



ARMY  
FOOTBALL

# THE SOLDIERS' GAME

## ANNUAL REVIEW 2020/21

### ISSUE 20



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Fujitsu recognises the power of sport and the tangible benefits it can deliver.

We are immensely proud of our association with "The Soldiers' Game" Army Football Association, having sponsored the teams for many years.

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The Stokoe family evening routine seems to have settled around having dinner when 'The One Show' is on BBC 1. And as I consider the words to add for this season I reflect on the 'One Big Thank You' segment they have each Thursday evening.

In it a volunteer (peer or community nominated) is thanked for their incredible efforts in a very heartfelt and public manner.

This, therefore, is my heartfelt and public manner to thank all of our volunteers & the tireless staff at the Army FA who have kept the flame of The Soldiers' Game alive during this tumultuous season.

We were able to complete the Edwards's and Reserve Cup competitions as well as The Massey League, with the latter in a cleverly revised format, and all down to the flexibility and commitment of these volunteers.

We will too be set for next season and able to look forward to reigniting football at all levels and disciplines across the Army.

I recently met with the Army FA team and the FA to lay out our plan for the coming three seasons.

In it we sought to underline our desire to continue to uphold and, where required, improve the standards that make football an exemplar sport across the Army.

Also required was an outlining of intent from me as Chair. In essence it was about professionalism. That professional approach to the organisation of the game from unit upwards, where we recognise that affiliations and registrations are key to underlining the strength of us as one of only three nationwide FAs.

That professional approach to the continued development of our coaching and refereeing staff, ensuring that they are supported and mentored through their qualification levels or UEFAs C, B & A respectively.

And finally that professional approach to match day; where, as I said to the FA, our values & standards and the competitive edge we all possess combine to deliver the teamwork, the selflessness and effort that make The Soldiers' Game and the family surrounding it such a joy to be part of.



**Niall Stokoe OBE**

Chairman

## PRESIDENT

Gen Sir Mark Carleton-Smith KCB CBE ADC Gen

## VICE PRESIDENTS

Lt Gen Stuart Skeates      Maj Gen Darren Crook  
Maj Gen David Eastman      Maj Gen Celia Harvey  
Maj Gen Sharon Nesmith      WO1 ASM P Carney

## ARMY FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE ARMY FA BOARD OF TRUSTEES



### Chairman: Brigadier Niall Stokoe OBE (2015)

Joined the Board in 2015 with initial responsibility for Men/Corps representative football. He replaced Major General "Mitch" Mitchell MBE as Chairman in April 2020. A former Chairman of the Massey League who has also served as Chairman, then President of Royal Signals Football. Played from regimental level through to Army Crusaders (for whom he still plays for) and is a Youth Coach in the civilian world.

### Vice Chair: Colonel Sam Shepherd MBE (2021)

Sam was appointed the first female Vice Chair of the Army FA in July 2021 replacing the outgoing Colonel Colin Francis CBE. As part of her role Sam will be the Safeguarding Champion for the Army FA. Sam has been the Corps Colonel of the Royal Artillery since 2019.



### 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.

### Colonel Dave Jones MBE QVRM (2015)

Dave has been the Army Reserve Trustee since 2015.

In addition to being the current Chairman of the Reserve he also Chairs the Army Crusaders (Officers) football and has been involved in significant overseas Engagements, most recently spending nearly a year in Baghdad as part of the NATO Mission Iraq and previously in Kosovo.







### 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.

### Colonel Neil Blenkinsop (2020)

Neil was appointed Trustee in early 2020 concentrating on Unit football. The passionate Sunderland fan who played regimental football from 1992 to 2014 is deeply committed to the development of grass roots football within the Army.



### 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 Chloe was most recently the Vice 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 Alex Atherton (2020)

Alex joined as a Trustee; appointed in May 2020. He is responsible for Army Men's representative and corps football. Previously Alex had been Vice-Chair of RLC AFC for five years. He has also played for Army Crusaders.



### Major Jill Rogers MBE (2021)

Major Jill Rogers has recently joined the board of trustees as an advisor on Diversity and Inclusion. A total football novice, her sporting interests are sailing and cycling. However, she is a fast learner and hopes to finally get to grips with the offside rule after some coaching from the board.



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### THE SOLDIERS' GAME

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**AFTER WORKING REMOTELY DURING COVID-19 STAFF ARE AIMING TO RETURN TO THE ALDERSHOT ASCB HQ ON A ROTATIONAL BASIS FROM SEPTEMBER 2021 ONWARDS. HOWEVER, IN THE FIRST INSTANCE PLEASE CONTACT INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF STAFF VIA EMAIL.**



**SECRETARY: Major WTE (Billy) Thomson**

Email: [William.thomson@Armyfa.com](mailto:William.thomson@Armyfa.com)

Billy has been our Secretary since 2001. He joined the Army in 1971 serving 30 years. He was Assistant Secretary of The Army Youth Team 1991 -1993 and Assistant Manager of the Army Senior team 1993-1995. In 1995 he became General Manager of the Army Men senior team until retirement in 2001. He is also the Army representative on the Council of the Football Association (FA).

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY and REFEREES SECRETARY: Mr Graham Brookland**

Email: [graham.brookland@armyfa.com](mailto: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.



**DISCIPLINARY SECRETARY: Jenny Payne**

Email: [jenny.payne@armyfa.com](mailto: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.

**FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT MANAGER: Steve Stone**

Email: [steve.stone@Armyfa.com](mailto: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](mailto: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.

**ADMIN, MARKETING & SPONSORSHIP ASSISTANT: Kate O'Hara**

Email: [kate.ohara@Armyfa.com](mailto: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.







Army Football is committed to safeguarding and protecting children, young people and adults at risk in youth and adult football. Individually and collectively, we are signed up to Affiliated Football's Policies and Procedures and we are committed to achieving The FA's Safeguarding Operating Standard for County FAs. We recognise our collective and individual safeguarding responsibilities and accountabilities.

Whilst Army Football do not have any youth teams, we do have 16 and 17 year old's . If you intend to select a player who is under 18 then the team coach must have the following:

1. A minimum of a FA level 1 coaching qualification.
2. Hold an in-date FA first Aid qualification
3. Have attended the Safeguarding Children Workshop (now available on-line)
4. Hold an in-date DBS

If in doubt, please contact the designated Safeguarding officer

#### **COUNTY FA DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICER (DSO)**

**Name:** Ms Jenny Payne

**Role:** Affiliation/Discipline Officer

**Tel Civ:** 01252 787069

**Email:** [Jenny.payne@armyfa.com](mailto:Jenny.payne@armyfa.com)

#### **COUNTY FA SENIOR SAFEGUARDING LEAD (SSL)**

**Name:** Major Billy Thomson

**Tel Civ:** 01252 787067

**Role:** CFA Secretary

**Email:** [Safeguarding@armyfa.com](mailto:Safeguarding@armyfa.com)

#### **THE FA SAFEGUARDING TEAM**

The Football Association (The FA) Wembley Stadium,

PO Box 1966,

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**Tel:** 0800 0835 902

**Email:** [safeguarding@TheFA.com](mailto:safeguarding@TheFA.com)

[TheFA.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding](http://TheFA.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding)

In June 2021 the Army Football Association Strategy 2021-24 was presented to the Football Association. The presentation attached details of the work undertaken by the Army FA to assure the Football Association of our commitment to their new governance structures and the steps we are taking to ensure we remain a professionalised and exemplar County within the FA.

Throughout we impressed upon them how football (accepting we are not the only discipline) were seen as more than just a sport within the Army and that the values required of the game and by the FA as National Governing Body chimed with the values and standards by which we all live and work. We also made clear that the involvement of our players, coaches and officials extends well beyond football in the Army. With many of those who have gained coaching qualifications with the Army FA working as coaches in their spare time with their local amateur teams. And players too involved at representative amateur level, including LCpl Demi Edwards (RAMC) who recently scored for QPR FC Women in their Capital Women's Cup victory over Actonians Ladies. In addition we have 200 officials

who also officiate or remain involved within the civilian structure from grass roots through to the FA Premier League; indeed Cpl Declan O'Shea (REME) has been promoted to the Football League list after just two years as a National League official.

We were delighted that the FA has confirmed that the Army FA has been awarded a Grant to support the delivery of the targets set out in the NGS, as agreed by the NGB, from 2021 to 2024.

Chairman, Brigadier Niall Stokoe MBE said, *"I am pleased to report that the presentation was well received, and we have secured our funding from the FA for the next three seasons. What was of particular value though was that this required us, the Board of Trustees, to look at both our structure and the further professionalisation we must undertake. We are in a good place, but there is work to do. Rest assured the Board of Trustees and I are committed to doing this and will continue to deliver for the good of The Soldiers' Game."*

**PLEASE CLICK BELOW**  
to view the full presentation document.







Like the vast majority of sport across the 3 Services, last season was particularly difficult for UKAFF. Despite working tirelessly to ensure a safe and compliant return to football, it was not possible to restart UKAFF activity or hold the 2021 Inter-Services' Competitions. International fixtures were cancelled and opportunities to play within the UK were rightly prevented by national lockdowns and the critical requirement for Armed Forces personnel to support the Government's national response to the pandemic. Despite the challenges, UKAFF, along with the single-Service Football Associations and the UK Sports Board, have worked tirelessly to ensure that football can start as soon as possible and towards the end of the 20/21 season some football has been played. In June, the UKAF Women's Team returned to competitive football with a well-earned 1-1 draw with GB Police in a fixture to commemorate the tragic loss of life as a result of the Manchester Arena Terrorist Attack in 2017.

