel.



As UKAF broke to allow for the 2023 Inter Services to take place we said a sad farewell to UKAFF Manager FSgt Dyfan Pierce as he announced his retirement from the RAF. Cpl Daryl White was appointed as caretaker manager for the interim period and has subsequently been selected to take the post on a permanent basis. He appointed WO Gerwyn Griffith (Army U23's) as his assistant coach until Dec 23.

The Inter Services took place at Fratton Park (RN v RAF), Aldershot Town (Army v RN) and Shrewsbury Town (RAF v Army). Some close fixtures saw the

RAF coming out on top and retaining the trophy for another year. Having watched all the Senior and U23 Inter Service games, a strong squad was selected for a May training camp where we took on Aldershot Town Academy in the spring sunshine. A convincing 4-2 win provided the ideal preparation for our annual fixture against the Irish in June. There were first appearances in this game for several RAF and RN Players, including U23 players who quite rightly earned their place in the squad.



June 8th saw us host the Irish Defence Force in our annual fixture for the Friendship Trophy. Collaborating this fixture with UKAF Women, we hosted all four squads at MOD Garats Hay in Leicestershire, an excellent facility which was the perfect preparation for all teams. Games were played at Quorn FC, with the Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire able to attend the evening fixture.

This is our strongest fixture of the year and the Irish certainly came out of the blocks first, winning a penalty mid-way through the first half.

UKAFF settled and our equalizer came just three minutes later. From then on, we stuck to our game plan went in for half time 3-1 up. A wonder strike from Joe Spalding mid-way through the 2nd half sealed the deal for UKAFF and the game ended 4-1, with us retaining the Friendship Trophy for the 2nd Year. This was one of our strongest performances against a very competitive side and leaves us well placed for the rest of the year.



The remainder of the year is a busy one as we take on the Bundeswehr in October before heading down to Argen in France just before Christmas in a bid to bring the Kentish Cup back home.

We are grateful to our sponsors and partners, Avanti Communications, IPRO Hydrate and Forces News for their continued support for the 2023 season.





UKAF FA WOMEN

The UKAFF Women's squad have enjoyed another notable 12 months with Single Service Women's football now being more competitive than ever.

UKAFF Women came together for the first time in the 2022/23 season for their annual Remembrance Day fixture being hosted at Widnes stadium against the Everton WSL Academy team. In build-up to the fixture, the squad were able to use and experience the first-class facilities at Wolverhampton Wanderers Training ground and paid their respects at Wolverhampton Cenotaph.

In a competitive fixture, UKAF Women came from behind to eventually run out 2-1 winners, goals coming from the prolific Cpl Olivia Dixon and the late, late match winner from RAF sub, Cpl Harriet Wellings.

A break from Dec-Apr from UKAF football to allow for the preparation and completion of the Annual Inter-Service tournament was followed by a historical 10 days for UKAF Women. Following a training camp using the incredible facilities at Wolverhampton Wanderers the squad travelling to Eindhoven for the Presidents Cup. Much like Presidents Cup '22, the fixture ended in a draw, 2-2, with both goals coming from the RAF's Cpl Pip Wilson. Yet again, penalties decided the outcome of the fixture, with UKAFF Women unfortunately losing out 4-3. The following day the squad travelled to MOD Garats Hay to compete for the Friendship Trophy vs Irish Defence Force with the

game being played for the first time at the same location on the same day as our male counterparts.

Exemplary in preparation, kicking off only 48 hours after the Presidents Cup, a wounded UKAFF Women's side hit back with a 5-0 victory to beat the Irish Defence Force at Quorn FC.

A clean sheet for debutant GK, Cpl Lucia Turner (Army) and 3 of the 5 goals from Army representatives Cpl Olivia Dixon (2) and, Player of the Match, LCpl Demi Edwards.

In total, during the 2022/23 season, six Army players have represented UKAF Women, with three Army personnel making their debut for the side in Cpl Heather Mearns, Cpl Lucia Turner & Pte Courtney Jones.

Army Representatives 2022/23:

Jess Horsley	Lois Jacobs
Olivia Dixon	Demi Edwards
Lucia Turner	Heather Mearns

An exciting five months ahead will see UKAF Women return to the field in October when they host the Bundeswehr and then return in November for their Annual Remembrance fixture.

The support shown from the Army FA across all areas this season towards UKAF Women has been vital and helped progress Women's service football further once again.

Through the support of the single Services and our sponsors UKAFF has continued to develop this year. We have had some changes on the committee (Brigadier Leigh Drummond taking over chair from Air Commodore Simon Harper and Maj Mark Ayre replacing Lt Col Rob Swan as Vice Chair), but the key developments have been on the pitch where both the Mens and Women's sides have enjoyed successful seasons.

Of real note was the Irish Defence Fixture where we were able to play both Mens and Women's games on the same day at the same location; a fabulous event that showcased the best of what UKAF footballers have to offer. The remainder of the year sees us take on the Bundeswehr, play on remembrance fixture and then try to regain the Kentish Cup. Thank you again to all those in the Army who have supported the UKAF teams and we look forward to working together over the coming year.

JUNE 23



**UKAF
HEAD COACH
APPOINTMENT**



SCAN ME



**UKAF V IRISH DEFENCE FORCE
(MEN AND WOMEN) AND DUTCH FORCES**



SCAN ME



SCAN ME



SCAN ME



SCAN ME

FEBRUARY 23



**UKAF
HEAD COACH
STEPS DOWN**



SCAN ME



**UKAF V
UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH WALES MEN**



SCAN ME

NOVEMBER 22



**UKAF
WOMEN V
EVERTON**



SCAN ME

SEPTEMBER 22



**THUMPING
WIN FOR
UKAF MEN**



SCAN ME





CIVILIAN CLUB PARTNERSHIPS

Whilst we have strong links with clubs within the Aldershot and District area due to our HQ location, we are always keen to build new relationships and partnerships with civilian clubs throughout the United Kingdom. Our Women's section has now made Cirencester Town the home of the Edwards Cup Final over the recent years. Through the initiative of Vice President Major General Darren Crook strong links have been established with EFL club Swindon Town and National League North South Shields FC too.

Our long-standing partnership with National League Aldershot Town is certainly a driving force with a two-way relationship. The Hampshire club is committed to the military and has silver membership of the Award Employer Recognition Scheme which supports Military Personnel and their families.

The annual Inter Services home Army men's match has been staged at the EBB Stadium for the majority of the past 15 years with the club agreeing to also stage the Women's fixture from last season onwards too on successive evenings.

