

# THE SOLDIERS' GAME

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ARMY FA

Issue 10 – Summer Edition 2012



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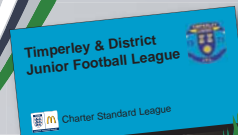
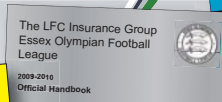
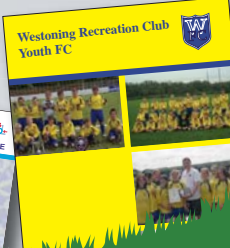
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## WELCOME



### VICE CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

#### Brigadier Mitch Mitchell MBE

I am delighted to be home after my recent Afghanistan tour and for the opportunity to pick up the Vice-

Chairman's post again. First, I must thank Brigadier Steve Vickery for standing in for me so ably. His willingness to step in reminded me just how reliant we are on a pretty small, but very committed band of volunteers to make Football in the Army run from Unit grassroots through to Army representative level. So my first message in this 10th Edition is to say a big thank you to all who help get soldiers out on the park every week, at what-ever level.

The Army Challenge Cup and Minor Units Competition had 114 teams enter, far more unit entries than any other Army sport's competition - culminating in our 2nd Festival of Football on a wet and windy day at Aldershot Military Stadium, in front of a good crowd. Well done to 4 Mechanised Brigade HQ and Signal Squadron for retaining the Minor Units' Cup and to 2 Signal Regiment for winning the Army Challenge Cup for the first time since 1995. The Inter-Corps Massey Trophy was a nail bitter – coming down to the last kick of the last game, with the REME winning for the first time in 18 years.

Our Representative sides had a productive season. The Army Women's Team retained the Inter Service Competition and also secured the Southern Counties Cup competition, which is a terrific achievement against really strong County opposition.

The Army U23 Development Team also tasted success winning their Inter Services tournament with victories against the Royal Navy followed by success versus the RAF at Farnborough FC.

The Men's Team are getting closer to a clean sweep, undefeated in this year's Inter Service Competition; they lost out to the RAF on goal difference for a second successive season. They did though, like the Women, win the Southern Counties Cup. Finally, our officials continue to progress, with one Referee and 3 Assistants on the Football League and 30 officials on the Supply and Contributory leagues; We have re-invigorated our Army Coaching Association, with over 70 active members and held a number of excellent Coaching Days.

For our 125th Anniversary, which will run from April 2013 to April 2014, we hope to have a high profile Charity fixture against a celebrity-side (details to follow); a Mens and Women's Representative Team tour of Brazil to coincide with the World Cup; and the U23s will tour the UK to take Army Football into the heart of the our Inner-Cities. We also hope to open our new Army Football Development Centre. This facility will herald some much needed investment in our infrastructure – with significant financial support from our own Army Sports Control Board –and raise the standards of the facilities which underpin all our Football training and education courses.

If we are to continue to meet the challenging targets we have set - raising Football's profile, reputation and standards inside the Army and across the National Game as one of the Football Association's 44 Counties – then we need to attract a broader and deeper cohort of volunteers to help. As the Army returns post-Afghanistan to a contingent footing we will need to re-energise sport and adventure training. In Army Football we want to be in the vanguard of this return to 'Sporting Contingency'. We have ambitious plans but we rely on volunteers to turn plans into reality.





# INTERNATIONAL STALEMATE AT ALDERSHOT TOWN

## Army 0-0 German Bundeswehr

*By Brigadier Steve Vickery*

**In a match that had been planned for the last year, the Army finally played the German Armed Forces at the EBB Stadium in Aldershot on 23 May.**

In a match that had been planned for the last year, the Army finally played the German Armed Forces at the EBB Stadium in Aldershot on 23 May.

The Germans currently hold the Armed Forces European and World titles, although interestingly the British Army does not take part in either competition - should we look in to this?

Players were introduced to the Chairman of Army Football, General Brealey, and the German Defence Attaché, Brigadier-General Nolte. Young players from the Aldershot Academy lined the pitch and provided the ball boys.

With coverage on BFBS and Garrison Radio, the match kicked off in sweltering conditions. A crowd of 1,100 enjoyed the early exchanges as the Germans sprayed the ball across the pitch. But the British Bulldog spirit was alive and well and the teams were level at half time.



The second half was a more even affair with both teams having opportunities to attack. Down to 10 men after a needless red card, the Army fought to the very end and matched the German side for effort.

Handshakes all around at the end to celebrate a hard-earned 0-0 draw.

In truth the German

side edged the game throughout, but given their pedigree, this was a fabulous result for the men in red.

After the game, players and officials enjoyed a formal supper hosted by Aldershot Town FC. It was a good chance to compare notes on the various experiences of soldiers (although it was observed that quite a few of the German side play professional football in the Bundesliga).

Post match, the Army Head Coach, Capt Joe Collins, agreed that the team had battled hard. "These types of nights are a great experience for the players and will only make us stronger for next season," he said.

Finally, it would be remiss not to mention the host of people who helped to make this international a reality - Billy Thomson and his staff at the Army FA, to Kris Machala, the Chairman at Aldershot Town FC, to Vic Baker, our sponsor from Trinity Insurance, to Steve Clout at the Aldershot Academy, to Mark Page at Garrison FM, to BFBS and to Army Media.



# YOUNG LIONS ROAR AHEAD OF THE PACK

## ARMY UNDER-23 TEAM SEASON 2011-12

*By Major C H W MOFFAT, Chairman Army Under-23 Football*



**Before I start to wax lyrical on how the Army Under-23 Development Squad ground out their Inter Services victories over the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force (which, I have found out, is the only thing that counts – or is it?) it is probably just as important for those not involved with Army Football that I put into context the role and organisation of the Army under-23 team.**

This has been my first season as Chairman of the team and, as I look back on our achievements and setbacks, I can honestly state that my initial impressions of the role were wide of the mark - and by some measure.

The development team, as I perceived at the start of my tenure, was charged solely with finding and consequently exploiting young talent in order to grow Army senior team players of the future.

I still believe this is one of its key outputs but now realise it's not the only key objective. In addition, we also have very important roles in maintaining the 'brand' of Army Football, acting as a recruiting tool and, as I have come to realise, possibly most importantly – winning the Inter Services.

The team itself, due to its very nature, is a dynamic and constantly changing beast where players come and go. The time available for development is extremely compressed and delivered against a backdrop of operational commitments, career obligations and the impetuosity of youth.

One of the vital components in ensuring we are able to maintain success is the coaching and development team, and I think I have some of the best working at Army under-23 level. SSgt Sean Cochrane signed off last year with success in the Inter Services, but he has left a legacy of coaching development that is based on nurturing, openness and commitment.

The new head Coach, Kev Hanbury, and his assistants will take this on and build in their own methods, but I'm sure we will continue in the same vane and focus will remain very much on the development of the players – the team develops as a result – win win.

To the season past. As I have mentioned, we are an ever-changing entity, and it will come as no surprise to read that we started 31 players this season, the squad being unnaturally large for all the reasons I discussed above.

Our first three matches in the season are very much geared to settling the squad and identifying the core players who will sustain the team through the season and into the decisive Inter Services matches in February. Our early success against Sandhurst Devels (1-1), Aldershot Town (2-1 win) and Farnborough (4-1 win) provided us with the best opportunity to see new players compete against a good level of academy teams.

We were not to fare so well against our next two opponents, who provided a step up in class and, with it, a more severe test of our potential both as a team and as individuals. These games really helped sort out the Possibles and the Probables.

AFC Wimbledon and Middlesex played some of the best football I have witnessed this year. In particular, Middlesex's first half performance had the Army under-23s reeling as they struggled to match the pace and movement of their civilian counterparts. However, a quick re-shuffle of resources at half time allowed the Army to match strength for strength and, in all honesty, they should have pulled back at least one goal.

The performance of the Army under-23 side in the second half was in my opinion the turning point in the season and the realisation that they could not only play at this level but compete.