Looking ahead, the future is more positive. UKAFF has signed an innovative sponsorship deal with Avanti Communications. Avanti will collaborate with UKAFF to introduce high tech systems to monitor and enhance individual and team fitness and training, while also providing the financial support for UKAFF Men to host the Centenary of the Kentish Cup towards the end of 2021. We aim to play all the Kentish Cup fixtures at Havant & Waterlooville FC near Portsmouth and attract support and interest from the local community and across Defence. We are also optimistic that our annual fixtures with the Irish Defence Force will begin again soon. UKAFF Women will commemorate Remembrance with a possible fixture against Chelsea FC and will travel to the Netherlands in 2022 to play for the President's Cup. Planning is now well underway and the continued support of the Army FA has been vital to the restart and recovery of UKAFF over the coming months.

Finally, not being able to play competitively also meant that it was not possible to say proper 'goodbye' to our players, coaches and officials who left the Armed Forces in the past 15 months. There are too many to mention individually and their commitment to football across Defence will not be easily forgotten. However, our departing Men's captain, Cpl Rob Farkins, deserves a special mention. Having left the Army in 2021 following a 12-year career, UKAFF will miss his dedication to football, inspirational leadership both on and off the pitch and talent at the centre of defence. 'Farks' has been instrumental and critical to UKAFF's success in recent years and represented both UKAFF and the Army with distinction; he will be sorely missed and we wish him well.'

**Air Commodore Simon Harper**



@UKArmedForcesFA



@UKAFWomen



ukafffootball



## ARMY FOOTBALL

### **BRIGADIER N M STOKOE OBE** **CHAIR – THE ARMY FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION**

The Vision statement for Kick it Out, English football's equality and inclusion organisation, says it all;

*'Our Vision is that football will be a sport where people flourish in a supportive community, and where fairness is openly and transparently practised and enforced for the good of all participants.'*

In Army Football, we are a sporting community of Regular and Reserves Personnel, of Civil Servants and Civilians. We operate across all four countries of the United Kingdom (& wider too) and, through the involvement of our people in the sport outside of their Army commitments, we are present in all its forms from junior to walking football disciplines.

We are players, we are coaches, we are officials, we are secretaries, we are organisers, we are kit custodians (and washers), we are trustees and above all we are inclusive and passionate about this, The Soldiers' Game.

As the Chair of this, your sport, I will strive to provide you with a sporting environment free from unacceptable behaviours (particularly towards officials), where you are treated with dignity, respect and kindness. An environment where your ability, your skill and above all your contributions are valued and celebrated. An environment where diversity in all its forms (race, sexuality, gender, belief) is actively welcomed. And an environment where we know that these behaviours and this welcoming, respectful culture will ultimately enhance and strengthen the game and so we invest in it wholeheartedly.

I know we will not always get this right and it is important that we hold each other, particularly me and my trustees and staff, to account so that we can maintain and continue to improve the inclusive environment of Army Football.

It is The Soldiers' Game, it is Pele's 'Beautiful Game', help and work with me to ensure that our behaviours and culture of inclusivity reflect the highest standards of the Army and that of the sport we all love.



**MAJOR JILL ROGERS** has recently joined the board of trustees as a Diversity and Inclusion Advisor.

A keen advocate of all sport although not a footballer, Jill is committed to the principal of opportunity for all to engage in sport and more particularly Army football, no matter what their background.

Having spent the previous 5 years in roles which are about improving behaviour, removing barriers to talent and enhancing diversity, Jill is in a good position to advise the board on how to both celebrate the inclusivity of Army Football; and to take steps to build on that great foundation in the future.

No stranger to operating out of her comfort zone, Jill recently sailed around Britain singlehanded and cycles and plays tennis to keep fit.





## ARMY FA VICE CHAIR

There has been a change in the position of Vice Chairman within the Army FA Board of Trustees.

This is due to the departure of Colonel Colin Francis CBE. Colin, who was awarded a Commander of the Order of the British Empire in the 2021 New Years' Honours List, has left the Army.

He was commissioned into the Royal Logistic Corps in 1993 and appointed as Corps Colonel in 2017.

A veteran of operational tours in Iraq, Afghanistan, Bosnia, Macedonia and Kosovo he commanded at every level on operations, up to unit level and was appointed MBE for his contribution to operations in 2009.

Colin became a Trustee in 2015 and appointed Chairman after the departure of Colonel Richard Hayhurst OBE in 2019.

A proud Chairman of the RLC FA Colin also chaired the Crusaders (Army Officers Football Club).

We express our sincere appreciation to Colin for his superb contribution to Army Football and wish him well in the future.

### WE WELCOME OUR NEW VICE CHAIR COLONEL SAM SHEPHERD MBE.

Colonel Sam Shepherd MBE commissioned into the Royal Regiment of Artillery in 1997. During her career she has served across the UK and Germany and has deployed on operations in Northern Ireland, Iraq, Macedonia and Afghanistan.

Her early career saw her deploy on Operation TELIC 1 and 3 as a Forward Observation Officer after which she became the Adjutant of the Army Foundation College (Harrogate). Promoted to Major in 2006 her initial grade 2 appointment as SO2 Organisation & Deployments within London District earned her an MBE.

Her Battery Command tour with 17 (Corunna) Battery, Royal Artillery followed, and it was in this role that she deployed on Operation HERRICK 15 in support of the 5 RIFLES Battlegroup. A posting to the Land Warfare School as the lead staff officer responsible for the planning and delivery of the new 8 week Junior Command and Staff Course gained her promotion to Lieutenant Colonel and selection for the Advanced Command and Staff Course. She fulfilled the role Chief of Staff 102 Logistic Brigade for 15 months before assuming Command of 5th Regiment Royal Artillery in January 2017. Following command, Colonel Shepherd was posted to London District as the Deputy Chief of Staff and assumed the Regimental Colonel Royal Artillery appointment in October 2019.

An avid sportswoman, her primary playing passion is rugby and as blind side flanker she represented the Royal Regiment, the Army and the Combined Services. However, an active supporter of football and a Spurs fan to boot (no pun intended!) she is delighted to have assumed the role of Vice Chair of the Army FA. Other interests include baking, hiking and playing the piano.





In June DASCBC Maj Gen Shaun Burley CB MBE had the pleasure of presenting the ASCB Director's coin to the first recipient of the award.

Capt (MAA) Kevin Haley RAPTC has represented service football at the highest level for two decades. This includes Corps (RAPTC & AMS), Army (various levels) and UK Armed Forces.

Since retiring from playing, he has taken on the roles of RAPTC FC manager and Army Senior Team Secretary, this clearly demonstrates his dedication and passion to serve both Corps and Army Football.

Away from the pitch, Capt (MAA) Haley has impressively managed the Army FA Roadshow, delivering clinics to schools and communities around the country and he has promoted the sport passionately.

Capt (MAA) Haley organised the first Army female 5-a-side competition and has been instrumental in supporting numerous OSV's at various levels and he has achieved all this and more, whilst continuing to be successful in his career.

He is widely acknowledged within the Army Football family as a superb role model and is a POC for many players and coaches. Although his preferred role is 'a solid' centre midfielder who isn't shy of a 50/50 challenge and thrives on the physical aspect of the game, he has only ever received one yellow card in his service history which spans well over 500 caps.

A fine example of someone who is competitive but fair and epitomises the qualities of a sportsman and symbolises what it is to be a sportsman, role model, leader, manager, and coach. Moreover, he is one of the good guys, who has been selfless in ensuring he has supported the UK Armed Forces over many years, in many countries and simply excelled!

Congratulations Captain Haley, a very well-deserving recipient of the very first Army Sport Control Board Director's Coin.

Capt Kev Haley commented, "I was initially shocked by the presentation but thankful to receive the first DASCBC. I thank the DASCBC, for taking the time out to personally present me with the first coin. I hope this was the first of many as there are so many people doing a huge amount of great work, usually in their own time within sport that unfortunately goes unnoticed. I hope the introduction of this coin gives those who dig out blind for their sport the recognition they deserve".

The credentials for the DASCBC Coin is in recognition of individuals who have continually or exceptionally gone above and beyond in their role in support or delivery of Army Sport and to have an emphasis on performance and achievement rather than seniority and length of service to sport.

The Army Football Association Chairman's Coin has also been introduced in 2021 and the first presentations of the award will be made in October.





# AFFILIATION & PLAYER REGISTRATION

**To measure our County FA vision (2021/24) and smart goals and objectives it is imperative that the correct affiliation and player registration procedures are implemented as per the guidelines below:**

1. Affiliation to the Army FA is to be completed using the Whole Game System (WGS). If a unit manage or operate a football league, unit football or any other type of football competition and they have not registered on the Whole Game System you are to contact the affiliation secretary who will assist you in the registration process. All guidance notes for everything WGS can be found at <https://grassrootstechnology.freshdesk.com/support/home>

There is no restriction on the number of players that can be registered on the WGS.

Leagues, Corps Secretaries and Competition organisers cannot permit entry into a football competition without the team first receiving an affiliation number from the Army FA for the 2021/22 season. The affiliation for all units is free for season 2021/22.

All players regardless of how many times they play must be registered through <https://clubs.thefa.com> and must include the individuals email address. This is a mandatory requirement for season 2021/22.





**A BLOG FROM FORMER ARMY FOOTBALLER MATT SPRUCE AND AN INSIGHTFUL OUTLOOK ON THE MENTAL HEALTH EFFECTS OF FOOTBALL DURING COVID-19 AND HOW TAKE IT ALL FOR GRANTED.**

## **“THE BEAUTIFUL GAME: SPORT AS A VEHICLE FOR WELLBEING”**

**BY MATT SPRUCE**

How have you found the last 12 months? Personally, I have found it a challenge. To move to a new house, have a baby as well as a two year old, leave the Army, resettle, job hunt, interviews and then start a job all under some kind of pandemic restriction has made everything a little more complex.