Chair Shahid Azeem said at the 2023 Inter Services match, *"We are proud of our association with the Army and Army FA and are totally committed to continuing to grow the progressive links that we have all worked together to build over the past decade or so"*.

At the Inter Service matches last season we were delighted to welcome the Aldershot Town FC Girls Academy and our guests from the Aldershot Royal British Legion too.

During the course of the 2023/24 season, we look forward to supporting the Aldershot Town Shots Foundation Vets Hub which is held on the final Wednesday of each month. Indeed, one of the Hub events will see our Football and War seminar be

presented. As part of our commitment, we always sponsor the match ball at one of the Aldershot home matches- during 2023/24 it will be v Rochdale on Saturday 27 January. We are also proud to be involved in the annual Remembrance Day match the club stages so impeccably.

If you are involved with a civilian club and believe there are ways where the Army FA could become involved, please email:

graham.brookland@Armyfa.com





Capt Jimmy Blair is the Head Coach of the British Army Men's representative team. Prior to that he led the Infantry to the Massey Division 1 title. He joined the Army at a career office in Newcastle in late 1996. 19 years later he became an officer taking on the Queen's commission.

The passing of HM The Queen on 8 September 2022 was a day when Jimmy knew that he would be representing the British Army in a variety of events to mark such an historic occasion as we lost our loved Monarch who had served since 6 February 1952.

Jimmy takes the story up from here. *"I didn't think for one minute when I joined up 27 years ago, I would be taking the Queen's commission, the attestation and the Oath of Allegiance. It was the beginning of my journey. At that point of my life, like so many of us, all we had ever known was Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II."*

That sad day which we all knew would eventually come was all too sudden in September. From the initial announcement at lunchtime to the formal announcement of the passing of HM The Queen hours later shook the nation, it shook the world.

Jimmy was aware, however, that it would now be a landmark occasion. He continues, *"It was a shock. However as soon as the announcement was made, I knew as a Guard's officer I would be involved in the vigil. It all happened so quickly. From 10 days from the orders of Op Bridge practices and rehearsals were delivered."*

From 14th to 19th September the Lying-in-State of Her Majesty took place in Westminster Hall at the Palace of Westminster. The Coldstream Guard explains the rigid structure of involvement, "The Coldstream Guards RHQ ensured that anybody who wanted to take part in the vigil would be able to. There was a limited amount of space. The preparation, home service clothing, bearskin, medals, tunic, and everything that goes with it was all taken up to London late one evening and at 0200hrs I met up with my vigil team at Wellington Barracks. We were met then at Knightsbridge Barracks and met by instructors of the All-Arms Drill Wing who had been providing the final instructions and final rehearsals.

"At 0200 to 0400 we rehearsed at Knightsbridge until a minibus journey to Westminster at 0500hrs. Our shift was due to start at 0600hrs. The vigil lasted six hours and teams of up to 20 persons were broken down to four-man teams spending 20 minutes at the four corners of the coffin."

"I was on one of the early stages swapping with the Household Cavalry. It was early in the morning, and it was all quiet which fitted the occasion and important to ensure that final preparations were meticulous for an event that was broadcast worldwide."

"At 0555hrs my team of four surrounded by members of the Queen's Yeoman went down the stairs. They paused the members of the public as the teams swapped over. 20 minutes seemed a long time, but thoughts were going through my head."

It was also a privileged way of being able to pay my respects too whilst also sharing everybody's grief too from Londoners to those who had travelled far and wide."

Eight months later and Jimmy was then involved with the King's Coronation in May. Having taken part in many Trooping of the Colours and State visits he is quick to point out that this was the biggest by far. *"Wearing the red tunic and bearskin cap to be involved in the biggest parade of 70 years was something to be proud of."* he adds.

Jimmy was one of an estimated 7000 men and women of the UK Armed Forces involved in ceremonial duties at the Coronation. The planning was more precise with a detail for timing. He was also in a prime position on the day. His involvement was aiding the RBL standard bearers in Parliament Square which was where the King came through in the Diamond Carriage before he got out at Westminster Abbey to be coronated and then embark post ceremony in the Gold State Carriage.

It all started in Hampshire, however as Jimmy explains further, *"Having watched members of the Welsh Guards rehearse for many a day on Queens Avenue in Aldershot in the Guards Concentration area where hundreds of foot guards from all five guards' regiments took part my rehearsals were shorter over three days in RAF Odiham covering a few miles. It a sight to see with so many people congregating in one open space. The runway was the same size as the Mall and Whitehall."*

"The next time was an overnight rehearsal for all three services which saw thousands of troops congregate in central London via the railway network with the Navy coming in from Portsmouth and Army from Aldershot, Farnborough, and Alton all into Waterloo."

The Army then marched into Wellington Barracks, Navy into MOD Main Building and RAF into a church also at Wellington Barracks. The general public wouldn't have known what had hit them at 2100hrs on a calm Tuesday evening as thousands of troops disembarked, marched over Westminster Bridge and into rehearsal."

"Fast forward to 0200hrs all the troops were lined up from Parliament Square, along Whitehall and back down the Mall. The full rehearsal should have gone into Buckingham Palace Gardens but there had been a lot of rain. The GSM then stood everybody down and we were back to Waterloo Station and then on the trains back to the accommodation camps awaiting a de-brief as London was awakening."

The actual occasion itself was special for so many reasons. Jimmy concludes, *"Everybody had a pride about them. It was damp and dull, but it didn't detract from the event. I remember getting into central London the night before and went for a run around Parliament Square as the general public who had travelled from all around the world were lining the Mall and every place they could get to."*

"That was the bit when you pinch yourself realising that these people have got their vantage spot for what would be a 60 second glimpse on the day whilst we were fortunate to be in the position, we were in. It was a wonderful occasion."

"Coming from Newcastle I never thought I would ever be involved in both these events. It was a pleasure and a privilege to carry out the duties."





HEAD
COACH
CEREMONIAL
DUTY



The Indian Army Memorial Room at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst was the magnificent venue for the 2023 Army FA Awards Evening in late June.

The guest of the evening was Nigel Adkins who provided an enlightening and fascinating speech on a unique footballing career which, so far, has covered over 1500 matches as player, Physiotherapist before managing Scunthorpe United (taking the Lincolnshire club to the Championship twice), Southampton whom he led from 23rd place in League One to the Premier League in successive seasons. Nigel has also managed Reading, Sheffield United, Hull City, Charlton Athletic and Bangor City and is currently Technical Director at his hometown club Tranmere Rovers, where he also started his career as a 17-year-old goalkeeper.