Struggling for players (I draw your attention to previous constraints) the team turned out against Sandhurst Town on a cold wet winters night in December and battled their way to a 1 – 0 lead against all the odds, relying on a die hard spirit, team work and inner resilience. Sandhurst equalised in the dying minutes of the game to secure a well-earned and possibly deserved draw, but the lesson was not lost on the Army team and we were never again to concede late goals in our remaining fixtures.

Aldershot Town Academy (with one or two senior players in the ranks) provided our final work up for the Inter Services. The truth is the Army side dominated proceedings from the start and it was evident that players were keenly focused on making the team that would start against the Navy on 21 February. A resounding 3 – 1 victory and an excellent starting block for the Inter Services.

The Inter Services competed for by the Royal Navy the Royal Air Force and ourselves, is the centrepiece of Services football at all levels. The team had spent a week preparing for the first clash with the Royal Navy in Portsmouth and the tension in the players before kick off was palpable.

An early mistake by the Navy in bringing down our left back in their box as he made a marauding run through their defence resulted in a penalty, which was dispatched without fuss and we were 1 – 0 to the good and still inside the first 10 minutes we were unable to capitalise on this and went in at half time with the same score.

The second half continued much as the first had finished, full of bluster, energy and determination. It was however, the Navy who seized the initiative, snatching an equaliser after a mistake in the Army's rearguard.

The game ebbed and flowed and neither side asked for or gave quarter; a typical Inter-Services contest. It was a case of who would blink first, and I was so glad when it proved to be our esteemed colleagues

the Navy who faltered. We accepted their demise and took full advantage of the opportunity to score the winner. It was an excellent match, played in the right spirit and although the result was harsh, I'll take it.

The final match of the season and the Inter Services saw us host the Royal Air Force at the Farnborough FC ground, but not before the obligatory team photo was completed.

The Army team were up for the game, recent history focusing the minds to the imminent task. The conditions for football were excellent: no wind, slightly overcast and a very good playing surface.

During the early exchanges, neither team seemed capable or interested in taking control, which resulted in a bitty and stuttering match. It was not until Army claimed the first goal that the game settled down into a recognisable pattern, with the RAF striving hard to dominate possession and drive home their advantage.

The half-time whistle brought welcome relief to the Army and presented the coaching staff with an opportunity to reconstitute the side's morale and physical components.

The Army started the better of the two sides in the second half, but it was to be the RAF who claimed the next goal.

Shortly after conceding the equaliser, the Army also conspired to have their numbers reduced to 10 when one of our players was dismissed for serious foul play – despite this, young Sapper 'Simba' Green still managed to win our Player of the Year award.

Down to 10 men and with the RAF in over-drive, the Army survived wave after wave of light blue onslaught. They say that in times of need, a few that will rise to the challenge. In this case, it was LCpl Jase Hubbard who grabbed the game by the scruff of the neck and single handily redressed the player imbalance by terrorising the RAF defensive line at every opportunity.

His endeavours were rewarded with a goal and with it the title of Inter Services champions.

The job is not done and there is still a way to go for the team and, more importantly, for the players. We shall continue to develop them not only as players but as men, instilling in them the values and standards of the British Army (Selfless Commitment, Respect for Others, Loyalty, Integrity Discipline and Courage) and imbue them with the characteristics of a sportsman - magnanimous in victory, gracious in defeat.

We can't achieve this alone and we are eternally grateful to the staff at the Army Football Association and to our sponsors, Fujitsu, with whom we seek to develop closer ties in the coming season.



# UNBEATEN, UNBOWED AND PLENTY TO PLAY

## ARMY TEAM SEASON 2011-12

*Lieutenant Colonel M J R Cotton MBE AGC (SPS), Chairman Army team*

The season began in September with team trials attended by both established players and, just as importantly, emerging talent identified by both the management of the successful Army under-23 team and respective Corps' coaches.

It was encouraging to see about 30 players attend the trials, during which three competitive fixtures were arranged to allow the Head Coach, Captain Joey Collins, to identify those players he wished to select for his squad.

After encouraging and productive trials, the Army team continued the momentum with a successful campaign in the Southern Counties Cup. They were unbeaten in winning the trophy in a league format that included the Amateur Football Alliance, Middlesex, Sussex, London and the Royal Navy.

The Sussex fixture marked one individual's formidable spirit and character to overcome personal injury. Lance Corporal Tony Fitzpatrick, of 2nd Battalion the Parachute Regiment, was shot in the leg four times after his patrol was ambushed in Helmand Province in December 2010. After extensive surgery and treatment at the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre at Headley Court, he worked his way back to full fitness and completed his recovery by pulling on the red shirt to play in a 5 – 0 win over Sussex in December 2011.

In February, the team successfully retained the Grenadier Guards Trophy against the Metropolitan Police and soon after departed for Gibraltar for a five-day pre-Inter Service training camp.

This was a new venture and proved invaluable from a coaching and camaraderie perspective. There were two friendly fixtures against local teams, which included some Gibraltarian internationals, and while taking the opportunity to try new formations and players, and despite narrow losses, the experience ensured the players were ready for the key fixtures in the Inter Services competition.

Our home fixture was against the Royal Navy at the EBB Stadium,

home of Aldershot Town FC, and in a game of few chances we won 1 – 0 after a coolly taken penalty by Sergeant Dougy Douglas.

It resulted in the Army retaining the Mercury Cup and, on the same night, the Chairman of the Southern Counties Cup competition, David Richbell, presented the trophy to Staff Sergeant Glenn Davidson, the Army team captain.

The match against the Royal Air Force, played for the Carrington Cup, was once again the deciding fixture

in this year's Inter Services competition.

The game was played at the home of Shrewsbury Town FC and attracted a sizeable crowd for what is traditionally a fiercely competitive fixture, combined with respectful rivalry. This match was no exception and, although the Royal Air Force took the lead midway through the first half, the Army responded with two outstanding strikes in the space of eight minutes, from Lance Corporal Jay Bates and Staff Sergeant Glenn Davidson.

Just before half time, the Royal Air Force levelled and the stage was set for a thrilling climax to the domestic season.

The second half ebbed and flowed and both sides had opportunities but,

despite the Army playing their best football of the season, the game ended in a draw. This resulted in the Royal Air Force retaining the Inter Services Championship, the Constantinople Cup, on goal difference for a second consecutive season.

Despite the obvious disappointment and frustration of not winning the ultimate prize, the season has been very encouraging. Young talent has been identified and nurtured into the team, we were undefeated in our domestic competitive fixtures and credit must be





# FOR IN 2013

## Team Manager:

Major Richie Bell R SIGNALS

## Head Coach:

Captain Joey Collins R SIGNALS

## Assistant Head Coach:

Warrant Officer 'Dinger' Bell RE



given to both players and management for creating a camaraderie and team ethic, as well as developing a style of play that bodes well for the future.

From an accolade perspective, Warrant Officer Class 2 Kevin Haley was deservedly named both Manager and Players' Player of the Year.

In May, a prestigious match against the German Defence Force was arranged at Aldershot Town FC and this attracted the largest crowd at an Army fixture for many years.

The game evoked memories of classic matches between the two nations and the players and management of both sides were proud to be part of this special occasion.

Despite a goalless draw, and on this occasion there was no penalty shootout, the crowd were well entertained and it is hoped to repeat the fixture next year in Germany.

An eight-month season was a long one. However, the ambitions and desire to take the team forward runs through the veins of Major Richie Bell and Captain Joey Collins and already the planning has started to recapture the Constantinople Cup in 2013.



## A DAY TO REMEMBER AT BRISTOL ROVERS FC

*By WO1 Paul Hughes, 21 Signal Regiment (Air Support)*

**Bristol Rovers FC kindly hosted soldiers and families from 21 Signal Regiment (Air Support) and 600 Signal Troop, 15 Signal Regiment during their home fixture against Burton Albion FC on Saturday, 14 April.**

The day started with a warm welcome in the supporters' club bar before all made their way to their seats under the guidance of lifelong Rovers fan LCpl Alex Rogers.

Sgt Steve Pountney, LCpl Coleman and Sig Black from the Royal Corps of Signals Pipes and Drums led the two teams out with Rovers players joined by children from the Forces as mascots. The teams and mascots were provided with a guard of honour by members of the Regimental football team under the guidance of team captain Sgt Andy Card, who recently passed his Level 1 coaching certificate with the Army FA.