You may laugh but I have missed playing football... I know, selfish and sad... but I have played since I was a child and throughout my adult life. Every posting, every new Town, 5-a-side, 7-a-side, Sunday league, non-league, for the Army Medical Services, for the Army, even on Operations around the globe .... Kosovo, Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen... and then there are the Exercises in Kenya, Cyprus, Uganda, Germany, New Zealand, France, and the

Czech Republic....I have always had the escapism of playing the game. At every level, from having a kick about in the gym to playing at Fratton Park against the Royal Navy, the buzz and team cohesion is the same. A freedom to focus on nothing other than the game, the ball, your team, the score.

I read a quote “you will never miss “normal” until it’s gone” and boy have I missed normal. Physical activity is vital for health and wellbeing, it is something I have always prided myself on. The varying degrees of lockdowns gave me the freedom to do “daily activity” which I embraced... but it wasn’t enough. I found myself getting a little more stressed and having a little less tolerance.





Team sports require you to place the good of the group above your own self-interest. It might feel good to run the length of the pitch, take on every player.... It's more likely that you'll lose the ball to the other team. In football, how many you score doesn't matter. All that matters is that your team wins!!

I am hoping to play for a Charity team called North Wales Dragons, they play in various charity cups but most importantly, they train every week. On a 4g pitch under flood lights, the excitement I have for turning up, meeting new people, and playing the beautiful game is ridiculous...!! I am nearly 40 ....!! I have had the opportunity to play football throughout my career, culminating in being a part of the Army Masters team that won the World Masters Game in Auckland 2017. If I could offer any advice, regardless of your age, gender, or ability..... Keep playing the Soldiers game....!!



Suffering from cabin fever and feeling guilty as I had everything, and people had lost so much. I knew I missed the game. Of course, I couldn't talk about it, even writing about it seems ridiculous and selfish, but not having that hit of passion, adrenaline, commitment, and cohesion took its toll.

For many people, sport is taken for granted. It is something that exists in the background, it is seen as a bit of fun on the weekend but ultimately, not all that important, for me, this couldn't be further from the truth. I struggled to process how I have managed to play football in every warzone I have deployed to, often to break barriers with locals, often to bring people together and a vehicle for leadership and cohesion. Yet here I was, in the UK, BANNED from playing.

The physical importance of sports is well known but participating in physical activities also has an incredibly beneficial effect on your happiness. This boost in happiness comes from a range of sources, both neurological and psychological.



**THIS BLOG WAS ORIGINALLY PLACED ON**  
[www.fortitudepsychologicaltherapy.co.uk/blog-1](http://www.fortitudepsychologicaltherapy.co.uk/blog-1)





Photo: Ian Morsman

## FAREWELL AND WELCOME.

Army Men's Football would like to express our sincere thanks to Colonel Colin Francis OBE for his support as Vice Chairman Army Football. We send Colonel Francis and his family our very best wishes for their next exciting next chapter.

We also say fond farewell to Major Sean Birchnall as Army Men's Senior Team Head Coach on his retirement from the Army. Sean has been a phenomenal servant to football in the Army and will be missed by all at the Army FA. We wish Sean and his family our best wishes for the future.

Welcome to Major Dean Boughen who takes over as the new Army Men's Football General Manager. WO2 Craig Willis RA who assumes appointment as the Army U-23s Team Secretary. Welcome to the Army FA.

Finally, we welcome back Lt Col Richie Bell as Secretary of the Army Men's Masters and Captain Joseph Collins Head Coach of the Masters. We are expecting great things from this dynamic duo and wish them well for the coming season.

## OPENING REMARKS

This was clearly not the season that any of us had planned or hoped for and the eventual cancellation of representative football was a hammer blow for all those involved with Army Men's Football. Of course, we completely understand and support the reasons why, nevertheless, it was still a huge disappointment for all involved in Army football. Looking ahead, we have an exciting 21/22 season to look forward to across the Men's Senior, U-23s and the Master's team who will be jetting off to Japan for the World Masters Games 2022.

Lt Col Alex Atherton, Trustee Army Men's Football commented, *"It was incredibly disappointing not to complete the inter services this season. However, as we begin to plan for next season, I think we do so with a far greater appreciation of exactly just how important football is for the mental and physical wellbeing of our people. As Trustee, I remain incredibly grateful for the efforts of all those involved in making the Army FA a success and cannot wait to get the 21/22 season underway."*

# A MESSAGE FROM THE ARMY MEN'S SENIOR TEAM HEAD COACH ON RETIREMENT

The Last Word.....

Colonel independence

As I prepare to hand over the role of Head Coach of the Army Men's Football Team I'd like to thank a few people who, without their support, we would never have achieved what we did prior to the Covid-19 pandemic.

I had the privilege of working with a great backroom team. They deserve all the plaudits that they receive for the way in which they supported me and the players in preparing for the Game of Remembrance, two Inter Services as well as and the Southern Counties Cup competition. Their professionalism, and the manner in which they challenged each other, and the players, ensured that we evolved each year and continued to be successful. The environment they created was ideal for player development and their knowledge and experience improved both individuals and the team.

The players commitment and desire to represent the Army cannot be underestimated. The passion that each player demonstrated during every training camp was a pleasure to see and their willingness to develop and buy into my ethos of how I wanted the Army team to act, on and off the pitch, was invaluable in creating a professional and positive team ethos.

Finally, I'd like to thank the Army FA for the continued support to the development of the Soldiers Game and their passion for supporting a successful Representative team. The thankless task, that they do in the background, can sometimes go unnoticed however; it is essential in allowing the team to focus on preparing for each fixture without the administrative burden that is an inevitable consequence of Service football.

I wish my successor all the very best and firmly believe that we currently have the best players and best team in Service football.

Major Sean Birchnall RLC



## SOCIAL MEDIA TRIBUTES:

*Fantastic coach and a true gentleman, always supported the women's team and constantly on hand if I ever needed anything. You will be missed Sean, go grab the next chapter in your life*

**Mags McAteer**

*The success he achieved in Service football was never in doubt. Meticulous, professional and 100% committed, Sean B was great to work alongside as a player and coach. Best wishes pal.*

**Ellis Langford**

*Firstly, a fantastic bloke who has helped me numerous times away from football, a wealth of knowledge and approachable at any time. Secondly, a fantastic coach who taught us a lot on the pitch. Been an absolute pleasure and wish you every success in your next step pal!*

**Rob Farkins**

*An absolute privilege to have played for & won trophies with you. You've done so much for me as a player & I will always be grateful for that. You will be missed! All the best Gaffer*

**Sean Woolley**

*Pleasure to work with. A dedicated true professional and an honour to call him a friend. Will be a huge loss to service football. Thanks for the memories.*

**Keith Emmerson**

*Sean arrived as Head Coach after THE MOST successful period leading the Royal Logistic Corps to the Massey League title (three times) and the Woolwich Cup (twice). The man, the myth, the legend.. All the best.*

**RLC FA**

ARMY  
MEN -  
THANK  
YOU  
SEAN

## TO ARMY MEN

At the end of season 2019/20 the Army Men's Senior team went into the Inter-Services (IS) unbeaten and without conceding a goal which gave the squad so much confidence. The first fixture, against the RAF at Shrewsbury, was a very tight affair but the team came through it with another clean sheet and winning the game 1-0 put us into the driver's seat for the remaining fixture against the Royal Navy. However, due to the situation with Covid-19 the second game against the Royal Navy was postponed and then the IS for season 2019/20 was subsequently cancelled. This was extremely disappointing, however, completely understandable.

Having not completed the last IS competition, the team are extremely positive and energised for the 2021/22 season. They team are confident that they can continue to produce similar results from those delivered by the great coaching work of Maj Sean Birchnall (Head Coach) and his coaching staff. It is unfortunate that Sean was unable to complete the last IS as it would have been a fitting leaving gift to retain the IS Cup 3 years running under his tenure as he now retires from the Army. Sean, on behalf of all the team, thank you for all your personal time and effort in making this team successful and we wish you all the very best.

We also say goodbye to players Rob Farkins and Dan Stoneman who are both leaving the Army. Both have contributed immensely to Army football over the years with Rob captaining the side to our most recent Inter Services success in 2019 prior to the Covid-19 outbreak. We thank you for your

commitment to Army football and wish you all the best in the future. Suitable presentations have been arranged to be made to both players at the appropriate time.

Whilst Sean has left, the Head Coach job has been advertised and will no doubt be hotly contested. There have also been several new additions to the committee and management team during the lockdown period and this has given the opportunity to realign some of the aims and objectives and has allowed for a more comfortable settling in period for the new committee.

**Capt Kev Haley RAPTC**

## TO UNDER 23

A season filled with so much uncertainty, the Army U23 Squad were forced to try and best prepare remotely through team meetings over zoom and routine fitness challenges for coaches to monitor until a decision was made to cancel the U23 Inter Service competition.

Not a single ball was kicked but most importantly all players and staff were kept safe and we are extremely excited to get the 21/22 season started, which will kick start with a training camp early September 21. Acutely aware of the lack of exposure to identifying young promising talent across all cap badges for some time, the training camp will allow a great opportunity for Corps coaches to recommend players they feel should be invited.