Nigel made the opening Player of the Season presentations as follows:

Men Representative – Sgt Craig Stevenson

Men's U23 – LCpl Alfie Moulding

Crusaders Firsts – Capt Oli McAfee

Crusaders Masters – Lt Col Ali Beard

The following were recognised on the evening but unable to attend and will receive their awards in due course:

Women Representative - Cpl Imogen Fisher

Women's Development – Rfn Sinead Bushell

Reserve Women – LCpl Chantelle Dumbell

Men's Masters – Sgt Michael Morris

Army FA Vice President Major General Aidan Smyth QVRM TD made presentations to two recipients of the Long Service Awards presented to individuals having identified a minimum of 10 years' service to Army representative football. Recipients received a framed engraved pendant:

MAJOR MARK EVANS

Cardiff born Mark first became involved with Army representative football in 2005 as a qualified Physiotherapist. He continues to serve within the UK Armed Forces in addition to having been involved within civilian football at AFC Bournemouth, Plymouth Argyle and Darlington. He has also been involved within his hometown club Cardiff City for many years.

WO1 GARY LEWIS

Gary has over a decade of involvement within the Army Men representative team where he was Performance and Medical Lead. An experienced Army Rehabilitation Specialist he also remains involved within the UK Armed Forces mens squad.

NIGEL WISCOMBE

Nigel Wiscombe has been involved with Army Football since 1987. He made over 120 appearances for the Army and 50 (Combined Services) before spending over 20 years coaching representative goalkeepers. He was unable to attend and will receive his presentation at a later date.



Former Referee Chair from 1997 to 2009, Lt Col (Retd) Tony Rock made two presentations as follows:

Dobson's Trophy (Most Significant Refereeing contribution) – Sgt Dickie Doorbar

Le Breton Trophy (Most inspiring newcomer) – Cpl David Johnston

Army FA Chair, Brigadier Andy Cox MBE who opened the evening with an address covering all aspects of the season for Army Football from unit through to representative football through to community and defence engagement activity over a busy season made the following presentations:

An award recognising a minimum of nine years' service on the Board of Trustees:

Colonel Dave Jones

Mr John Taylor

A presentation to Mary Jane Little who has recently retired after 22 years within the Army Sport Lottery and who has been the main contact to thousands of soldiers during that period supporting overseas sports visits.

Brigadier (Retd) Niall Stokoe OBE who stepped down as Chair in December 2022 upon leaving the Army and had been on the Board since 2015 was presented with a framed memento in recognition of his outstanding service. Niall responded with a passionate speech noting that it was fitting that such an enjoyable time involved within Army Football started and ended at RMA Sandhurst.

The Army Football Association are thankful to all our sponsors who were in attendance for the evening (Fujitsu, Supacat, F5, Holt's Military Banking, Towergate Insurance, Royal British Legion, Leonardo, Babcock and VIMA Group).

The evening also gave us the opportunity to display our growing collections from the "Football and War" project highlighting significant Army Football Association from 1888 through to the present day.

We are also grateful to the British Army Band Sandhurst String Trio who performed on the evening and to Debi Backhurst and staff for the smooth operation of the evening.

Nigel Adkins also requested that the fee offered to him on the evening is donated to a Military charity. The donation will be made to the Aldershot branch of the Royal British Legion. We are appreciative to Nigel for his generosity in this matter.

ANNUAL AWARDS EVENTS PROGRAMME



2023 AWARDS DINNER



Army staff



British Army Band Sandhurst String Trio



Brigadier Cox address



Colonel Dave Jones



Cpl David Johnston



Crusaders Firsts- Capt Oli McAfee



Crusaders Masters-
Lt Col Ali Beard



John Taylor



Major Mark Evans



Mary Jane Little



Niall Stokoe speaks



Nigel Adkins speaks



Nigel Adkins presentation



Sgt Dickie Doorbar



Sgt Craig Stevenson



Presentations commence



REME group photo



Toast to The King



U23 - LCpl Alfie Moulding



WO1 Gary Lewis



Womens players



A successful season for Army FA Refereeing with a focus on recruitment, conversion of trainees to Junior County Referees, the adoption of the new FA Referee Progression Pathway and a renewed focus on Referee Development.

Over the course of the season 63 new referees have successfully passed the basic referee courses. 36 of our referees achieved promotion. One of our two referees operating on the English Football League, Steve Finch, achieve the milestone of 200 EFL games as an Assistant Referee and both he and Dec O'Shea officiated at the annual Remembrance fixture between Cambridge United and Bolton Wanderers as part of an all-military team. Other highlights included interservice and cup final duties as well as an excellent Referee Training Day support by Premiership Refereeing brothers Andy and Bobby Madley followed by an excellent dinner night.

2022/23 ARMY FA REFEREE PROMOTIONS

PROMOTION TO COUNTY REFEREE - LEVEL 7-6

Adam Doughty
 Andrew Denikiewicz
 Carl Beard
 David Johnston
 Gareth Davies
 Jack Munro
 James Rees
 James Wilkes
 Jamie Gibson
 Jon Marsh
 Kabir Rai
 Matthew Hills
 Ryan Hetherington
 Teddy Whale
 Robert Hodgen

PROMOTION TO SENIOR LEVEL 6-5

David Johnston
Emmanuel Adeeko
Kabir Rai
Luke Quinton
Michael Lowry
Ryan Hetherington
Sawhalhang Rai
Sheridon Grant
Steve Clout

LEVEL 5-4

Andrew Desroches
Arturo Robinson
Ashley Foster
Barrington Ellison
Calberth Charles
Daniel McLaren

LEVEL 4W - 3W

Calberth Charles
Daniel McLaren
Gareth Davies

LEVEL 4-3

Andy Biggin
James Garsrud

LEVEL 3W TO 2W

Levi Gray

ASSISTANT REFEREE PATHWAY STEP 3/4 TO STEP 2

Imran Khan



BASIC REFEREE COURSE

63 referees attended one of the Basic Referee Courses last season and early indications are that this is likely to be exceeded in the 2023/24 season as the interest in officiation grows.

Course Dates & Locations. The face-to-face part of the course will take place over a four-day period. Future course dates and locations are below.

- Catterick Garrison – Monday 18th September to Thursday 21st September 2023. This will be in conjunction with the UK North competition.
- Dalton Bks, Abingdon – Monday 25th March to Thursday 28th March 2024. This will be in conjunction with a UK South competition.
- MOD Garats Hay – Monday 13th May to Thursday 16th May 2024. This will be in conjunction with the Army Sixes.