Also in the guard of honour was LCpl Will Hillyard, another recently qualified coach, having passed his Level 1 goalkeeping course with the Army FA, and LCpl Nick Harvey, a member of the season's successful Army under-23 squad.

As the captains and officials gathered in the centre circle, the Commanding Officer of 21 Signal Regiment, Lt Col Aitken, walked out to a great reception from the crowd to deliver the match ball and pose for photographs.



A tense and well contested first half saw Rovers go into the break with a 1-0 lead.

The half-time display from LCpl Coleman and Sig Black must have inspired those in the ground as Rovers went on to win 7-1 after an impressive second half display.

The whole day was a very kind gesture by the club and

in particular its very warm hosting of LCpl Alex Rogers, a young soldier who is a born-and-bred Bristol lad and lifelong Rovers supporter, who spent the day receiving the full VIP treatment courtesy of the club's board.

Throughout the day, soldiers from 600 Signal Troop conducted a collection for Alabare charity, supporting homeless Armed Forces veterans in the Bristol area, raising an impressive £1183.19.

The prominent memory from the day is the reception from the fans and all members of the club being happy to give their time to the soldiers and families attending and pose for photographs along the way. The generosity and hospitality of the players, staff and fans of Bristol Rovers FC was first class and the Regiment hopes to continue a link into the future



Manager at Bristol Rovers Mark McGhee



# ARMY REFEREEING GOES FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

By Maj PW Conn – Chairman, Army Referees



Outgoing Chairman Major Brian Murdoch presented with memento in appreciation of services to Army Refereeing by incoming Chairman Major Pete Conn

As the 2012-13 season swiftly approaches, Army Football Referees finds itself in a period of transition. Our most senior referees have moved on.



Maj Brian Murdoch presenting Le Breton Trophy to Capt Andy Dunne



Major Brian Murdoch presenting Dobson's Trophy to SSgt Steve Scott



Brian Murdoch presenting Capt Alan Marshall in appreciation of services to Army refereeing

W01 Andy Halliday has left the service but remains a Premier League assistant referee and Maj Danny McDermid was posted abroad and leaves the National List, his last appointment being to the League One playoff final between Sheffield United and Huddersfield at Wembley in front of 60,000 spectators - an outstanding achievement.

Additionally, Maj Brian Murdoch leaves as Chairman on assignment overseas and I would like to publicly thank Brian for his contribution over the recent past. He can be justifiably proud of his achievements and Army Football Referees is on a very sound footing due to his management and leadership.

Currently there are 200-plus referees with the Army FA, of which 24 are at Supply League Level, seven at Contributory Level and three at the National Level - this a very good representation. There is a healthy number of active referees, and each division is well served by a committee of volunteers to appoint, develop, assess and mentor officials to support unit sport.

Recruiting new officials is a success, with over 100 personnel attending the Basic Referees course over the last 12 months. SSgt Chris Carter and his team are to be congratulated for their efforts. We cannot rest on our laurels and each unit is mandated to have a qualified official in its ranks.

The Army FA recently held its showpiece event, the Festival of Football, in May, with both the

finals of the Challenge Cup (Major Units) and the Minor Units Cup at the Military Stadium in Aldershot. This event has been designed to ensure that the Army FA could bring as many people as possible together to watch both games and to showcase Army Football in the best possible light.

As part of these celebrations, the Army FA Referees Committee organised the annual referees get-together, consisting of the RA-FA Training Day, the Mitchell Dennis Trophy, the Annual Referees Dinner, and of course watching both matches and supporting the officials lucky enough to be appointed to them.

This two-day event is the only one in the referees' calendar where most of the referees can meet, socialise, train together and at some point even attempt to play football.

The event started on 10 May, when the referees met at the Military Stadium to watch the two cup finals. Both matches were handled superbly by the teams of officials, resulting in a few celebratory drinks all around. This event was supported very well by the referees, with over 50 attending.

The next day, the annual Army FA RA-FA training day took place at the Military Stadium. This was put together and organised by SSgt Chris Carter. The keynote speakers were Dean Mohareb, FA National Manager for Referees, and Terry Brown, AFC Wimbledon Manager. Both were well received and there was particular interest in hearing about the game from a Football League manager's perspective, with his views on officials and how he expects his players to behave. It was amusing and enlightening.

After a long and enjoyable day, the annual dinner took place with over 80 of the 250 registered referees in attendance, including representatives from all divisions. This was the largest gathering of referees for many years and the commitment to Army refereeing was demonstrated fully.

The dinner is a great opportunity for referees to get together, enjoy each other's company and celebrate successes.

These awards were presented:

## Dobson's Trophy

This award, donated by former Army FA Secretary Maj Alan Dobson, is awarded to the referee who

has made the most significant contribution to Army Football in the season. All levels are eligible, but it can be won only once in a career. The winner is decided by the Referees Committee.

This year's Dobson Trophy went to SSgt Steve Scott, a Level 5 referee, Level 2 tutor and assessor from Aldershot. He assists on the Basic Referee course and is the 4 Div (E) development, training and promotions officer. A most worthy winner.

## LeBreton Trophy

Donated by former Army FA Referees Secretary Brian LeBreton, this is designed to recognise the most dedicated and committed Level 7 referee with the most potential. Again it is decided by the Referees Committee and can only be won once in a career.

Winner was Capt Andy Dunne, who was promoted from Level 9 to 4 within 18 months of qualifying, a quite outstanding achievement. His first-class dedication and commitment to refereeing was reinforced when he accepted the role as Chairman of 2 Div referees. Another worthy recipient.

Other awards / presentations on the night were made to:

**Maj (Retd) Len Grist** – for over 20 years' service to Army Football

**Maj Brian Murdoch** – outgoing Army FA Referees Committee Chairman

**Capt Alan Marshall** – Meritorious Service Award

**SSgt Rick Harden** – Meritorious Service Award

**Lt Col John Roskelly and his team** – Army Challenge Cup Final officials

**SSgt Ken Hughes and his team** – Army Minor Units Cup Final officials

## All the recently promoted referees

After some superb food and a few bottles of wine, the event ended with the new Referees Committee Chairman thanking his Committee, particularly Graham Brookland and Sue Clarke at HQ, along with SSgt Chris Carter and Mr Rob Ellis, for all their hard work.

Overall, the two-day event was a huge success with particular emphasis on development of our junior referees. Showcasing our successes has helped raise Army FA refereeing to the highest echelons of both Army and FA football.

And so to next season...





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# GROUNDS FOR IM

The grass is always greener for Alan Ferguson, as he takes up his new role as Head Groundsman



**W**ith St. George's Park due to open later this year, work is continuing apace, but there is still preparation work to be done. One man who is applying the finishing touches is Head Groundsman Alan Ferguson.

Ferguson worked with Glasgow Rangers for five years, after which he moved to Ipswich Town in June 1996. There, he began to build a reputation as one of the nation's top groundsman. The Scot won the Premier League Groundsman of the Year award in 2001, followed by four in the Football League, including three in a row from 2003-06. In 2004 he also scooped the IOG Professional Groundsman of the Year prize.

Now, though, Ferguson is seeking a fresh challenge. He's upped sticks from Suffolk and headed to Burton upon Trent and the new 330-acre national football centre.

"I was Head Groundsman at Ipswich Town Football Club, but I moved on as I thought I had gone as far as I could," says Ferguson. "While I loved every single minute, I was openly looking for a new challenge. I had known of the national football centre for some time and had been to the site to have a look a few times. It was obvious St. George's Park had enormous potential."

He adds, "Purely and simply, this is the jewel in the crown of my profession and it is a massive opportunity, which I am honoured to have been given."

A UEFA natural turf consultant and renowned industry speaker, Ferguson

made the move to Staffordshire in August 2011 and has since been working on providing quality pitches at what will become the home of all 24 England National Teams, including an exact replica of the Desso-reinforced surface at Wembley Stadium.

The challenge ahead for Ferguson is a massive one, with eleven outdoor football pitches and an estate to grow and maintain, but he insists SGP has exciting potential for the future of the game in this country.