**SSgt Gerwyn Griffiths RE**



Rob Farkins



Dan Stoneman



@ArmyFAMensTeam



@ArmyU23



armymensfootball





The Army Masters' Football Team has grown in stature since the 'Veterans' fixtures, between the 3 services, were formally initiated in 2002. In Sep 2016 the 'Vets' team were invited to participate in the 2017 World Masters' Games (WMG17) to be held in May, in Auckland, New Zealand. At this point, in order to compete and have suitable personal injury cover, the Army took the unilateral decision to deliver Football for over 35s, for serving personnel only, thereby, changing the status from 'Vets' to Masters, the Masters' concept was born. The team had a hugely successful first outing in New Zealand, winning 8 of 9 fixtures and the Gold Medal in the 35-40 category.

That success brought fresh impetus to Army Masters' Football and the team has grown exponentially with a player base of 40+ players across the Army, including a number of Army Reserve players. COVID-19 and the global pandemic has clearly stymied our efforts to play over the last 18 months, but with some hope for the 21/22 season the Team Management are preparing a number of fixtures to build some impetus towards WMG22 in Japan.

Capt Matt Spruce has been a stalwart of Masters' Football since its inception, covering the Secretary and associated Administrative functions, bringing his passion for football to bear and moving Masters' Football forward since Auckland. Matt has left the Army and is building a new career, forcing him to step down and concentrate on his personal and professional development. He will be back, once he has the time to join the Army Reserve and the Masters' Team would like to formally thank him for all of the great work, he has delivered on our behalf over the last 4 years.

That said, the team is in good hands as the former Captain and Head Coach of Army and UKAF Football has stepped up. Capt Joe Collins has accepted the offer to take the role of Head Coach and will begin the preparation for WMG22 when the Army returns to football. Army Masters' Football is now well and truly established and in a strong position to develop in time to defend our Gold Medal in 2022.

If you are over 35, a footballer who stills craves competitive sport and keen to get involved please make contact with the Army Football General Manager, Dean Boughen @ Boughen, Dean Maj (21SIG-RHQ-2IC), Joe Collins @ Collins, Joseph Capt (4LANCS-BHQ-RCMO) or Richie Bell @ Bell, Richard Lt Col (159RLC-125-OC).



Dean as an apprentice at Newport County sat on the grass, right of the ball.

## INTRODUCTION

Major Dean Boughen MBE is the new Army General Manager of men's football, replacing the outgoing manager Lt Col Richie Bell MBE who retires from regular service. However more to follow on Richie elsewhere in this review in the Army Masters update.

Dean isn't new to Army Football, he played for the Senior team for several years and skippered the side to an Inter Services victory in 2003. After a couple of years in the professional game, he joined the Army in 1991 and has been involved in football as a player, coach, and manager throughout his career. He has won every major honour in military football, including Army Cups, as a player and as a coach too. He has played representative football for his Corps (R SIGNALS), the Army and UKAF and had a successful coaching career when he eventually hung his boots up. Passionate for the game, Dean will bring a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to the appointment.

Many moons ago, Dean was the Regimental Sergeant Major to our Chairman Brigadier Niall, and on news of his appointment Dean commented with a wry smile "that he was looking forward to working for Brigadier again, honestly."

## FOOTBALLING HISTORY

- Professional football - Newport County, Bristol Rovers, Lincoln City.
- Player – various Regt'l teams, R SIGNALS Corps team, Army Senior team, Combined Services (now UKAF). Played football for German, Dutch, Gibraltar and Cypriot teams whilst serving.
- Coach – youth football, various Regt'l teams, R SIGNALS Corps Team, Assistant Coach to Army Senior Team.
- Manager – R SIGNALS Corps team, Combined Services Gibraltar, Army Gibraltar.
- Other Appointments – Director of Football R SIGNALS, Vice Chairman R SIGNALS (present)
- Notable achievements – professional debut aged 16, Army Cup Winner as a player and then coach, Army Super Cup Winner as a coach, Massey League winner numerous times as a player and coach, Inter Service Champion as skipper, South West Counties winner and Kentish Cup winner as a player. Walked out a combined RAF/Army XI v RN at Wembley as a joint coach.



## PERSONAL STATEMENT

I am thrilled and honoured to be appointed as the General Manager of Men's Army football. Having skippered the Senior team and then worked as the Assistant Coach, stepping up to be the General Manager seemed a logical and natural progression.

It is not lost on me that I am extremely fortunate to be joining a great team of knowledgeable, enthusiastic, and dedicated people. I intend to use my experience to continue to maintain the high standards and excellence that are clearly evident across both teams, but importantly look for areas where we can progress too. Years in the game have taught me that if a football team is to be successful over a sustained period of time, then everyone must have a focussed approach to improve and be committed to continuous development. Constant betterment drives competition, which builds the foundations for success. I hope to support the staff and players of both teams as we continue to move forwards together.

Having played and coached in the Massey League, I understand passion and desire for the Soldiers' game in the Army, and it is unique. As restrictions are lifted and we return to football, from grass roots to the representative teams, our game will be welcomed back throughout the Army. To be part of that, with Men's Army football is an absolute privilege and a challenge that I will take on with the utmost pride.

### ARMY GENERAL MANAGER

Maj Dean Boughen MBE



Dean running out for his debut in the old 4th Division aged 16, Newport County v Rochdale. Darren Peacock (on Dean's right) is was playing a couple of years later in the Premiership for Newcastle United..... and Dean was in the Army.



Dean as R Signals Coach winning Massey Trophy and QUADS.





The frustrations of Covid-19 were put to one side on the first Friday in June as the name of the Infantry returned to the Massey Trophy Division 1 champions board after a 3-1 victory versus Royal Signals in Aldershot confirmed the achievement. There is no doubting the team, led by Head Coach Capt Jimmy Blair, have been the most consistent in Army Corps football over the last two years.

Indeed, victory versus the Royal Engineers in the final match of the 2019/20 season would have secured the trophy a year previously halted, however, by the initial Covid-19 lockdowns and subsequent cancellation of the competition.

The facts are clear though. Since the commencement of the 2019/20 season Infantry have won 11 of their 14 league matches completed and have thoroughly deserved the accolades that have come their way.

It is a good story for Army football too. A corps in decline and hovering in Division 2 just five years ago re-energised itself devising a structure that would ultimately prove successful.

A jubilant Blair explains the story after Infantry became the top men's corps team for the first time in 17 years, *"Proud is the word that sums it up. We have been chasing this for a while. One of the motivations was the winners board in Garretts Clubhouse (Aldershot Military Stadium) where it shows that the last time Infantry won it was in 2004. There was a sheer desire to get our name on there."*

*"We have had a lot of plaudits in recent years from where we have brought the set up especially since our relegation to Division 2 where we literally had a bag of balls and a few cones. We have brought it to a position where we are fully kitted out, sourced a sponsor, and created several methods to develop the team and structure. The support we have had from the Army FA with the use of the Development Centre in Aldershot was considerable too. If we hadn't won the league it would have drifted away a bit. There has been so much hard work to get to where we are now".*



In 2016 The Infantry approached the Army FA for support when they were having serious problems staging matches at Pirbright and it was becoming a dilemma every Friday home game as to whether they would be able to fulfil a fixture. Eventually the home of Infantry football was moved to Aldershot and, primarily, a desire to use the 3G facility at Wavell on Queens Avenue. There were several people involved at the outset. Initially Mark Stones was the “one-man band” for the Infantry followed by Lee Waghorn (Wagsy) who played a huge role in the progression as Jimmy alludes to, “Stonesy carried that and it had a big effect on the team. There would be times when he used to have half a dozen turn up for training and then the others role up the next day just to play and that was it. You can’t operate like that and I really felt for Stonesy. It must have been frustrating. That was the lowest point. Lee took it over after the team was relegated and thrown out of Pirbright and homeless. It was Lee’s early conversations with the Army FA to help provide a home to have a firm base was key.

*We were then able to bring coaches in such as Lee Barry and Scotty Ralfe.”*

*“At the time I was on my Level 2 with the Army FA and Steve Stone. My involvement was just to observe matches. Little did I know it but the second time I came to visit I became involved with the coaching and a season and a half later I became the manager. We were all finding our feet as new coaches at the time. Nowadays we have a full squad turn up for training and have a strength in depth that has paid off. “We had a lot of players come through too and didn’t have the consistency at the time of regular players. Back in 2016 we only had one Army player, Adam Wakley whereas now we have 6/7 Army players that we have been able to develop. The consistency has opened interest within the units which has been of help too. There used to be an abundance of talent in the Infantry when they won the league in the late 90’s with many Combined Service standard players.”*



After winning Massey Division 2 in 2017 unbeaten throughout the season the club has just kicked on from there due to the huge enthusiasm provided from within.

Capt Blair continues explaining how he became manager and how they started to professionalise the organisation. *"Our manager went on a six-month deployment and we weren't sure what our roles were. Wagsy made a key decision and appointed me as Manager. We had Scotty Ralfe, Leighton Wilks. Mark Rider became Kitman and Matt Little, originally the kitman, showed a real aptitude for analysis. We started to record all our matches and the players were receptive to this as they could see what they were doing well and what they could do better. We approached the PCRF in Aldershot for physio support and this worked well. The care and attention from the side-lines were important too. We stretched all of this. We even got a couple of Wheely bins from Rushmoor Borough Council to pack with ice and cold water for when the players came off from training that they would use. Marginal gains but really important because it has worked."*

The outset of Covid-19 has provided challenges to every household, every business, every Army unit. For the Infantry it came at the worst time too as they were just 90 minutes from the final match of the 2019/20 season with a winner takes all situation with the Royal Engineers. That match was cancelled and the season null and voided. That produced its own difficulty for Jimmy and the interaction of his players.