- MOD Garats Hay – Monday 15th July to Thursday 19th July 2024. This will be in conjunction with a UK Midlands competition.
- Catterick Garrison – Monday 9th September to Thursday 12th September 2024. This will be in conjunction with the UK North competition.



**ALL MILITARY TEAM
TO OFFICIATE AT
EFL REMEMBRANCE GAME**



INTER SERVICES 2023

ROYAL NAVY v RAF

MEN:

Referee: Capt Ash Allen
 Asst: CoH Ben Duffill
 Asst: SSgt Chris Steadman
 4th: Mike Robertson-Tant

UNDER 23

Referee: Cpl Harry Scott
 Asst: Cpl Ash Foster
 Asst: W01 Baz Ellison
 4th: Sgt Baz Brooks

FEMALE

Referee: SSgt Calberth Charles
 Asst: Cpl David Johnston
 Asst: W01 Dan McLaren
 4th: 2 Lt Levi Grey

MASTERS

Referee: Sgt Andy Cuthbert
 Assts: W02 George Postings Capt Gareth Davis
 4th: Sgt Sheridan Grant





The Army FA Annual Referees Awards dinner was held at the home of National League Aldershot Town FC in May. Over 60 people were in attendance and enthused by the after dinner double act of special guests, Andy and Bobby Madley. The Huddersfield born brothers spoke about their careers at length in an entertaining session hosted by former FA Premier League official WO2 Andy Halliday MBE including working through the levels from West Yorkshire parks to reach the FA Premier League and also the FIFA list. Between them they refereed 58 matches last season including Andy taking charge of the FA Premier League match at Anfield as Liverpool defeated Manchester United 7-0.

The evening commenced with a presentation to former Army FA Referee Chair Lt Col (Retd) Pete Conn MBE. Pete, who served on the Referees Executive Committee between 2005 and 2018 received a 30 year Long Service award that had been provided by the Football Association. Ironically Pete was appointed as Fourth Official the previous week alongside his son Aaron at Aldershot Town's final National League match of the season versus Altrincham in a rare father/son appointment.

Sgt Dan Smith was awarded his UKAF FA tie after officiating at a recent UKAF fixture.

WO2 George Postings was presented his Army FA Chair's Coin by Vice Chair Colonel Dave Jones in recognition to his outstanding contribution to Army football.

The Meritorious Service Award (MSA) is a presentation made to Army Referees who has served a minimum of 10 years as a referee including a minimum of five years on either the Executive Committee or through divisional representation. Bobby and Andy Madley presented the MSA honours to the following:

WO1 Chris Hastings

WO1 Bri Slinn

Sgt Simon Thorburn

The newly agreed presentation for the MSA is a framed cap.

SSgt Dan Smith and Cpl Harry Scott were presented with an Army FA Cap. This is applicable to an Army Referee who has competed five qualifying appointments as a Referee with a minimum of one appointment from list 1 and one from list 2. The remaining three appointments can be from list 1, 2 or 3.



List 1 - Army Major Units Challenge Cup Final, Kentish Cup, Inter Service Men's RAF v RN, Woolwich Cup Final, Super Cup Final

List 2 - Army Minor Units Challenge Cup Final, Army Reserve Challenge Cup Final, Edwards Cup Final, Inter Service Masters RAF v RN, Inter Service U23s RAF v RN, Inter Service Women's RAF v RN

List 3 - Army Men's Fixture, Women's Senior Fixture, U23's Fixture, Army Reserve Men Fixture, Army Reserve Women's Fixture, Any UKAFF International Fixture

The most prestigious award for an Army Referee is the **Dobsons Trophy**. This was donated by Major Alan (Retd) Dobson on his retirement in 1988 as the Army FA Secretary and may be won by any level of referee. It is awarded (with a keepsake replica) by members of the Army FA Referees' Committee to the referee who has made the most significant contribution to Army Football during the season. The Trophy cannot be won by the same individual more than once. The 2022/23 winner was **Sgt Dickie Doorbar**.

Cpl David Johnston was presented with the Le Breton Trophy. This was donated to the Army FA Referees' Committee in 2007 by Brian Le Breton who was Referees' Secretary for 21 years. The criteria is to present the trophy (with replica) to a newly qualified Level 7 Army FA Referee who has shown the most potential and commitment.

Both of the above awards were re-presented at the Army FA Annual Awards evening at RMA Sandhurst in June.

After the Madley brothers received their presentations of a gift framed pendant in appreciation of their support of both the awards dinner and earlier in the day at the annual RAFA Training Day the final presentation of the evening was provided by current Referee Chair Major Nigel Bamford in recognition to Graham Brookland who stepped down as Referees' Secretary on 31 July 2022 after 15 years' service to take over the CEO/Secretary role after the retirement of Major Billy Thomson.



Nigel Bamford and Graham Brookland



Bri Slinn



Chris Hastings



Dan Smith Cap



Harry Scott



Danny McDermid



David Johnston



Dickie Doorbar



George Postings



Graham Brookland



Madley Brothers



Pete Conn



Madley Brothers



McDermid Burton Brookland Conn Halliday



Pete Conn



Si Thorburn



ARMY FA

REFEREE BASIC COURSES



➤ **CATTERICK GARRISON**
Monday 18th September to Thursday 21st September 2023
This will be in conjunction with the UK North competition.

➤ **DALTON BARRACKS, ABINGDON**
Monday 25th March to Thursday 28th March 2024
This will be in conjunction with the UK South competition.

➤ **MOD GARATS HAY**
Monday 13th May to Thursday 16th May 2024
This will be in conjunction with the Army Sixes.

➤ **MOD GARATS HAY**
Monday 15th July to Thursday 19th July 2024
This will be in conjunction with the Battle for Centre competition.

➤ **MOD GARATS HAY**
Monday 9th September to Thursday 12th September 2024
This will be in conjunction with the Battle for UK competition.

➤ **CATTERICK GARRISON**
Monday 7th October to Thursday 10th October 2024
This will be in conjunction with the Army North Sixes.