"[The work is] not just this year in getting everything up and running, but during the next three or four years, what we can establish and achieve here is breathtaking and I am lucky to be part of it," he explains.

"People don't know how big it is and how



important to the future of English football it will be. It is an honour to be involved in St. George's Park and I will work my hardest to make sure that we offer the best we can to some of the best players in the world."

## What is St. George's Park?

Thirty years since the concept of a national football centre was first suggested, St. George's Park is now nearing completion and scheduled to open its doors later this summer. Fundamentally, SGP will be the central setting in which coaches will be taught how – as well as what – to coach, teach, inspire and influence.

"This will transform the way football is coached in England and, it is hoped, positively shape attitudes and behaviour," says David Sheepshanks, Chairman of St. George's Park. "In time, it will benefit individuals and teams involved in the game at every level – and, we believe, also deliver tangible benefits to the wider sporting arena."

St. George's Park will be a world-class training facility, providing a national home for



The huge site covers 330 acres

**"People don't know how important to the future of English football St. George's Park will be"**



# PROVEMENT

at St. George's Park



coach education, in time producing more and better players; and bespoke training facilities for teams, individual players and athletes.

The 330-acre site on the outskirts of Burton upon Trent in Staffordshire will become an educational hub, to embed enhanced standards of coaching and a wider breadth of coaching qualifications – coaching as a recognised profession, not just a pastime – along with qualification pathways and career opportunities across a range of different sporting disciplines.

SGP will also become a national centre for sports medicine and science, delivering football and sport-specific screening, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation; high-performance analysis and research; clinical excellence via affiliations with healthcare professionals and specialist hospitals; and, importantly, a platform from which it can become the first FIFA Centre of Medical Excellence in the UK.

There will also be a focus on The FA's 'Club England' concept, with all 24 England teams calling St. George's Park their home.

"St. George's Park will be the heartbeat of our national game," says FA Chairman David Bernstein. "It will be the focal point of an unprecedented coach education revolution that will reach from grassroots football in every corner of England right up to the pinnacle of all our England teams."

In keeping with SGP's devotion to innovation, Hilton Worldwide will unveil two hotels operating under one roof: a luxury Hilton hotel and a Hampton by Hilton hotel for more value-wise guests.



England's national football centre will open later this year



Alan Ferguson will get St. George's Park's pitches in perfect shape

## PITCH PERFECT

There will be a total of 12 full-size pitches at St. George's Park

- The main 'Elite' pitch, where the England Senior team will train, which includes over 100 million blades of Desso Grassmaster synthetic fibres to strengthen the turf.
- Five pitches have undersoil heating using 130km of pipe and 4,000 litres of water per night.
- There are 138 infield irrigation points, which runs from a holding tank of 2.4 million litres of water.
- There will also be a 120m x 80m indoor hall, accommodating a full-size artificial football pitch.
- Around SGP is 3.5 miles of rabbit fencing to protect pitches.



# RESEARCH AND DEVELOP

## Wayne Allison joins the St. George's Park staff in a newly created role

The FA made a new signing recently when former Swindon Town, Tranmere Rovers and Sheffield United striker Wayne Allison was appointed Research Manager for Coaching.

The newly created role, which will be based at St. George's Park when the centre opens later this year, will focus on interpreting and communicating The Football Development Department's discussion document, Developing World-Class Coaches and Players.

Although the move signals a career change for the vastly experienced centre forward, it is one he is thoroughly prepared for. During a playing career spanning over 20 years in which he amassed 870 League appearances for eight clubs and registered 208 League goals, Allison attained the UEFA B, A and Pro Licence qualifications as well as a number of academic achievements before moving into coaching and management.

While still playing professionally, Allison completed a BSc in Coaching, Sports and Exercise Science at Crewe and Alsager University before going on to study at Sheffield Hallam University,

### "The aim is to provide informed knowledge and findings that are of value to the coaches"

where he gained a PhD with a thesis on the effects of high-intensity exercise on decision-making in soccer; an area he believes is a major advantage to any team.

"You never stop learning in football and this position afforded me by The FA will give me an opportunity to share some of the latest findings in the development and growth of the game in coaching, from grassroots right through to elite level football," explains the former Chester City, Bury, Tranmere Rovers and Bradford City coach.

The appointment arises from the Developing World-Class Coaches and Players document, in which five structural 'pillars' for coaching were identified; a world-class coaching system, a first-class workforce, enhanced and sustained support for coaches, coaching as a profession and Research and Development.

"Research and Development actually serves to underpin the four other pillars," says Allison. "My role will be to ensure that policy and practice which supports enhanced coach development across the whole game links with the 12 areas of focus already identified."

Practically applying the findings of academic study is a challenge for many academics and an area in which much of his work will come. "I hope to embark on a journey: gathering, collating and interpreting information to communicate across the football audience. There is some fantastic work going on and we must start to make sense of it all, so that coaches and players can maximise their potential at all levels."

Pragmatic and realistic in his approach, Allison understands effective change requires time and patience. A vision of how his role can support and influence the future growth and development of the whole game is currently being articulated.

"In my opinion, research has to have a practical application. The aim is to provide informed knowledge and findings that are of value to the coaches responsible for supporting and guiding the players of today and those of tomorrow."



## JOIN THE FA LICENSED COACHES' CLUB

The full interview with Wayne Allison is available in the latest edition of The Boot Room, the official magazine for members of The FA Licensed Coaches' Club. The first of Allison's research findings will then be published in the August edition of The Boot Room.

Membership to The FA Licensed Coaches' Club starts at just £12 per year and provides discounts on

FA Learning National Courses, access to a members-only website, ballot entry for free tickets to England home matches and access to local training events. Additional options include insurance, access to FA Licensed Coaches' merchandise and the three issues of The Boot Room.

■ To see if you are eligible to become a member of The Licensed Coaches' Club, visit [TheFA.com/CoachesClub](http://TheFA.com/CoachesClub)



**S**ince work began on the site, Gareth Southgate has visited St. George's Park – tailored by Umbro – on numerous occasions, monitoring its metamorphosis from field to football hub. So The FA Head of Elite Development is the ideal person to explain what will go on at the centre.

**Gareth, how will St. George's Park work on a day-to-day practical level to help develop better players and coaches?**

There are two or three core elements involved. It will be a home for our International teams, giving them a sense of identity. Both the Men's and the Women's teams at all ages, depending on their fixtures, will train there.

With the possibility of three or four different teams training at the venue at the same time, there will be interaction between players and coaches. Our younger teams will have the opportunity to watch our Senior team train and play. There will also be opportunities for the younger players to chat with a Senior or Under-21 player after training. This is an important part of young players' development.

There will also be the opportunity to invite coaches to watch the teams train. Logistically, we've never had that before; we'd have had one team staying 200 miles away from another. As a result, it may have been difficult to go and see two teams training in a week.

Identity is also an important issue. I feel strongly that when a young international player drives through the gates they will feel like they are arriving at Club England. We have to ensure that the St. George's Park sign will provoke a sense of aspiration. In terms of coach education, we've never had a 'home'. People attending the courses will learn at the home of English football. With [The League Manager's Association] based there, the through-traffic of people will allow candidates to see senior managers and coaches sharing the site.

**A 'hub' of coaching has been mentioned before. What will that actually involve?**

We're constantly reviewing the content of all of our courses. As I travel around the country, I've had a great number of people from some of the best academies who have said the new FA Youth Awards have changed their way of thinking. The same is true for lots of grassroots coaches, so it's great that we're hitting both ends of the spectrum.

I think when people go on the Youth Award course they're expecting an old-fashioned, 'socks up, stop-stand-still' approach, but the Youth Modules are completely different and I think people have found that refreshing.

That's what the centre will be like; it's about evolving into modern coaching. We have a number of research positions to be filled and Wayne Allison has just joined as Research Manager for coaching. It is crucial that we research what the rest of the world is doing, what the latest academic research is on coach-development and also find out how other sports are progressing. We will invite people from other sports in to deliver and we can hone that knowledge further.



The 330-acre centre will open this year



The opportunities for sharing these findings will be limitless.