He continues, *"There is no face to face contact on a regular basis for Corps teams as we are not together daily in the same unit. To have 15 months without meet ups or contact due to Covid-19 was a challenge. To not be able to complete last season was a frustration especially as we knew that if we beat the Royal Engineers, we would have won the Massey and I truly believe we would have won the match. The worry was that the winning formula would disappear. We kept in touch via What's App and set them challenges and kept interaction going. I do believe our players look forward to coming to training. We involve them in everything and have little incentives including presenting an Infantry coin on debut for each player. These things are so important."*



"When we returned this season and got to November and another lockdown there was a tiny belief that we would come back in December or, at the latest, January. When it carried through and the new strain started to develop, we thought the season could be cancelled again. Conversations started in February/March time with the Massey Secretary, Matty Barton and the Army FA and it was a wait and see but we did have a belief that there was an intent and desire to get the season back up and running at some stage with the league to be the priority which was encouraging."

"The re-start was a "do and die" for us. We knew that if we hadn't won that game versus Royal Engineers then we would have had it all to do. They have been our main competitors and we have had some battering's from them during my time. They have that winning mentality over the years that we hadn't yet achieved. It was probably the most nervous I have been in my time as manager, but we won 2-1 and I knew then that I believed we would do it."

"It has been hard work. My biggest achievement in football to date. I am immensely proud of everybody involved from General Tom (Coppinger-Symes) who was our President to Col Simon Brown who was our Chairman. Lee Waghorn, "Mr Infantry" right from the beginning. All the coaching team. There has been so much hard work put in. Now we are on that board in Garretts we have cemented a bit of a legacy. The aim must be that we continue to hit the right standards and continue the challenge. The sign of a good team is to keep getting your name on that board. The bar has been raised and we have to match that."





After careful consultation the 2020/21 Army Challenge Cup competitions was cancelled in May 2021. The Army FA were proud to be in a position to complete the 2019/20 competitions despite the Covid-19 restrictions and also to commence with the 2020/21 competition, even though the majority of county associations decided not to stage their own senior cup competitions.

The Army Challenge Cups (Major and Minor Unit) were due to re-commence after Easter leave in mid-April in line with the Covid-19 NGB guidelines, lifted on 29 March 21. At this stage both the Major and Minor Unit competitions had a heavy backlog due to the suspension of the competition in November 2020. However, a plan had been devised to complete with a stringent calendar that would have ensured each round being competed for on Wednesday afternoons from 14 April through to the original finals day of 23 June.

Direction was provided to all remaining teams in the competition to make a commitment to comply with the strict dates announced. It was always going to be a tall order to complete but we were prepared to give it a go. A subsequent Army HQ ABN was announced post Easter limiting all Army football matches up to 17 May 2021 to be "Intra Garrison" only. Due to this the cup competitions were duly suspended.

Throughout the second lockdown from Christmas onwards it had been Army FA policy to ensure that all 2020/21 competitions be concluded by 30 June 2021 in order for the 2021/22 season to be able to commence in August with the hope



that Covid-19 restrictions will, by then, be lifted allowing to return to a "normal" football season without any outstanding matches from the previous season.

It was deemed that it would not be possible to complete the competitions within the specified time limits. The Army FA did not take this decision lightly. It is the first time since 1899 (Boer War) that the competition has not be completed outside of the two world wars.

**The 2021/22 Major and Minor Unit competitions will commence in September. All affiliated Unit Secretaries will receive an invite via email nearer the time.**



## Maximising participation in the 'Soldier's Game' though flexible, inclusive and accessible playing opportunities for all

It has proven to be a challenging year for grassroots Unit Football as Coronavirus restrictions severely hampered the fixtures programme throughout the season. The decision to cancel both the Army Challenge Cup and the Minor Units Cup was taken following careful consideration and after all possible options for their continuance were explored. However, covid restrictions made it simply impossible to complete the competitions in the 20-21 season. Equally, it was not possible to complete any of the League programmes in the UK Regions, with Unit Football limited to the arrangement of ad-hoc friendlies and Arms and Services competitions completed during those occasions when restrictions allowed.

However, as we look forward to the upcoming 21-22 season, it is now possible to see a brighter future ahead, and League Secretaries and Unit Football Officers are now actively planning for the return of Unit Football. It is anticipated that all UK Regional Leagues will recommence in the late Summer, and much work is currently ongoing to increase both Team and Player registrations with the Football Association. A number of events to kick start grassroots football are in the planning phase, notably a proposed Festival of Football at Catterick Garrison which will make use of the excellent new 4G facility at Wavell Road. Likewise, the long overdue Army FA Super Cup between the Regular and Reserve Unit champions from season

19-20 will herald the start of the new season, and we look forward to the return of both the Army Challenge Cup and the Minor Units Cup in 21-22.

As always, Unit Football is reliant upon the commitment and support of League Secretaries and Unit Officials. The summer posting cycle has seen a number of notable changes, and we say thank you and farewell to SSgt Garsrud (UK North League Secretary), SSgt (SSI) Noble (UK South

League Secretary and Sgt (SI) Crame (UK Midlands League Secretary). Correspondingly, we welcome Sgt (SI) Lowe, SSgt (SSI) Charles and SSgt (SSI) Hull to the team.



Neil Blenkinsop (Trustee)

## ARMY UK NORTH LEAGUE OVERVIEW

This season has been a frustrating one. Safe to say it's been very stop-start but units have tried their best to play as many games as possible. No leagues or Cups were able to be finished and therefore the majority of the games were friendlies (adhering to the Covid-19 guidelines). Some units have managed to play at least half a dozen friendlies which is impressive considering the challenges faced this season.

Going forward, we are hoping the season will recommence in August/September with a full league fixture programme for all 3 Divisions. The Northern League Cup will also start in the New Year.

We also look forward to the resumption of the Major and Minor Unit cup competition and Corp's cups that will take place during the season. All in all, everybody in the North is looking forward to the resumption of official football matches in the North. We have had some good units return to the North and they are raring to start.

There will be a Festival of Football in September which will see an 11 a-side knockout competition with teams from the North competing. This will be held on a Wednesday TBC, hopefully on the new 4G pitches at Wavell road.

Sgt Ryan Lowe will take as Secretary, prior to the start of the next season.





Tony McBean

The annual Royal Signals football competition, the McBean Trophy, is without doubt a sporting highlight in the Corps' calendar. It is named after Major Tony McBean, a brave and gifted goalkeeper who was an influential member of the Corps team for over 20 years, first as a player, then goalkeeping coach and finally Assistant Coach. This role he embraced with enthusiasm, passion, and pride right up until he tragically lost his life to motor neurone disease in 2016.

The McBean Trophy is the Royal Signals' inter-Regiment cup competition. Previously designated The Signaller Cup, the competition was renamed in 2017. The very last Signaller Cup final in 2016 was played in the North East at Consett FC, Tony's local club; he presented the trophy to 1 Signal Regiment after a thrilling game against 3 Signal Regiment, a befitting end to the competition.

The very first McBean Trophy final saw 22 Signal Regiment beat 1 Signal Regiment, again at Consett FC. The winners were presented the McBean Trophy by Claire, Tony's wife, watched by his two lovely daughters and in front of friends, family and the Corps' football community.

Brigadier Niall Stokoe OBE, Chairman of Army Football Association, said *"When I think of Tony (which is still very often) I am always drawn to remember how, in the depths of his illness when even messaging was hard, he still texted me about football. I know how difficult it was for him to do it, but when Spurs played Newcastle he couldn't resist - he had to do it. And I had to reply and, if Spurs were winning, spare him no quarter and in those moments it wasn't me texting my dying mate but rather me texting the mad-as-a-box-of-frogs goalkeeper and ludicrously optimistic*

*Geordie fan with whom I played so many matches. He lived and breathed the game, he lived and breathed being a soldier and that this trophy will always bear his name will be forever fitting."*

*"The McBean Trophy is an important part of Royal Signals Football, providing an opportunity for all our units to compete against one another. Over the years the competition has highlighted new talent and has provided a number of surprise results, I suppose the beauty of the beautiful game! The McBean Trophy, named after our fellow footballer, much missed friend and Corps legend, Tony McBean, is played in the absolute spirit of the game; with total commitment, a desire to do everything for your team and teammates and of course, with a will to win."* - Lt Col Simon Smith, Chairman of Royal Signals Football Association, Commanding Officer, 30 Signal Regiment.

This year, the final was between 21 Signal Regiment and 30 Signal Regiment, significant as both Regiments held a special place in Tony's heart. Tony was the Regimental Sergeant Major of 21 Signal Regiment, prior to becoming the Corps Regimental Sergeant Major. 30 Signal Regiment was the last unit that Tony served with and provided close support to Tony and his family on behalf of the Corps. After an absolutely thrilling match (even better than watching England beat Germany in our opinion), 30 Signal Regiment came out as 5-3 winners, with two goals being scored in extra time. Congratulations to everyone that took part, it really is a very special Corps competition.

*Article originally placed on the  
IRoyal Signals website- 01 July 2021*



Excellent Zoom meeting with the Army Football Board of Trustees. Fantastic to welcome our four new Bd members to the fold. Covering all preparations for the hopeful start of football in the autumn it was great to see the enthusiasm amongst all for The Soldiers' Game.