**SCAN ME
FOR MORE
INFORMATION**



**SCAN ME
TO APPLY
FOR A COURSE**



**SERVING ARMY PERSONNEL WILL BE REIMBURSED
COURSE FEE UPON COMPLETION OF FIVE MATCHES
THROUGH THE ARMY SPORT SOTR SCHEME.**



ARMY CHALLENGE CUP FINAL - 10TH MAY 2023

Referee: Sgt Si Thorburn

Asst: SSgt Steve Tymms, Cpl Harry Scott

4th: WO1 Baz Ellison



ARMY MINOR UNITS CUP FINAL - 26TH APRIL 2023

Referee: SSgt Calberth Charles

Asst: WO2 Dan McLaren, WO1 Arturo Robinson



SUPER CUP FINAL 2022 - HELD IN 2023

Referee: SSgt Jimmy Garsrud

Asst: Cpl Jamie Gibson, LCpl Luke Quinton



ARMY RESERVE CHALLENGE CUP FINAL - 13TH MAY 2023

Referee: Col Davy Jones

Assts: Capt Gareth Davis

Assts: WO1 Jon Marsh

4th: Cpl Ryan Hetherington



WOOLWICH CUP FINAL - 24TH MAY 2023

Referee: Sgt Chris Steadman

Assts: Ash Foster

Assts: Maj Andy Desroches

4th: Sgt Si Thorburn



EDWARDS CUP FINAL - 24TH MAY 2023

Referee: WO2 Gaz Dunn

Assts: Capt Gareth Davis

Assts: Pte Elle Dewhirst

4th: Cpl Ryan Hetherington



ARMED FORCES DAY - 24TH JUNE 2023

2Lt Levi Gray

Cpl Ryan Hetherington

Cpl Issa Taboada

Maj Steve Clout

Col Davy Jones

Sgt Kierran Corrigan



In October the Army Women representative squad hosted players and management from Women's Super League Tottenham Hotspur. A morning introduction to the Role Fitness Test Solider, a form of basic training for soldiers was undertaken at RMA Sandhurst before an afternoon's training session for the two squads in Aldershot.

In addition to developing a strong relationship between the two teams the purpose of the days was to learn from each other covering aspects of teamwork and leadership qualities. The Tottenham team were also given a tour of the Sandhurst grounds where they learnt more about what life in the British Army is all about.

The whole day was viewed by the then Head Coach of Tottenham, Rehanne Skinner.

One of the event organisers, SSgt Yvette Kemp spoke to BFBS on the day and said,

"For our girls, these girls are role models for them. We watch these girls week in, week out on the TV so to be playing next to them, it is a day they will never forget."

Rehanne Skinner commented, "There are loads of things we can take out of this day, learning about some of the things that the Army women have done and the things they do on their day-to-day basis."

"It's just really tough and obviously they are very committed to everything that they are trying to achieve here. I think that's inspirational."

"We learn through some of their functional testing, the things that are really important for being in difficult situations, how to work together as a team and the resilience element associated with that is really important so, hopefully, we can take lessons from that, that help us move forward."

**BRITISH ARMY
EXPERIENCE FOR
TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR
AT SANDHURST
AND ALDERSHOT
TRAINING DAY**





Members of the Tri-Service Toffees Supporters club and the Everton in the Community Veterans Hub



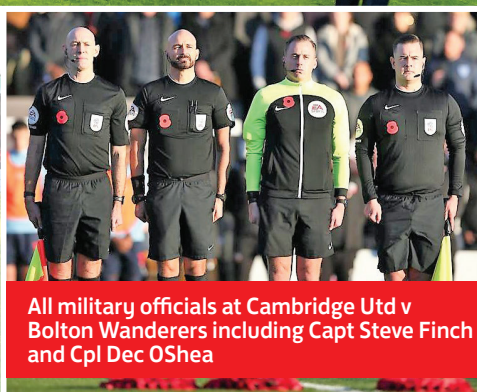
Army Women player Rfn Bushell at WSL Manchester Utd v Chelsea



Referee Vice Chair WO2 Gaz Dunn at Sheffield United



Aldershot Town



All military officials at Cambridge Utd v Bolton Wanderers including Capt Steve Finch and Cpl Dec OShea



National League Aldershot Town- Home of the British Army remembers



INTRODUCTION:

Sgt Sada Sumareh, who hails from Churchills Town, The Gambia is the Personal Assistant to the Director of Personnel, Maj Gen Griffiths. He joined the Army in 2008 and serves as a member of the Adjutant General's Corps (Staff and Personnel Support). Throughout his tenure, he has demonstrated a remarkable commitment to charitable endeavours, particularly in his home country, the Gambia. Over the last decade, his significant contributions to various charity events, his dedication to education, and his support for female empowerment through sports has been remarkable.

Charity Events and Educational Support: One of the most notable aspects of Sgt Sada Sumareh's philanthropic efforts is his involvement in multiple charity events in the Gambia. With an unwavering dedication to the betterment of his community, he has participated in various initiatives aimed at improving the lives of underprivileged children. Sgt Sumareh has generously sponsored children's education, providing them with essential school materials, ensuring they have access to the tools they need to pursue their academic dreams.

Another remarkable aspect of Sgt Sada Sumareh's philanthropy lies in his support for female empowerment through sports, particularly football. He was generously donated some unused

football kit by the FA, and instead of keeping it for himself, he chose to use it for a noble cause. Sgt Sumareh donated the football kit to both male and female teams in the Gambia, including the Gambia Armed Forces female football team, encouraging and empowering young women to participate in sports. Not content with just his work with the Army, Sada – now a married father of two children, has given back his time and skills to become a role model to many youngsters back in his home community in Gambia.

Sgt Sada Sumareh's connection to Plymouth and his inspiration from footballers like Cherno Samba, Sylvan Ebanks-Blake and Barry Hayles further adds to the depth of his philanthropic journey. It is commendable to see how individuals like Samba, Blake and Hayles, who have made a mark in football, have also extended their efforts to support youth development and empowerment through charitable initiatives. Sgt Sumareh's admiration for them and their work likely influenced and motivated him to engage in similar endeavours in his own community, contributing to the betterment of the lives of young people in the Gambia. Their positive impact on the community and their commitment to uplifting others serve as a testament to the power of sports figures in creating social change and inspiring future generations to give back to society.

Recognition and Acknowledgment: Sgt Sada Sumareh's selfless dedication to philanthropy and development has not gone unnoticed. Recently, he was recognized and praised by high-ranking officials, the Vice President of the Gambia, the Minister of Defence and the Deputy CDS of the Gambian Armed Forces, for his exceptional contributions to the community. This acknowledgment further solidifies Sgt Sumareh's reputation as a true ambassador for development and philanthropic acts, inspiring others to follow his example.

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, Sgt Sada Sumareh's remarkable contributions to charity events, educational support, and empowerment of female athletes demonstrate his unwavering commitment to social development in the Gambia. Throughout his 14-year tenure in the Army, he has made a positive impact on the lives of many, leaving a lasting legacy as a true ambassador for development and philanthropy. Sgt Sada Sumareh's dedication and selflessness serve as an inspiration to both his fellow service members and the community at large, exemplifying the power of compassion and generosity in creating meaningful change.