**With grassroots coaches sharing the facilities with senior coaches, what sort of dynamic will this create at SGP?**

I've always thought the courses are a great learning experience, but so too is the time around the course. Chatting to coaches at dinner provides great opportunities for interaction and the swapping of ideas and philosophies. With a variety of people using the centre at any one time, there will be lots of opportunities for discussion.

Senior football people are only too happy to share their knowledge. There's an understanding and appreciation of where they started and how much they valued the help of senior people in their learning.

**Once the centre is open, people will start to expect to see results. How important is accountability?**

I believe there should be accountability, but development is a long-term process. If we haven't produced the right quality and numbers of coaches then we have to ask ourselves why that is. The French have had Clairefontaine, the Italians have had Coverciano and the Dutch have had Zeist; in building St. George's Park we're taking one of the things we haven't had out of the equation.



The FA's Head of Elite Development Gareth Southgate

## SO WHAT IS ST. GEORGE'S PARK?

St. George's Park – tailored by Umbro – is nearing completion and is scheduled to open its doors this summer. SGP will be the central setting in which coaches will be taught how – as well as what – to coach, teach, inspire and influence.

The 330-acre site on the outskirts of Burton upon Trent in Staffordshire will become an educational hub, to embed enhanced standards of coaching and a wider breadth of coaching qualifications – coaching as a recognised profession, not just a pastime – and qualification pathways and career opportunities across a range of sporting disciplines.

SGP will be a world-class training facility, providing a national home for coach education, in time producing more and better players; and bespoke training facilities for teams, individual players and athletes.

SGP will also become a national centre for sports medicine and science, and, importantly, a platform from which it can become the first FIFA Centre of Medical Excellence in the UK.

St. George's Park has been highlighted as a major part of the long-term future of the Three Lions as The FA look to the future. As home to all 24 England teams – all Men's and Women's Teams, the Disability sides and Futsal, St. George's Park will provide world-class sports facilities.

"This is the first time all the England teams will be able to train side by side," said Club England Managing Director Adrian Bevington. "So if the teams are there for ten days, it's perfectly reasonable to expect the managers to wander from one room to another and spend some time talking to the younger players. Imagine the boost that would give them."

"You mustn't underestimate the importance of St. George's Park in this," added FA Chairman David Bernstein, "The dynamic for England will be very different when we have SGP."

## GET IN THE BOOT ROOM

This full interview with Gareth is available in the latest edition of *The Boot Room*, the official magazine for members of The FA Licensed Coaches' Club.

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# BACK TO SCHOOL

**TheFA.com visited Suffolk FA to find out exactly what it takes to become a Level Two coach**

**W**ith the opening of St. George's Park imminent, the attention of The FA is firmly on coaching. To find out exactly what it takes to earn a Level Two Certificate in Coaching Football – the level below the UEFA B Licence – TheFA.com went along to Suffolk FA. Here's their diary from the first six days of the course.

## Day One

Although it's not compulsory to have earned the Level One Certificate, the next step up the ladder is a big one. Half-term week in the lead up to Easter saw 18 candidates – aged 17 to 60 and with varying backgrounds and ambitions in the game – arrive at course venue Suffolk One, where they were greeted by course tutor, former Norwich City player and reserve team manager, Keith Webb.

After an introduction to Level Two, which includes the principles of play for attacking and defending, styles of coaching, and the distribution of the hefty candidate pack, the group headed out onto the college's artificial pitch to start the first of many practical sessions, which form the preparation for a 35-minute assessment in September.

The first few sessions involve short and long passing, different ways to encourage

players to receive the ball, and drills involving turning with the ball. Each was shown first as a technique in its own right, with players working unopposed during the drill. Then came the application, when opposition was introduced, forcing players to decide on the right time to employ the technique. Finally, the sessions would progress into a game-related scenario. Keith, as coach, followed the coaching cycle – observe, see fault, coach and correct, re-create, play – stepping in to work on improving the players in each session.

## Day Two

The first message the group received on arrival in the classroom was that the initial assessed sessions, which are to cover the technique and skill factors of one of the topics covered in the course, will be on day four. "You're all in the same boat," Keith told them reassuringly. Ultimately, though, as candidates on the course, the aim is to learn and take on board enough information to earn the certificate. They aren't given out just for attendance, nor should they be. One of The FA's goals is to produce more and better coaches, not just more coaches.

Looking around at the 18 faces this week, you realise that the courses in this country are highly respected around the world, so they need to stretch those involved. One of the group, also called Keith, is from Ipswich originally, but now lives in Chicago and coaches five to eleven-year-old co-eds. He came back from the States specifically for this course and will return for the follow-on days in June, July and September.

Another, Chichi, is from Norway, while 17-year-old Josh travelled from Munich.

The first discussion for the day was Long-Term Player Development (LTPD), looking at the four corners – technical, psychological, physical and social – of players' development in certain situations and during sessions, something that coaches, particularly of youth players, should understand.

Other classroom topics during the week involve injuries, emergency procedures, fitness and nutrition. There's also action on the pitch – dribbling and running with the ball, followed by support play, were the focus for day two.



**“One of The FA's goals is to produce more and better coaches, not just more coaches”**

## Day Three

With the 'mock' assessments coming up on day four, Keith gave us a look at how to draw up a plan for a coaching session – an essential part of the Level Two course. It covers organisational factors before going on to look at the aims of the session, warm-ups and cool-downs, plus key technical aspects. It also provides space to draw up any diagrams to illustrate what the session will look like. The second page focuses on LTPD and how the session will affect the four-corners, ideas to develop the session and then finally the self-evaluation after you've finished the practical.

After focusing on the final few required areas of attacking principles out on the pitch – forward runs with and without the ball, one-tvos, overlapping and third-man running



The third and final portion of the coaching sessions at Level Two focus on a 4v4 game





The candidates put their new coaching knowledge into practice



The courses take place both on and off the pitch

– the group moved onto defence, which aims to highlight the principles of denying space, restricting space and predicting space.

## Day Four

Having touched on a couple of early points in the classroom, the group were quickly out on the pitch to begin a long day of sessions in which each of the 18 candidates had their first chance to actually coach.

The requirement was to cover the first two of three parts of the final practical assessment in 15 minutes. Part one covers the technical requirements of the drill, then the opposition is introduced to force players to decide when to employ those techniques. At the end, Keith evaluated each coach on a series of factors, and gave out the topics for the assessment for day six, which is when candidates must focus on a game-related scenario.

discussed at length was the influence of parents on the sideline in kids' games – a big concern for many of the coaches. It was a useful discussion, and after that it was out onto the pitch for the day's first session: Finishing. The drill, using the five-a-side goals, was about the technique of shooting; body shape, contact with the ball, types of shots and being creative to add a clever finish.

The final practical demonstrations involved two similar sessions on defensive and attacking headers. Areas addressed include adjusting to the flight of the ball in defence, sending it back where it came from and contact with the ball to ensure height in the clearance. In attack, they looked at the back-post header, rising to head across the 'keeper towards the far corner, movement towards the near post and how to generate power.

## Day Five

A discussion about the Respect programme, one of the many theory areas covered in the candidates learner packs, kicked off Good Friday at Suffolk One. One topic that was

Coaches are given learner packs to accompany the course



## Day Six

The final day of the course's first week saw everyone coaching one team in a 4v4 game, correcting faults when the elements covered in the topic weren't being achieved. After each 15-minute session, Keith once again ran through his evaluation points

with the coach. The feedback is designed to give the candidates things to think about ahead of the final assessment in September. Before that, they will have two follow-up days to refresh themselves on certain areas. Away from the course, they must also do their homework – 12 planned sessions with their clubs to help them prepare for life as a Level Two Coach, should they pass in September.

● If you're keen on taking your next step up the coaching ladder, visit [TheFA.com/FALearning](http://TheFA.com/FALearning) or contact your County FA for courses in your area.