**Niall Stokoe 09 July**



Thank you to ex @ArmyFAMens Team captain @BarryRizza who leaves regular Army after 22 years. Over 300 matches for Army, @UKArmedForcesFA, @RoyalSignalsFA plus Coaching/Engagement initiatives with @EFL clubs. Awarded 2019 @ Armyfa1888

Lifetime Achievement Award. Superb service  
**11 Aug**



This is also 8th season of Steve Finch @RLC\_FA officiating in Football League. Congratulations Steve, 4th Official at Cambridge v Carlisle today. Steve was also Asst in midweek in the League Cup tie between Gillingham v Crawley Town. He also refereed 2014 @Armyfa1888 Cup Final

**12 Sept**



FA Level 2 block 2 coaching course at the Army FDC Aldershot #Covidstyle !!  
@stevestone124

**23 Sept**



We wish our former @ArmyFAReferees Chief Instructor Rick Harden the very best as he leaves the Army. Rick (2nd from right) also served on the Referees Executive Committee. Thank you for your contribution to Army Football Refereeing.

**02 Aug**



Our @armyfa Ambassador @kempykempsta1 met @imogen\_phwho is raising funds for #Covid19 heroes. She said "It was an absolute pleasure to present Imogen with @AWFTLionesses shirt & show our appreciation towards her 7.1 million keep up challenge."

**21 Aug**



Congratulations to @AMS\_football Women on winning the 2019/20 Edwards Cup Final beating @fa\_reme 3-2 in a terrific final in Bicester.

**23 Sept**



Congratulations to The Armour Centre on creating history by winning the @Armyfa1888 Minor Units Cup Final (19/20) for the third successive season beating 34 Field Hospital 3-0 in Bicester.

**23 Sept**





After no Inter Corps Football for what seemed like an eternity. The decision was made to cancel the 2020-2021 league and focus on the Edwards Challenge Cup (ECC).

With Lt Col Plimmer-Sayce RE appointed as the Army Women's Trustee an entirely new approach to the competition was clear from the very first fixture.

## QUARTER FINALS

On Fri 30 Oct 2020 the Int Corps travelled to MOD Lyneham to face the REME with the visitors on the end of a 4-0 loss. The Intelligence Corps came away with their reputation still intact after a very strong performance despite the result. Cpl Dinnage netted a brace, with Sgt Kemp and Cfn Cooke doubling the score in the second half.

Due to another break in play the three remaining quarter finals were kindly hosted by Bicester Garrison at Saint George's Barracks on Tue 18 – Wed 19 May 2021. All the hard work and effort put in by Director of Football Maj John Normanton RLC was clear to see with excellent playing surfaces and facilities to accommodate six different teams over the week.

The morning kick off saw a very strong and confident AGC side take on an ever-developing RA squad. Some superb football on display from both teams in a competitive game saw the Cup favourites AGC come away with a 4-0 victory. Capt Wright opened the scoring before Cpl Dixon claimed the match ball with a tremendous hat trick.

As the weather changed in the afternoon from bright blue skies to severe down pours the second fixture saw the RE take on league champions RLC. The weather certainly played its part and the game was an incredible battle for both sides. RLC booked a place in the semi-finals with a 4-0 victory despite RE leaving literally everything they had to give on the field. LCpl Bancroft, LCpl Williams, Pte Earns and Pte Roberts all finding the back of the net respectively.

The next day saw the fourth quarter final fixture take place with last season's ECC winners AMS come up against the Royal Sigs. Tough conditions from the previous day's weather made this an extremely tough game and both teams really gave it their all. The AMS found themselves ending the fixture with a reassuring 5-0 victory. Cpl Clifford, Pte Fitzpatrick and Pte Fisher all adding their names to the scoresheet with LCpl Edwards scoring twice.

To see both playing and coaching staff back doing what they love in a tremendous location was evident all round and all fixtures were played in the greatest of spirits.

## SEMI FINALS

With all four teams struggling for accommodation due to COVID-19, and expert guidance and assistance from Maj Nicola Gould RA. The two semi-finals were played at Bulford Garrison's 3G all-weather pitch on Wed 2 Jun 21. From one weather season to the next. The sun was out and temperatures on the pitch reached a staggering 25 degrees before the first fixture kicked off.

AMS faced up against the AGC in what was set to be a brilliant encounter. The players certainly didn't disappoint. Two fantastically drilled and organised sides found it hard to break each other down and finding themselves after extra time at 1-1 the game

was decided on penalties. AGC coming away the victors.

The day's second game saw the REME (who hadn't played for 8 months) take on a very strong RLC side. With REME fielding many debutants from MOD Lyneham to allow the fixture to be played there was nothing that could be done to stop the sheer force of their opponents with the RLC coming away as 6-1 winners on the day. Goals scored for the RLC by SSgt Montgomery, Pte Mills and both scoring twice were Pte Hunter and Pte Bancroft. Cpl Kelly Aldridge getting her name on the REME scoresheet.

## FINAL

Wed 23 Jun 21 saw the much-anticipated fixture take place between the AGC and the RLC. Again, thanks to the expert organisational skills from the Army FA saw the final take place at Cirencester Town's ground. Perfect location, excellent weather and two great teams lined up for the National Anthem. This was posed to be a cracking final. Both teams did not disappoint. End to end football with some great physical battles all over the pitch, smooth combination plays and incredible skill on display. The 124 spectators were on the edge of their seats throughout.

AGC opened the scoring with Cpl Dixon going into the break with a lead of 1-0. RLC came out fighting in the second half and always looked like they were going to score with the pressure all inside the AGC half. SSgt Montgomery equalised, and the pace and intensity grew and grew the longer the match went on. For the neutral fans spectating, they didn't want this fixture to end and would've been delighted to watch an extra 30 minutes should it go to extra time.

That wasn't to be the case though as Cpl Jones scored the winner with 12 minutes to go. Constant pressure from the RLC until the final whistle just wasn't enough and the AGC became the 2020-2021 Edwards Challenge Cup champions.

Nothing short of a superb cup competition with all matches played in all different conditions and surfaces/locations. All with the right attitude and sportsmanship you would expect from these players and staff. A great competition which was deservedly one by an ever impressive AGC side and we look forward to the start of the 2021-2022 league and ECC in October 2021.

*Written by Sgt Matt Kenny RE*





## REPORT FROM Capt Jack Dimmer - 12 Regt RA

The Royal Artillery Female football team competed in the ISL Bournemouth 6-a-side competition in July. Out of a squad of 35 players, only eight players were available to play, below is a list of the players who attended.

The tournament had 10 teams from across the South of England including London and the standard of football was very high with a lot of teams using the tournament as their first pre-season run out.

The conditions, due to the heat, were tough and the players showed real determination, desire and commitment to each other and the Royal Artillery.

They played with real passion and flair and scored some outstanding individual and team goals (LBdr Birtwhistle top scorer with 6 closely followed by Gnr Roberts with 4). Sgt Burnfield and Bdr Clarke were exceptional in goal putting their bodies on the line numerous times resulting in only two goals conceded in 7 games of football.

It was also great to see a reservist in Bdr Horsley (101 Regt RA) come down represent the Regiment.

Lt Col Dan Herberts RA, Chairman of Gunner football, added, *"Special praise should also go to Jack Dimmer and WO2 Johnson (47 Regt RA) who, as coaches, have committed a great deal of time and effort to help develop the team and individuals."*

NO.	NAME OF PLAYER	REGIMENT
1.	Sgt Burnfield	19 RA
2.	LBdr Birtwhistle	19 RA
3.	Gnr Burberymayes	12 RA
4.	Bdr Copley	14 RA (ERE from 4RA)
5.	Bdr Clarke	26 RA
6.	LBdr Clark	1 RHA
7.	Gnr Roberts	5 RA
8.	Bdr Horsley	101 RA





## A ROUND UP OF CORPS FOOTBALL INCLUDING THE NEWLY DEvised DIVISION 1 AND 2 FOR NEXT SEASON FROM MAJOR MARK NORMANTON

### FUTURE PLANS

With the forming of a dedicated committee under the guidance of Lt Col Plimmer-Sayce, the future of the women's game looks bright. The initial aim is to ensure women's grass roots football is available throughout the Army, both small sided and 11 a side format. We will see the return of the extremely popular inter unit tournaments, the Open Invitation 1966 Commemorative Cup, Steerment – Carter Shield and the Army Women's Sixes. The 21/22 season will also see the return of both the UK North Cup, Southern Cup (9v9) and newly developed leagues. The winners of the regional cups will battle it out for the converted Women's Challenge Cup. Units interested in entering any competition are requested to register with the Army FA and inform the Women's Director of Football who can both offer advice and give additional details ([John.Normanton649@mod.gov.uk](mailto:John.Normanton649@mod.gov.uk)).

Trials will shortly be advertised for both the Senior Representative Team and the Amazons Development Team. Both teams will be working closely with all Corps managements to both open up opportunities and develop players. Additional community engagements, utilising the power of sport will also be developed over the forthcoming season with teams from all levels being invited to support.

As an example, throughout the pandemic support has been given to the London Fire Brigade to help them start a women's team, this collaborative working will be enhanced over the coming months with both training sessions, coached by Army volunteers and games being held involving teams from across the Army.

### 21/22 SEASON

The forthcoming season will see a step change within the Women's Corps game to both enhance competition and assist with development. For the first time we will see two dedicated leagues, with promotions and relegation. Teams in either league will have the opportunity to also win a trophy and it is hoped such a change will make competition tighter and fairer. Teams have been pre-warned and selection for the newly formed leagues has been conducted using data from previous seasons. Dates for the all fixtures have been passed to Corps managements and are now officially fixed within the Army FA diary.



@ArmyWomensFoot1



## ARMY WOMEN'S FOOTBALL TEAM

It has been a challenging season for the Army Women's Football Team (AWTF); without a ball being kicked since February 2020 it's been uniquely quiet. However, now the Corp teams are back playing, it has given the AWFT staff the opportunity to re-engage with the Corp managers, past players and any new potential players coming through.