ARMY WORKSHOPS

When people think of the army, the vast majority simply envisage soldiers fighting on the front line. However, despite soldiers being the face of the overall operation, with over 200 different jobs and more than 40 apprenticeships available, there really is a potential career for everyone.

The sporting opportunities are also endless. The British Army provides the chance to pursue high-level participation in sport, while perfecting a trade, gaining invaluable experience, and furthering a career.

Lee Fraser and Barry Rizza both served in the army for over 20 years and are now Sports Engagement Warrant Officers for the British Army and run their own initiative called STEPS (Soldier, Trade skills, Experiences, Personal Development, Sporting Success). As part of the Army's partnership with

LFE, the pair visit football clubs all over the country to deliver workshops to young footballers to educate and open their eyes to the opportunities on offer if a full-time professional career in football doesn't quite work out. STEPS is delivered as an engaging workshop that provides an overview of the journey (the steps) a scholar would take to achieve both personal development and sporting success within the British Army.

LFE recently caught up with Lee and Barry to find out more.



What do your sessions involve?

Lee: "It's a life skills workshop, highlighting opportunities in the Army for those young footballers who don't make it. The initial presentation has a constant underlying football theme as this allows the scholars to relate what we are delivering enabling an engaging workshop throughout the session which is key. It also allows us to create an environment where we can myth bust on some of the areas that are preconceived ideas in the eyes of scholars whilst also re enforcing the message of the hard work and effort involved, required to allow them to achieve their maximum potential. After the workshops, when we ask the lads for feedback, the main thing that comes back is 'they just didn't realise.' They did not realise the opportunities available. They just see what they see on the TV and we're showing them it's not all like that. Following on from the interactive presentation we put on a couple of classroom based team building activities. Our first activity acts as an ice breaker to get them out their comfort zones and to form groups leading onto activity two. The second activity begins with both myself and Barry talking about the values and standards essential to a soldier where we look to get these core values from the audience. From here we turn it on them, in their groups they must come up with their own values and standards of being an apprentice at their academy. This has gone down really well as they academy managers and coaches at the clubs become involved

in judging which group have created the best set of values. It allows an opportunity to empower players to be accountable for what they believe in and can also re instil any values and standards the club we are visiting have already embedded into them.

"We've been delivering STEPS just over a year, and we've done 14 clubs. STEPS will be delivered on a two year cycle to allow for fresh audiences. With the initial relationship built between clubs we have delivered to; further engagement activity will continue every season working on essential skills such as leadership and communication."

What careers can the Army provide?

Lee: "This is an important part of the myth busting segment of our workshops. We ask the lads how many jobs they think there are in the Army. When we tell them there are over 220 trades, they're shocked. You could be a mechanic, an engineer, chef, anything. In the presentation, we try and relate them all to the football pitch, starting with the goalkeeper, these are your medical trades such as nurse, dentist, vet, essentially the "safe hands" all the way up to the striker position, that's your infantry soldier. It's important to make the workshops relatable. We talk about the trades, the qualifications, going from zero qualifications all the way to GCSEs. They can do engagement visits and experience days to see if it's something for them, but where our partnership with LFE comes in is giving that little bit further.

"An academy footballer is about 75% there (being a soldier) due to the fantastic work put in by the academies. This is why the link is so good between us and LFE. These young lads know about working in a team, being on time, what to wear, what to eat, being fit and motivated. The transferrable skills are there. Some players won't make the cut at their clubs because they're missing a couple of bits – the Army can give them that."

"We also highlight that again due to the opportunities available with sport where we have over forty sports supported by the Army, it gives them the chance as athletes to realise the peak of their sporting potential could be in a completely different discipline. We have had soldiers not quite there in terms of footballing ability trying their hand at boxing and reaching a professional level in this field."►

"THE TRANSFERRABLE SKILLS ARE THERE. SOME PLAYERS WON'T MAKE THE CUT AT THEIR CLUBS BECAUSE THEY'RE MISSING A COUPLE OF BITS – THE ARMY CAN GIVE THEM THAT."

What footballing opportunities can the Army give a recently released player?

Barry: "At the highest level of football in the Army, there are four different levels you can represent. You've got your regiment where you work on a day-to-day basis, they'll play on a Wednesday afternoon in a local league against other regiments. Then you've got your corps, such as the Royal Engineers and Intelligence Corps. They also play in a league on Friday's. Then you've got the Army, they probably play 10 games in a season. They do a couple days training camp leading up to the game. The pinnacle is to represent the UK Armed Forces which is the best of the Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force. During the season, you could end up playing 40/50 games and you're travelling around the country, bouncing between teams.

"I went around the world playing football with the Army, I had the honour of being captain for both the Army and UK Armed Forces. I have played in places like Brazil, Mauritius, New Zealand – all over the world playing constant football. At the same time, I was getting trade qualifications which is what our package involves. I'm now employed by a college through the transferrable skills that I picked up in the Army. I was on that same journey as a scholar with Inverness Caledonian Thistle, I remind the scholars during our workshops that just because you get the bad news, you can still go on and get qualified, make a career, and play high-level sport."

"We like to highlight Tom Broadbent as a successful

case study. He initially didn't make it as a footballer because he was missing a couple of bits – such as physicality and confidence... he joined the Army, with the mentoring and development he was provided both on and off the field during his time in the Royal Artillery he successfully plied his trade for both the Army and UK Armed Forces as a left back as during our presentations we light heartedly say how the manager didn't fancy him as a centre back. With this newly gained confidence and development, he got another chance and ended up winning League Two with Swindon Town just a couple of years ago, as a centre back."

What is the standard of football like?

Lee: "At corps level, the PFA came down and said it's probably above the highest level of university standard, so pretty high. We've got lads in the Army playing step four or five level at the weekend."

Barry: "When we were over in Brazil, we were there at the same time as the England team who were there for the World Cup, and we were sharing the training facility with them. We played against certain Brazilian forces who due to national service had guys on their team on the books at big clubs like Flamengo. We've travelled to Germany and played in Bundesliga stadiums in front of 20 thousand people, the opportunities and experiences really are endless."

What is the work/football balance?

Lee: "STEPS as mentioned is our acronym. To achieve anything, you have to go through steps and climb the

ladder to succeed. In football, it's joining the academy, going through the age groups, getting your apprenticeship, getting your professional deal etc. Same applies for the Army, you get your trade skills, experiences, personal development skills, then sporting success. Get all those bits right, get the hard work done on the training pitch and with an education you are provided. If you work hard on the training pitch and the classroom invariably you start the game. It's the same with us in the Army. You get your trade skills, work hard as a soldier first and then that opens other opportunities like sport, travel and adventure. Do the hard work first, you'll then get your reward."