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Together we're developing the future of football in England





# 27 REGT TAKE TITLE AFTER EIGHT-GOAL THRILLER

*By Maj PW Conn - 4 Div Football Chairman*

**The finals of the 4 Div Major and Minor units took place on Wednesday, 2 May, at Aldershot Military Stadium and were organised by WO2 Kev Haley, Hon Sec of 4 Div Football.**

The morning kick-off saw the Minor units match contested between 10 Trg Bn REME 'C' team from Bordon and the Medical Trg unit, DMSTG from Ash.

Early on, the game was kept scoreless by several fine saves from the DMSTG goalkeeper and it remained extremely tight with neither team able to press home an advantage. Then late on, a cross from the right saw Mne Ingram rise higher than anyone to head into the net off the far post.

One goal was always likely to be the difference and a close match was decided by this strike. Result: 1-0 to 10 Trg Bn REME 'C' team.

Both sides were congratulated on their performances and for putting on an entertaining game, which was well controlled by referee WO2 John Brown and his team.

The Major units final was fought out between 11 Sigs from Blandford (the third Trg unit in the



finals) and 27 Regt RLC from Aldershot. This game followed a similar pattern, with 11 Sigs exerting the early pressure but coming up against an opposition keeper in good form.

This seemed to boost 27 Regt, who took the lead in the 17th minute after concerted pressure resulted in a defender putting through his own goal. It was then fairly quiet until the 44th minute, when a free kick from Sgt Douglass, the 11 Sigs skipper, was scored direct making the score 1-1 at half time.

The second period was a completely different story. Goals came fast and furious. In the 50th minute, a route one goal by Pte MacDonald for 27 Regt was cancelled out within two minutes by a penalty converted by Sig Cordon after LCpl Bryce

was brought down making the scoreline 2-2.

27 Regt regained the lead in the 65th minute after a quality free kick delivery by Sgt Douglass was headed in by WO2 Pierce. Two minutes later, 11 Sigs were back on terms after an excellent strike from LCpl Bryce.

Then in injury time, man of the match Bryce demonstrated his strength to hold off defensive challenges to release Sig Snell to score. That appeared to be the winning goal - but 27 Regt went straight down to the other end where Pte Jeffries rose above everyone to plant a firm header into the far corner: 4-4 and extra time.

The extra periods were well contested but goalless. Penalties would decide this season's winners. The first 11 Sigs penalty was missed, twice, and this would prove decisive as all other penalties were converted with the winner rolled in by substitute Capt Vince Kelly, who had just entered for a cameo performance.

A superb game, well marshalled by WO1 Mark Hounsell, demonstrated all that is good about military football - talent, endeavour, passion, commitment and desire. 11 Sigs were runners-up for the second year, both times losing out on penalties, but had fully contributed to the spectacle.

This left 27 Regt RLC as the Major unit champions for the season. Congratulations to all finalists for their efforts.

## SIX-A-SIDE CHAMPIONSHIPS PROVE POPULAR

**Six-a-side teams from across the Division gathered for the annual Support Command (UK South) Inter-Unit Championships on Wednesday, 23 May.**

The competition was hosted by 42 Engineer Regiment and about 200 players and coaches filled Hermitage Station with an atmosphere of tension and excitement. The outstanding turnout made up a top-quality field, which allowed for tense competition.

The league tables were drafted the night before and the competition was all set. However some extra teams turned up, and others dropped out, which meant some last-minute adjustments to fixtures and timings. The event was supported by 24 male teams.

The first game kicked off at 0930 just as the catering staff opened for business. The

competitors flocked outside to purchase a healthy salad in a bun – no mention of the burgers.

The competition was of a high standard and was closely contested. Although tension was high, the competitors still played with great enthusiasm and a fun spirit, which made for a better day.

Here are the results and the teams who qualified for the Army Championships at Queens Avenue, Aldershot:

**a. Winners: 2 RRW**

**b. Runners-up: 11 Sigs Regt**

The competition was a huge success and will

remain a regular annual fixture in the Sp Comd sporting diary. It was also a positive indicator that sport in the Formation AOR is very much alive and kicking - with many units deployed on operational tours, the turnout was still healthy.

Many thanks must go to the Commanding Officer, Lt Colonel Wilby RE, for allowing the competition to be played at Hermitage Station. Thank you to all the officials, who refereed to a very high standard. On behalf of the competitors and myself, thank you Mr Nigel Wiscombe, SIOPT Hermitage Station, for the outstanding standard of pitches and facilities provided.



**ARMY FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION WOMEN'S TEAM  
SEASON ROUND-UP 2011-12**

**Games played:  
Won 4,  
Drawn 1,  
Lost 2**

**Inter Services  
and Southern  
Counties  
Champions**

# ARMY WOMEN SHOW HOW IT'S DONE

Captain Sandra Hodgson, AWFT Head Coach

## With a squad of 25 to choose from during trial week, the Army players faced their first test against Oxford City.

The Army were a goal to the good after only 60 seconds, when Sig Shanice James tapped in a goalbound effort from Pte Rachel Rigby before the ball crossed the line. But Rigby would not be denied her glory and went on to score a hat-trick in just five minutes.

Ten changes were made at the interval, but this did not hinder the home side's dominance as Gnr Bianca Ross put them five to the good only three minutes after the restart. Then, from a corner, Ross got her second.

The last goal went to LCpl Tara Lofts after she won the ball just inside the opposition half, ghosted past three tackles to shoot from 25 yards. Final score: won 7 – 0.

Our second opponents were HM Prison Service. The visitors had the brighter start with efforts denied by Cfn Michelle Stokes and LCpl Hannah Bramhall.

The opening goal came from a fine pass by Cfn Jess Moran to Capt Maria Beaney, who rounded the keeper to stroke the ball into the empty net. The opposition did not let that deter them and LCpl Hannah Bramhall and Gnr Jordan Frayne had to break up attacks on the Army goal.

The second goal came from a corner, which was swung deep into the penalty area to be met by the head of ATpr Siobhan Cockham.

Half time saw the Army change their entire team due to the large number of players available.

Within 60 seconds of the whistle, the opposition were picking the ball out of the net after a fine strike by LCpl Kim Holden. Goal number four was scored by Pte Rachel Rigby after good work from LCpl Yvette Kemp. The final goal belonged to Cfn Nat Walker, who tucked the ball beneath the keeper from six yards. Final score: won 5 – 0.

The next opposition were Portsmouth Ladies, who ply their trade in the Premier League Southern Division.

From the first whistle the Army were put on the defensive. An excellent throughball split the Army defence and left Sgt Becky Davis one on one with a Portsmouth striker, who found the back of the net with a clinical finish.

The Army were finding it difficult to adjust to the pace and tempo of the game due to the high standard of the opposition. When they did manage to adapt, they found that the opposition keeper was in fine form to deny efforts from Cfn Max McIvor, Sig Meg Horrey and Cfn Jess Moran.

Pressure on the Army defence by Portsmouth paid off with a second goal five minutes before half time. Both teams started the second half at the same pace, with LCpl Kim Holden, Pte Rachel Rigby and Moran denied by the away keeper. The third goal came from a corner when the Army

failed to clear their lines.

Straight from the kick-off, however, Holden picked the ball up just inside the opponent's half, drove between the two central defenders and scored from 30 yards to reduce the deficit. Final score: lost 1 – 3.

Middlesex provided the Army with a stern test prior to the start of our Inter Services campaign.

The Army took the lead after five minutes when Pte Rachel Rigby won the ball on the halfway line and released Cfn Jess Moran, who beat the defender and chipped the advancing keeper from just inside the area.

It wasn't long before the Army doubled their advantage through Moran, after great work from ATpr Siobhan Cockham. Gnr Bianca Ross went on a run down the left to cross for Rigby, who cut back to find Moran near the penalty spot to stroke the ball into the far corner.

Middlesex were now showing more urgency and got a goal back after some fine build-up play down the right. They added a second while Cpl Jemma White was off the field and the Army were down to 10 players.

The Army secured the points late in the game from Sig Shanice James after going one on one with the keeper. Final score: won 4 – 2.

The Army started the defence of their Inter Services title away to a strong RAF side at Cosford.

The first opportunity fell to the visitors when



## Heading training went well

SSgt Krissy Wright headed wide after an excellent delivery by LCpl Kim Holden. The RAF were not without attacks of their own with Gnr Jordan Frayne snuffing out an attack down the visitors' right while LCpl Nikki O'Donnell had to be alert to stop an RAF free kick from breaching her defence.