We are looking forward to hopefully running a joint trials week with the Army Development (Amazons) team in September. All fixtures for the coming season are still TBC but we are working hard behind the scenes to secure competitive fixtures ready for the upcoming Inter Services.

The Staff for the coming season will be:

Head Coach – Sgt Lee Barry 1 MERC

Assistant Head Coach - Sig Rebecca Wells R SIGS

Coach - WO2 Stuart Brown RLC

Coach - SSgt Danny Baxter AGC

GK Coach - Sgt Karl Dean R SIGS

Kit Manager - CSgt Ashley Cunningham 1WG

Physio - Maj Annett Lilly RAMC



@AWFTLionesses



awftlionesses

## ARMY AMAZONS – ARMY WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT TEAM

The Army Amazons have not played a competitive fixture since February 2020 and are thoroughly relishing the chance to get back together in September 2021.

Work continues with the players and staff to make sure that trials can go ahead from 20 – 23 September 2021 and fixtures are TBC for the upcoming season.

Staff for the season will be as follows:

SSgt Ryan McDowell – Head Coach

Sgt Yvette Kemp – Assistant Head Coach

SSgt Lou Banton – Coach

Sgt Matt Kenny – Coach

SSgt Candice Hall – Secretary



@AmazonsArmy



army\_amazons\_fc





## SUNDERLAND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2021

The Army FA were asked to support an event at Chaucer School, Wordsworth Avenue in Sheffield for between 20 – 60 children (Boys & Girls) in Years 10/11. The event was run in collaboration with Sheffield Wednesday and the National Citizen Service programme and involved both a Q&A session on Army careers (sport, travel, life etc) and a practical leadership and team building session which involved small sided games and skills sessions. Sgt Lee Barry (Head Coach Army Womens Football Team) and Army Amazons Players Capt Alex Meakin (REME) and Pte Leah Eames (RLC) were involved in the event.



Pte Eames, Sgt Barry & Capt Meakin  
(pictured above L-R)

The call was put out for volunteers and all three personnel were quick to get involved and performed exceptionally on the day. Not only did they display good leadership skills but also demonstrated a great empathy of others. They managed to encourage some of the quieter, less confident individuals to get fully involved during the team building sessions.



Pte Eames (left) & Sgt Barry (right) sharing their experiences during the sessions.



Energy and enthusiasm ensured that there was a definite competitive edge to the small sided games and after the football sessions were finished, all personnel took part in a Q&A session where they shared experiences about life in the Army from the perspective of a soldier serving within multiple cap badges.



Group picture for event including WO2 Mark Hill  
(Youth Community Engagement Officer)

To conclude the day six young people were interested in joining the Army and one young lady was interested in joining the Army via University and is looking forward to joining the University Officer Training Corps (UOTC) with everyone else knowing a lot more about the Army. A great event had by all.

*Written by SSgt McDowell AGC (SPS)*





## ROYAL SIGNALS GOALKEEPER STRIVING FOR SUCCESS IN THE ARMY UNDER PRESSURE.

### INTRODUCTION

LCpl Amy Cassidy assigned to 22 Signal Regiment, is a Network Engineer who thrives under pressure & with that brings Success to her individual goalkeeping performances.

What inspired you to play football? *"A lot of my friends were playing at the time near home, and i felt the need to do a hobby and with that I started to play alongside them. Once I started playing i couldn't stop and just really enjoyed it". Who is your role model? "It has to be Jordan Pickford, the way that he communicates to his team is brilliant & I wish to emulate as part of my game".*

### WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT COMPETING?

*"In all honesty, it is the pressure for me; the pressure of being in goal and relied upon to make key decisions and actions that can impact the game. It is very similar to that of work where you are required to support your colleagues but instead of colleagues, they are your team-mates who rely on me and equally and I rely on them for the best result".*

### WHAT SUCCESS HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED?

*"One of the key highlights for me was being selected to play for Stoke City a few seasons back. However, since then success has been varied for example; selected to play for Army Amazons Development Team, saving a penalty in the Staffordshire County Cup in the final minute of the game. This has to be a stand-out memory for me, the pressure and again it is that pressure we spoke*

*about earlier that drives me on to do well. But the penalty was in the quarter final of the cup, the final minute of the game and the striker connected well with the ball and I dived to my bottom right and palmed the ball away from goal, this has to be the highlight of last season. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to play in the semi-final due to military commitments".*

### WHAT IS NEXT FOR YOU?

*"Firstly, I need to complete my upcoming course, whilst still playing for a local team. After which I will look for a team within the FAWNLI (Tier 4 upwards). As well as continue to work hard on the communication aspect of my game and then one day represent the Army Women's Football Team".*





FA Level 2 Block 3 (Covid safe) coaching course at the Army FDC Aldershot delivered by @stevestone124  
**20 Oct**



VETS RESULT Following a pre-match COVID check, the vets played @ClaygateRoyals on Sa in the 1st round of West of London Cup. A strong 5-0 win with all goals in the first 20! With yesterday's gov announcement it is a likely wait till Dec for round 2. Well done lads  
**01 Nov**



The @Armyfa1888 are honoured to be Ball Sponsor for @OfficialShotsAnnual Remembrance Day The Vanarama NL match v @Official\_NCFC Based in Aldershot at the Home of the British Army for over 100 years we are proud of our established relationship and friendship.  
**06 Nov**



Congratulations Capt Steve Finch @RLC\_FA appointed to his 150th Professional Game Match Officials Ltd (PGMOL) (@EFLand FAC) on Monday at @EmiratesFACup 2R tie between Canvey Island and Boreham Wood. Steve also won 2019 Dobsons Trophy and refereed 2014 @Armyfa1888 Cup Final.  
**25 Nov**



Congratulations to @ArmyFAReferees Ssgt Andy Biggin @agc\_fc Andy has been awarded 2020 @ShropshireFA Official of the Year. A remarkable achievement. Andy commenced career at @Armyfa1888 2018 Course in Aldershot. Andy is a UK Midlands Committee member. Congratulations Andy  
**16 Dec**



Absolutely delighted today that I was Awarded the @FALearning FA Level 4 (UEFA A). I want to send an enormous thanks to all that helped, but in particular Stuart Delaney my FA Coach Mentor and @BFCYouthAcademy Head of Coaching @Blinks27 for all your help and guidance. Also want to add a huge thanks to @Armyfa1888, @ArmyFA\_Chairman, @stevestone124, @ArmySportASCB For all your continued support, it's very much appreciated  
**Army Legend Joe Collins 15 Dec 20**



Congratulations to @Armyfa1888 Vice Chairman Col Colin Francis, MBE @UKArmyLogistics @RLC\_FA on award of Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) by HM The Queen in 2021 New Years Honours List. Colin has been a Trustee since 2015.  
**31 Dec**



An all @Armyfa1888 connection as former @ArmyFAReferees and @AMS\_football Referee Rob Ellis is assisted by current serving officials Gareth Dunn @fa\_reme and Ben Duffill @RAC\_FC for Wednesday's Women's FA Continental Cup QF between Bristol City and Aston Villa at Bath City FC.  
**16 Jan**





In early May our Secretary Major Billy Thomson was approached a week before the FA Cup Final as to whether the Army FA could help to provide 80 flag bearers for the match between Leicester City and Chelsea.

Wembley Stadium played a role in the UK Government's Events Research Programme with regards to Covid-19. The programme involved a series of pilot events in England in April and May 2021. These pilot events incorporated research studies to gather evidence on the risks associated with COVID-19 transmission.

After discussing the opportunity with Chairman, Brigadier Niall Stokoe OBE, invitations were provided to a wide range of activity within Army football involving Men and Women's corps sections and match officials.

SSgt Luke Spires (RAPTC), based at MOD St Athan, was one of the flag bearers and recalls the occasion with fondness. He told **The Soldiers' Game**, "Although the match was on the Saturday, we also had to attend dress rehearsals on the Thursday prior to the game. After an epic drive from Cardiff to London we were met at the gate and everybody was friendly and extremely helpful.

*"The team that then hosted us were very attentive and made us feel at ease with what may happen. Apart from the lack of knowledge on how it would all work and the mechanics behind it all, we seemed to move around and changed a lot in terms of how we were coming on, what direction we were opening the flags, how they wanted them folding etc. This was only due to the fact they hadn't staged such an event with regards to football. Once we had established an end state, in true military fashion we devised a plan to execute and their team seemed very content."*

As part of the Covid-19 pilot scheme to ease back supporters into stadiums it had been announced that up to 20,000 fans would be admitted into the stadium with all having to provide evidence of a recent negative lateral flow test in order to enter the stadium. This was an advancement on the previous season where the FA Cup, whilst completed, saw the final played behind closed doors.



Saturday was the business end of the Flag bearing arrangements as SSgt Spires continues,

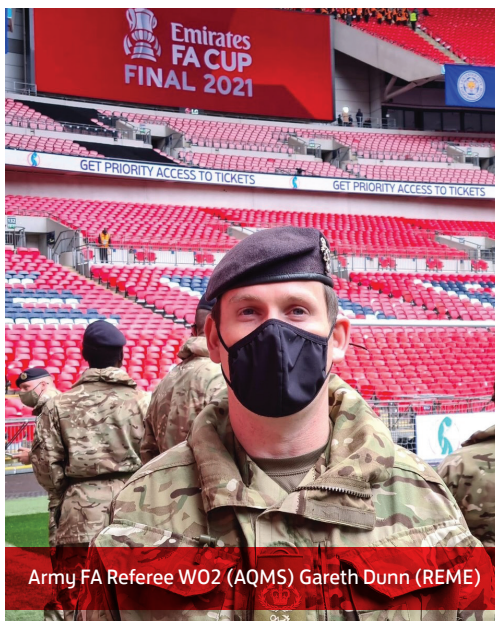
*“Saturday Matchday – Well what a day. As a football fan and the restrictions of COVID I believe that the day ran as smoothly as it could with the mix of those that attended the Thursday and those that didn’t.*

*“It was truly an honour to represent the Armed forces on such a stage and we hope that the Army FA got Hash tagged in on social media platforms by all those that put pictures up. The troops performed professionally and were a good advert for the Army under the strict eye of Major Gould who oversaw the proceedings.*

*“Thank you to the Army FA on behalf of all of us that attended for giving us the opportunity, it was a great day”.*

The opening ceremony saw British singer-songwriter Becky Hill sing the National Anthem alongside B positive Choir and the Band of the Coldstream Guards. The presentation part was led by Prince William, Duke of Cambridge, the President of the Football Association. Leicester won the FA Cup for the first time in their history with Youri Tielemans scoring the only goal of the game.