How have the workshops been received?

Lee: "From the feedback we have received, certainly some of their heads have been turned. Now because they've realised there are so many different trades and opportunities, it's something some of them will consider. It's a great opportunity, and a very viable one. As mentioned scholars due to their time at an academy are in a perfect position for a smooth and enjoyable transition"

Barry: "The workshops have been received really well. At the end of each one, we ask the attendees if they have learnt anything new and almost 100 percent of the time the answer is yes. We get asked the old classic "have you shot anybody?" but what people don't realise is that you can go 20+ years in the Army and never shoot a weapon. That's a huge part of the myth busting." ■



For one of Lee and Barry's most recent STEPS workshops, they headed to Luton Town where they spoke to the Hatters' U18 and U21 sides.

Wayne Polson, Luton Town's Academy Player Care Officer, told LFE about his experience of the STEPS workshop.

"Lee and Barry delivered a workshop in our analysis room to the U18s and U21s. There was a presentation that described the path roots of players that have been part of the army and what they do in terms of how they joined. You have to do two years in the army and then you can filter into different sectors, and it explains how you can get into the playing side of it as well. Clubs that they've played for, players that have had success stories of being in the army and coming into the professional game.

"We actually have Craig Alcock who is our U16s manager who has actually done that route. He was initially in the army and then went into playing professional football. After the workshop, the players were really appreciative

of Lee and Barry giving them his time and the way in which they actually engage the group is brilliant. It's not just about delivering a workshop, but it's about making it relatable for the players. That's what helped the group stay engaged. The activities that he did within the session were good and made it relatable to the club.

"Two of the lads after the session spoke to Lee directly and they were definitely keen to learn more. With boys in this environment, they're not sure where they're going to end up but the more options they have, the better. This is definitely one that guarantees a different pathway/option for the boys that are in the academy/development centre. Being in the army gives you the chance to play at a high level as well. One, you're building a career in the army but two, you can be playing football at a high level as well. I think that was the main takeaway from the workshop."

LEWIS SIMONS



In 2019, Lewis Simmons was released by his boyhood club Preston North End at the conclusion of his two-year apprenticeship.

For many young footballers who suffer(ed) the same fate, knowing what to do next can be difficult. However, for Lewis, a potential career in the army was always something that had been of interest to him.

Fast forward four years and the 22-year-old is now a paratrooper in the British Army. LFE spoke to Lewis to find out more about his transition from the footballing world into the Parachute Regiment.

"I got scouted by Preston at eight years old and signed for them when I was nine. I played all the way through up until 16 and from there I signed a scholarship, so a two-year apprenticeship. I was 17/18 playing with the reserves but then I got to the end of my scholarship and wasn't offered a professional deal," Lewis told LFE. "I did kind of see it coming, although I did think at the time, I still had a chance. Look, getting a professional contract is one of the hardest things to achieve. Out of 13 of 14 lads in my team, only two got a pro deal in the end. A lot of the lads that I still speak to have pretty much fallen out of the game. A couple of them still play at semi-pro level, but other than that, no one really plays anymore, but I knew I wanted to carry on playing in some sense.

After spending nine years with the Lancashire club, Lewis admits receiving the news that he wouldn't be getting a professional contract was hard to deal with, but for him, he used it as fuel to go and make something of himself. "Getting released probably was the hardest thing that's ever happened to me but in my eyes you can either sit back and cry about it and feel sorry for yourself, or get up, go again, and go and do something about it.

"I just made sure I was still playing, I think that was the most important thing, just playing. Taking that initial step of going down and playing non-league football for a bit actually helped me massively. Going from playing with boys my age at 18/19 with the reserves, it's not as competitive, there's no real sort of winning mentality because it's not as competitive in terms of results, it's all individual performance based. Sometimes taking one step down (to non-league) can mean you then take two or three steps forward. So yeah, playing was it for me. Just because I'd had a little set back, it didn't mean that was the end of football. ►



"THERE IS SO MANY DIFFERENT TEAMS YOU CAN PLAY FOR IN THE ARMY. MY UNIT IS THE PARACHUTE REGIMENT BUT THERE IS HUNDREDS OF OTHER UNITS WHICH CAN PLAY AGAINST EACH OTHER."



"I was playing for AFC Blackpool but then Covid hit. I didn't know exactly what to do but I had always had an interest in the army, and I knew there were lots of opportunities to play football and at a good standard within the army, so I signed up.

"It's something I'd always had in the back of my head to be honest. Growing up, obviously becoming a professional footballer was my main goal but I'd always had a back-up plan with the army. My dad was in the army, but he never forced it upon me, it was all off my own back. I don't think he really wanted me to go in to be fair, but it was something I wanted to do. I joined the Parachute Regiment and that is kind of the elite of the elite. For me, it was either the Royal Marines or the Parachute Regiment. They're the two most physically demanding in my eyes, the most challenging. I decided if I was going to do it, I wanted to join the best.

Within a year, Lewis had gone from training to try and earn a professional contract with Preston North End, to being put through his paces in brutal conditions in his attempt to become a paratrooper. "I went to Estonia to do cold weather survival training. It was -22 degrees; it was absolutely freezing. I was out there for five weeks and that's essentially where the money is made because you get paid when you're on deployment and travelling overseas. I also went to North Macedonia doing an airborne exercise working with foreign nations. Those types of deployments are training, trying to keep yourself ready for the real thing so to speak."

Not long after the completion of his training, Lewis was thrown in right at the deep end when he was deployed to Afghanistan as part of Operation Pitting. This was a British military operation to evacuate British civilians following the 2021 Taliban offensive.

"We went to extract British civilians and civilians who worked with NATO forces over there as the Taliban were taking over. I was there for 14 days, literally straight out of training and kind of like a rabbit in headlights, but it was a big moment for me.

"I'd only been out of training six weeks, so naturally I was nervous. I'd trained for 30 weeks to be in the Parachute Regiment and then all of a sudden, they're like 'you're going to Afghanistan' with all of these experienced paratroopers who had been there and done it. It was a shock to be honest. At the end of the day, I'm going to Afghanistan. You know it's the real thing.

"When I got over there, I was a bit wary and nervous. The first couple of days passed and my adrenaline was through the roof. Yet when you realise, you're surrounded by the best of the best, you almost feel safe. You're around people you can trust, people who have been through the same hardship and training as you have. I know it sounds a bit cliché, but they are like your brothers. You can talk to them about anything. If you have any issues at all, you can tell them. It's one big family and everyone looks after each other.