Winning a throw in midway inside the Army half found the RAF scoring the opening goal from long range when the Army failed to press and close the opportunity down.

The keeper was on hand again to deny Pte Rachel Rigby after she rolled her marker and fired in a low shot from the edge of the box but the Army got the equaliser that their play deserved after a fine run by LCpl Kelly Cox, which led to a corner. Holden delivered a cross to the middle of a crowded penalty area and Wright thundered into the bottom corner of the net, giving the home keeper no chance.

Neither side had given up hope of finding a winner and efforts from Holden and Rigby were again unable to find their way past an impressive home keeper. Final score: drew 1-1.

London FA would provide the Army with yet another stern test prior to our Inter Services match against the Royal Navy.

London had a first strike on goal when Gnr Roxy Roberts pulled off a fine save from a long-range effort. The Army were threatening though and the London keeper had to be at her best to keep out a shot by Pte Rachel Rigby.

The game swung when the Army gave away a needless penalty, which was duly dispatched.

London were now dominating the midfield with some fine passing and movement, which led to the Army conceding two goals in the space of two minutes just after the half-hour mark.

Just before the end of the half, the Army produced their best move of the match so far



when LCpl Lucy Foreman won the ball outside her own penalty area and found Cpl Jemma White, who beat two defenders before sending through Rigby, who again brought out a good save from the London keeper.

Chances for the Army were few and far between. When they did come, they found the London defence on top of their game - just like their forwards. Just before the hour mark, London once again breached the goal twice within two minutes.

A great cross from LCpl Kelly Cox then found Rigby but her shot went just wide of the post. Final score: lost 0-5.

In the final game of the season, the Army needed to beat the Royal Navy by two goals in order to retain their crown.

From the first whistle, the Army came out the blocks with wave after wave of attacks. The breakthrough came when Sig Shanice James played in Cfn Jess Moran to open the scoring.

It wasn't long before Moran got her second after fine play by Pte Lisa O'Neil. Goal number three was a fine solo effort by Cfn Max McIvor.

The Army weren't having it all its own way and Gnr Roxy Roberts and LCpl Lucy Foreman did well to prevent the visitors from scoring.

The fourth goal was set up by Moran for Pte Rachel Rigby. A good run and shot by LCpl Kelly Cox could only be parried by the Royal Navy keeper and McIvor scored her second and the Army's fifth.

The Royal Navy still had some fight in them, but Sgt Juliette Brown and Gnr Jordan Frayne were on hand to see that the Army goal remained in tact.

Shortly afterwards Rigby got her second after another fine solo effort. Rigby turned provider for the last goal of the game, duly dispatched by Cfn Nat Walker. Final score: won 7-0.

## HOW WE ACHIEVED INTER SERVICES GLORY

After a promising season and the introduction of some great new players, the Army women eagerly looked forward to the Inter Services competition, confident they would retain the prestigious trophy and be crowned 2012 champions.

In preparation for the first fixture, the squad and management arrived at Princess Royal Barracks, Deepcut, to begin the training camp before the away fixture at RAF Cosford. The buzz and confidence created a positive but competitive environment, each player genuinely fighting for their place in the first XI. A combination of fun and tactic-related sessions got the girls in the mood for what is always a difficult fixture.



Sgt Juliette Brown lifting the Inter Service Cup

After four days, the squad and relocated to Hemel Hempstead and were afforded the luxury of conducting the remainder of the training at Watford FC's training ground while being accommodated at the Holiday Inn in Hemel Hempstead.

Training at Watford was amazing, with superb facilities in a professional environment, and the squad embraced training alongside professional footballers and sharing their wonderful facilities. Lunch everyday was taken in the restaurant alongside the likes of Thomas Kusak, on loan to Watford from Manchester United. Some of the Manchester United supporters in the squad could not resist the photo opportunity.

The following three days' training was excellent with the coaching staff and players fortunate to be afforded the opportunity to be involved in a session on awareness with a guest coach Kevin McGreskin. The squad performed extremely well and it proved invaluable being able to train at Watford.

On the eve of the match, the squad relocated closer to RAF Cosford and stayed in Patshull Park Hotel and enjoyed the luxury facilities and superb post-match meal before settling in for the night



Awareness training with Kev McGreskin

Continued on page 21



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Sport is critically important to Army life, whether our soldiers are serving in campaigns overseas, providing essential logistical and operational support in the UK, or recovering from injuries sustained in combat.

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Team Army is endorsed by the UK Ministry of Defence's Executive Committee Army Board (ECAB) and works in partnership with the Army Sports Control Board, which regulates all sport played in the Army.

We continuously campaign to increase the funding that supports our Army sports associations with a steady income stream and simpler administration.

**If you want to know more about Team Army or discuss it further with our CEO, Major General Lamont Kirkland CBE, please contact Gerald Callus at [gerald.callus@teamarmy.org](mailto:gerald.callus@teamarmy.org) or on 07427 175 530, who will facilitate the next steps.**

*"There is a direct link between the Army's sporting excellence and its operational success. The superb support provided by Team Army will enhance our soldiers' ability to achieve both these outcomes"*

General Sir Peter Wall KCB CBE ADC Gen.

**[www.teamarmy.org](http://www.teamarmy.org)**

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with a few nerves already jangling. After a little shake-out in the morning and a late pre-match breakfast, the team moved to Cosford.

As always, the RAF gave us a tough fight. I think all players would agree they were a little subdued and that led to being 1 – 0 down and a little unsettled. SSgt Krissy Wright, one of the most senior players and only back in the country by planning her R&R from Afghanistan extremely well, scored the equaliser and the match ended 1 – 1.

The focus was now concentrated a few weeks ahead to the final match against the Royal Navy. The team knew what they had to do after learning the RAF had only managed a 1- 0 win against the Navy.

The focus when the players reconvened for the match was on scoring goals, and the coaching

staff geared the training towards attacking football and finishing sessions.

Again the squad were afforded the luxury of Watford's training ground and being away allowed them to really gel and focus solely on the football and the job in hand. By the time the team moved back to Aldershot, confidence oozed from the squad and they couldn't wait to play.

Once again, the team were afforded the prestigious venue of Aldershot Town stadium for their final game. The team went onto the pitch knowing they could leave nothing behind and that they had to deliver - and that's exactly what they did.

The pace of the Army side was ferocious and some of the attacking football they played was sublime. Even the coaching staff allowed themselves to relax a little, totally unheard of in

previous Inter Services games.

The team dominated throughout, winning 7-0 and retaining the title for 2012 in style.

The season was complete and the goal that was set out by the coaching staff at the beginning had just been realised. At this stage, due to pending results, little did we know that the team were also to be crowned Southern Counties champions. A superb result to do the double.

Looking ahead, 2013 cannot come soon enough. The new talent coming through, combined with some of the dedicated senior players the team already have at Army level, is exciting. The team deserve all they have achieved and hopefully will continue to go from strength to strength.

## FINDING THE NEXT ROONEY

### ARMY FOOTBALL RUNS SUCCESSFUL CHILDREN'S COACHING PROGRAMME OVER EASTER

*By Brigadier Steve Vickery*

In its recent review of the Army's County Football Plan, the FA suggested expanding to children's coaching so, under the guidance of the County Development Manager, Dave Manners, three sessions were held over the Easter break.

Blandford, Corsham and Stafford played host to over 90 children during the first week of the holidays. Technique sessions were followed by mini-matches and all players were taught some the values and ethos of playing football with the Army.

Each day finished with a penalty and free kick competition. Over lunch, a football quiz was held with the children tested on their knowledge of



football trivia – and they all did very well.

Courses were free at the point of delivery with the Army Football Secretary, Billy Thomson, providing the bulk of the coaching equipment. Current Level 1, 2 and 3 coaches were used, sporting the latest line in Army coaching wear.

Commenting on the day at Corsham, Danny Robinson, a L1 FA coach, enthused: "Great to see the kids enjoying a football environment and

making new friends."

The Acting Vice Chairman of Army Football, Steve Vickery, praised the efforts of the County Development Manager and expressed his hope that further days could be run during the summer.

Special thanks are extended to the children who took part and of course to the hard-working coaches - Oz Rowley, Dave Manners, Danny Robinson, Craig Marney, Danny Miller, Ian Corner, Steve Ford, Paul Hughes, Steve Vickery, Steve Pountain and Phil Graham.

Finally, if any coaches or potential coaches wish to participate or perhaps organise a coaching day, further advice can be found by contacting Army Football at [www.armyfa.com](http://www.armyfa.com) or email [info@armyfa.com](mailto:info@armyfa.com).

## NOSTALGIA AND VISION AT THE PRESIDENTS DINNER

*By Graham Brookland – Army FA*

**With so much packed into such a short period of time there were plenty of topics for discussion at the annual Army FA Presidents Dinner at St Omer Barracks, Aldershot, in May.**

For the second successive year, a former England international was the guest of honour. Following on from Alan Mullery MBE in 2011, the Army FA were delighted that 1966 World Cup hero Sir Geoff Hurst MBE accepted this year's invitation.

In addition to speaking of his unique experiences as a footballer, covering his time primarily with England and West Ham United, Sir Geoff also spoke fondly of his military connections with the 32 Regiment Royal Artillery in Larkhill, with whom he has strong links.

Warmly received, Sir Geoff was also free to mingle with guests and sign autographs.



There were other established guests at the event, including the Chairman of the Football Association, David Bernstein, in one of his final official engagements before embarking with the England team for the 2012 Euros in Ukraine and Poland. There was also a pipes and drums display by the Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment.

The culmination of the evening saw a host of presentations. Mr Bernstein presented the Dobsons Trophy, an award established in 1989 for an outstanding contribution to refereeing throughout the season, to Sgt Steve Scott.

This was followed by awards for the

representative teams' Player of the Season. All three teams enjoyed success during the 2011-12 season, collecting either Inter Service or Southern Counties success, and in the case of the women's team achieving the double.

The Under-23 Player of the Season was Spr 'Simba' Green (RE). He could not attend and was represented by the Under-23 Secretary, WO1 John McKenna.

The new Vice President of the Army FA, Lieutenant General James Bucknall CBE, then presented the Women's Player of the Season award to Pte Rachael Rigby (RLC) and the Army Player of the Year award to WO2 Kev Haley (RAPTC).

A successful evening, also attended by Lord Faulkner of Worcester (Vice President of the Football Conference) and Roger Burden (Chairman of the FA National Game Committee), saw Army FA Chairman Major General Bruce Brealey speak positively about the healthy state of football in the Army.

He also thanked the Army FA staff for their continued efforts, especially recognising a busy period that also coincided with the office move to Fox Lines, the Festival of Football, the Army Sixes and the visit of the German Bundeswehr to the United Kingdom. A good evening all round!



# ROYAL SIGNALS AND THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME

FOOTBALL TOUR – RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL 4 - 18 JUNE 11

*Brigadier Steve Vickery*

**The Royal Signals Corps team have enjoyed success on and off the pitch for over 10 years. Winning Massey League trophies, quadrangular tournaments and the Woolwich Cup has firmly established their reputation for playing good football and being hard to beat.**

To celebrate these consistent accomplishments, a grand tour was almost obligatory, and where better than to the spiritual home of football - BRAZIL?

On 4 June, Heathrow Airport welcomed 22 Royal Signals soldiers and officers eagerly anticipating the chance of lifetime to visit and play football in Brazil.

On arrival the reality of the huge expectation didn't disappoint either; the team hotel was only a left-handed stone's throw from the iconic, golden Copacabana Beach, framed by the tumbling breakers of the Atlantic Ocean. This is Rio, gentlemen.

After taking in the sights, the first few days consisted of acclimatisation, beach training and making new friends. The highlight was undoubtedly a trip to Estádio Olímpico João Havelange Stadium to witness the passion and intensity of Brazilian football, up close and personal, as Flamengo played Corinthians.

A Flamengo goal and subsequent victory saw the partisan crowd erupt into a mix of euphoria and celebratory madness that roller-coasted off into the warm night on a Brazilian samba – and a few younger Royal Signals soldiers tagged along in an attempt to sample the local delights.

Firmly established into routine, the training, swimming and sunbathing were nicely interrupted as the team visited the Bola Pra Frente Institute (translates to 'move the ball forward') on the edge of the Favelas in Guadalupe.

This institute was formed in 1994 by Brazilian World Cup winner Jorginho, who dreamed of giving socially vulnerable young children from deprived areas a chance to better themselves. Combining the language of football to embrace all sports, music, arts and crafts and drama with a disciplined, clean lifestyle taught the children another view of life.

The lads joined in the fantastic entertaining games with the youngsters, only conversing through football and smiles. Great fun and a humbling experience enjoyed by all.

Training continued and was inter-woven around excursions to the historic Maracana Stadium and Sao Cristovao, Ronaldo's first club. This was followed by a trip to watch and learn from a training session of the talented Fluminense, featuring Deco, the former Chelsea player. This certainly managed to whet the team's appetite to play a competitive fixture, while not letting anyone forget that we were still in Rio enjoying the days of our lives.

The next few days saw the focus change as the coaching staff prepared the team for the first game against a team from the formidable Botafogo Juniors. A good performance from the Corps against a representative XI from a Brazilian top-tier team saw the teams go in at half-time 0-0.

Unfortunately the end result of a 3-1 loss wasn't a true reflection of the contest. But a hard-fought contest it was, which tested the players and coaching staff alike against a totally different style and philosophy of football.

The packed itinerary included a VIP visit to watch the senior team of the previous day's opposition as Botafogo took their league opponents apart 3-1. But this was only a taster of what was to follow: a trip to the formidable training camp where the Brazilian national team would be preparing for the Copa America.

It was a world-class facility, in a world-class setting for a world-class team. It was here our team would play the second game of the tour against local opposition, Teresopolis.

The game saw the Brazilian team take a 1-0 lead from a silly mistake, which they defended resolutely under determined pressure. The Corps played attractive football but simply couldn't find the net and was genuinely disappointed at the final whistle to have lost again after having the lion's share of the ball.

After a light training session and evaluation of the previous performances, the team re-visited the Maracana Stadium before moving onto experiencing one of the most unforgettable moments of the tour, a journey to the Corcovado Mountain and the Christ the Redeemer statue.

Breathtaking. Overlooking Rio, sitting beneath one of the most iconic statues on earth, forced every tour member to consider how lucky we were, a truly everlasting memory on a tour full of priceless memories.

The final match was to be played in the shadow of Sugarloaf Mountain on a perfect surface, beside the edge of the ocean. It was an amazing setting which had been graced by arguably the greatest footballer ever, Pele.

A large partisan crowd gathered with keen media interest to witness the Royal Corps of Signals versus the might of the Brazilian Combined Services. During the national anthems, the pride of the soldiers and everyone involved in making this event an historic occasion was plain for all to see.

The Brazilians, with two ex-professional footballers in their starting line-up, began brightly. They moved the ball with confidence and ease and, with a great piece of team football, scored five minutes into the game.

Undaunted by the absolute class of their opposition and belief in their own ability, the Corps created a chance that was smashed firmly and brilliantly into the back of the Brazilian net. A shock equaliser and game on.

That goal however could only be likened to proverbially stirring the hornets' nest. What ensued was a masterclass in possession football and our team were subjected to what could only be described as a lesson. Without brilliant defending, sheer effort and a real desire to do their absolute best, the 7 – 1 half-time scoreline could have been much, much worse.

Unbelievably the second half produced no further goals, a victory in itself for the Corps. As the final whistle blew, the result was irrelevant as players exchanged shirts, took photos and laughed through broken conversations.

The final two rest days were an opportunity for the majority to take full advantage of the wonderful beaches Rio had to offer, notably the Copacabana to Ipanema. The long flight back gave the squad a chance to reminisce on the trip of a lifetime and to reflect on the two weeks of what will definitely become cherished memories.



**THOSE WHO SPOIL  
OUR GAME,  
NOW WALK ALONE.**



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