"Once the first few days have passed and the nerves have settled down and you actually get to work, all your training kicks in and you just realise that this is your job, and this is what I am here to do. It was a scary experience, but one I really enjoyed."

Alongside his day-to-day job in the army, Lewis has continued to pursue his passion for football. Thanks to the huge amount of investment put into army sport and the endless opportunities that it provides, the footballer turned paratrooper's transition from a training ground to the barracks has been a relatively smooth one. "There is so many different teams you can play for in the army. My unit is the Parachute Regiment but there is hundreds of other units which can play against each other. You've then got the actual army team which is like the ultimate where all the regiments combine together. So, all the best players from the different regiments play together to make up the team. Like myself, you get a lot of players who

have joined the army with experience of playing in an academy previously or at a high level like me. I know lads in the team who have been let go by the likes of York City, Leicester, and Hereford, so we've got a lot of players who have played in a professional environment before. To be fair, it's a really good standard of football.

"Technically, the level playing for the U18s or reserves at Preston was higher we were all training twice a day by elite coaches and getting looked after like professionals but with the army it's men's football. I'd compare it to non-league football. We do get some players who play in the Conference South or North division at the weekend and play for the army as well. If I'm being honest, I'd say the standard of football in the army edges the academy standard slightly overall. You wouldn't realise it from an outsiders perspective because in the army the main priority isn't football of course, it's your job but sport is huge in the army. So much money is invested, you get your kit and tracksuits paid for, in the changing rooms we have all the sports gels, nutrition, masseuses, analysts, you get everything. It really is like being in a professional changing room environment.

"It's made that transition out the academy environment so much easier because the treatment in the army is so similar. It's kind of like a new lease of life because I still feel like I'm almost in an academy, playing at a men's level, doing a job I enjoy and getting paid for it too." ■





SUPPORTING GIRLS FOOTBALL IN KOSOVO

Colonel Davy Jones has been supporting girls and women's football in Kosovo for nearly ten years following his deployment to the Balkans in 2013. He has been able to support female football in Kosovo at various levels with thousands of pounds of support, resources and guidance over the last decade. Colonel Davy saw the importance of football to girls and young women in Kosovo especially as it has the youngest population in Europe and is the second poorest nation on the continent.

In February this year Colonel Davy travelled to Kosovo to support the work of KVV Prishtina FC with the donation of two Army FA strips. KVV is the first girls' football club in Kosovo and has grown over the last few years with teams across the various age groups.

They aim of the club is to promote gender equality and girls empowerment through football and also supporting wider participation of girls and young women from deprived and minority communities. KVV are also the first club to support individuals to play football living with special needs including Down Syndrome. Colonel Davy says that *"Kosovo needs our support in many areas especially following the Balkan Wars of the 1990s. Girls and women's football has gone from strength to strength and KVV in recent years and has done a fantastic job to promote community cohesion and provide chances for the less well off and underrepresented. I am pleased that the Army FA have been able to support football in Kosovo for several years, making a difference with the various donations and support provided"*.

KEY EVENTS 2023/24

ARMY FA SUPER CUP FINAL

SUN 10 SEPTEMBER 2023

4 LANCS v 3 PARA

Bamber Bridge FC, PR5 6UU

KICK OFF 11AM

AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS 2023

10 TO 27 OCTOBER

14 Oct – Australian Army v British Army (Men, Women, Masters)

17 Oct – Australian Royal Navy v British Army (Men, Women, Masters)

19 Oct – Australian Royal Air Force v British Army (Men, Women, Masters)

Venue: Valentine Sports Park, Sydney

UNDER 23 INTER SERVICES

WED 7 FEBRUARY

RAF v Army U23

Venue/Kick Off: TBC

WED 14 FEB

Army v RN U23

Aldershot Military Stadium

Kick Off: 1500hrs

INTER SERVICES

**Proposed Home dates- To Be Confirmed:*

WOMEN INTER SERVICES

ARMY V RAF

Tue 5 March 2024

Aldershot Town FC 1900hrs

MEN INTER SERVICES

ARMY V RAF

Wed 6 March 2024

Aldershot Town FC 1900hrs

DATES/VENUES TBC:

RN v Army (Women)

RN v Army (Men)

RN v Army (Masters)

MASTERS INTER SERVICES

ARMY V RAF

Wed 6 March 2024

KO/Venue TBC

RN V ARMY MASTERS

TBC

ARMY FA MINOR UNITS CUP FINAL

Sponsored by Townergate Insurance

WED 24 APRIL

Aldershot Military Stadium

1900hrs

ARMY FA 123RD MAJOR UNITS CHALLENGE CUP FINAL

Sponsored by Townergate Insurance

WED 01 MAY

Aldershot Military Stadium

1900hrs

ARMY RESERVE CHALLENGE CUP FINAL

SAT 04 MAY 2024

Venue Aldershot Military Stadium

KO 14.00

ARMY SIXES

WED 15 MAY 2024

Venue: Garats Hay

WOMEN'S EDWARDS CUP CORPS FINAL

WED 15 MAY

Cirencester Town FC

Kick Off: TBC

MEN'S "HOLTS" WOOLWICH CUP CORPS FINAL

WED 22 MAY

Venue/KO TBC

TBC

ARMED FORCES DAY FESTIVAL OF FOOTBALL

SAT 22 JUNE 2024

Herefordshire FA

Army Reserve Men, Women and Masters

KO 12.00 / 14.00 / 16.00

ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER

JUNE - TBC

VENUE: RMA SANDHURST



*A Sporting
Chance*



Can I join?

Membership of the Army Sports Lottery (ASL) is open to all members of the Regular Army and Reserve; payment is deducted at source by JPA.

Military Support Force/Retired Officers/Retired Other Ranks who are ex-Army, whether working or retired, are eligible. Payment is annual in advance via the Worldpay gateway on the ASL website.

To apply visit our website www.armysportlottery.com



Benefits

Every ASL ticket is entered into a weekly prize draw with the opportunity of winning weekly cash prizes totalling **£30K**. In July and December a Super Draw is held when all prizes are doubled.

Annually, **£1.62M** is distributed in Prize Money. In addition, members can benefit through grants for Overseas Sports Tours, Sports Official /Coaching Courses, International Competitors Grants, Lev 3 AT, ACSO 1209 and Winter Sports Activities.

CONTACT US

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www.gambleaware.com



ARMY