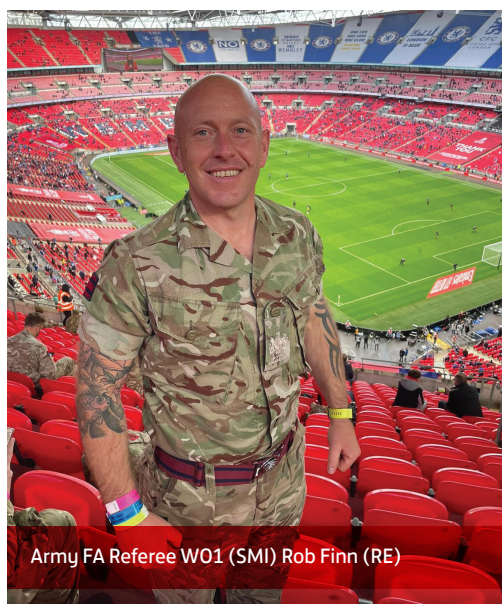
A further six matches for flag bearers has been approved during 2021/22 including the FA Community Shield, England men and women World Cup qualifiers and the Vitality Women's FA Cup Final.



Army FA Referee W02 (AQMS) Gareth Dunn (REME)

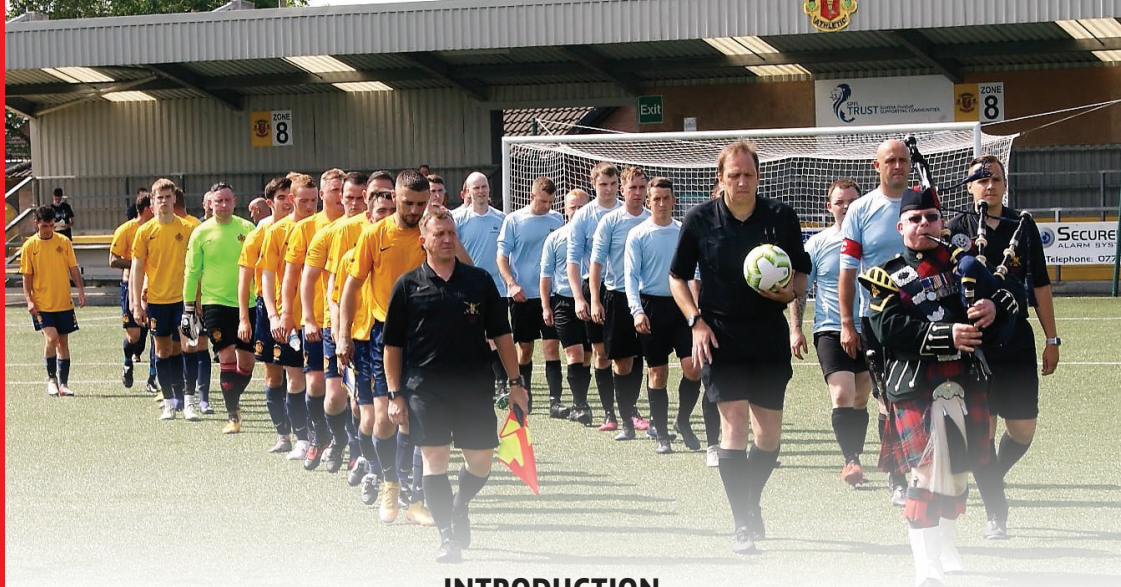


Army Women rep Major Nikki Gould (RA)



Army FA Referee W01 (SMI) Rob Finn (RE)

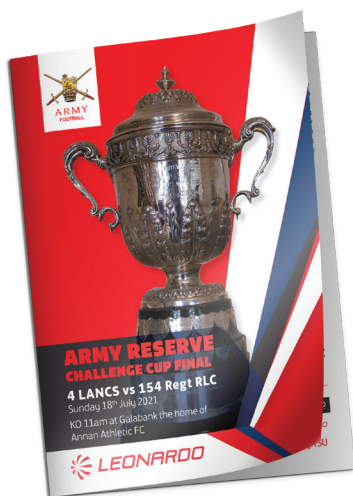




## INTRODUCTION

The Soldier's Game, especially within the Army Reserve has been greatly impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic. Due to the geographical national participatory spread of Army Reserve football an early decision was made early March 2020 to stop all football, even before the rest of Army football was halted.

**PLEASE CLICK HERE**  
to view programme



## ARMY RESERVE CHALLENGE CUP FINAL 2020

Covid stopped the conclusion of the 2020 Army Reserve Challenge Cup Final, with only one semi-final being able to be played prior to lockdown. In May 21 we were able to play the outstanding game and the final was played at Annan Athletic's Galabank Stadium on 18 July 21 between 4 LANCS and 154 (Scottish) Regiment RLC. Both teams had a good recent pedigree in the competition with 154 winning the cup in 2018 for the very first time, as 4LANCS did in 2019.

It was 4LANCS who retained the Army Reserve Challenge Cup after a thrilling 4-1 win. On a scorching hot day it was 154 who came out of the blocks the quickest dominating the first half with Pte Mickey Gallagher giving them a 1-0 leading at the half time break. But a hat-trick from man of the match Kgn Nicholas Heppie and a well taken penalty from Capt Joey Collins sealed the victory.

We were delighted that Army FA Vice President Maj Gen Celia Harvey, Deputy Commander Field Army attended the match and presented the trophy to the winning team and the officials and also thanked Annan Athletic for their outstanding hospitality.

4LANCS will now play the Army Challenge Cup winners 7 REGT RLC in the Army FA's Super Cup Final on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2021 at Longridge Town FC in Lancashire.

It is great to have the final played at a Scottish professional ground and amongst the community. A big thank you must go to Mr. Philip Jones, Chairman of Annan Athletic FC for his support to Army Reserve football, as well as the wider UK Armed Forces.

We are also grateful to the match officials on the day- Referee- Niall Anderson (R Sigs), and assistants Simon Towe (Infantry) and Luke Qinton (REME).





## WOMEN'S REPRESENTATIVE FOOTBALL

Covid 19 potentially has had the largest impact on Army Reserve Women's representative football over the last year or so with no football being played. However Bex Wells, Head Coach, and her team have been working virtually over recent months and have developed a plan for the coming season, including a training weekend and a match during the month of September 2021.

## MEN'S REPRESENTATIVE FOOTBALL

With no activity over 12 months the Army Reserve Men's representative team are looking very much forward to their planned training camp based in the Aldershot area, over the period 31 July – 6 August 21. This will be a fantastic opportunity for established players and a group of trialists to blow off the cobwebs and train together; play several games; working hard and bonding as a team, in preparation for the coming 2021-22 season.



@ARWomenFootball



arwomensfootball

**Colonel David Jones MBE QVRM**  
Chairman Army Reserve Football



After the cancellation of the Massey Trophy in 2019/20 due to Covid-19 it was always the aim of the Chairman Lt Col Alex Atherton and Secretary Major Matty Barton to do everything possible to ensure that the 2020/21 competition would be completed. When Covid-19 originally intervened in March 2020 Royal Engineers and Infantry were due for a final day face-off in Chatham with both teams level on 19 points from their nine matches completed. It was also a reprieve for AAC who had only collected one point from their eight matches. Royal Signals and REME would have been in a battle to avoid the play-off spot. In Division 2 Royal Artillery were well clear winning seven of their eight matches and eight points ahead of RAPTC who did have games in hand.

It was, therefore, fitting that not only was the Massey Trophy able to resume in May 2021 but to also conclude with Infantry and Royal Artillery winning their respective divisions. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions and the fixtures having to be completed by 30 June 2021 the decision was that each team would play each other once. It was fitting that both divisional champions had 100% records. Infantry returned to actions in positive fashion recording victories at their Aldershot 3G headquarters versus Royal Engineers (2-1) followed up with a 3-1 success versus Royal Signals to secure the title for the first time in 17 years. The trophy and medals were presented by Lt Col Alex Atherton in Calne after a last day 3-0 win versus REME on a windswept wet day in Wiltshire. On the same day long standing stalwart of Army Football, Lt Col (Retd) Tony Workman presented the Bulmer Cup, the annual trophy played for the two corps.

The AAC were relegated from Division 1 after gaining promotion in 2018/19.

Royal Artillery, needing a point from the match, concluded their season with a 4-0 success versus Int Corps at their Larkhill home. 15 goals in their five matches was testament to the strength of the champions who, in the past two seasons have won 11 of their 12 matches and can count themselves worthy and deserved winners. The Division 2 Trophy and medals were presented by Regimental Corps Colonel Sam Shepherd MBE who gave a rousing post-match congratulatory speech.

It just left for one remaining match to determine the final placings in the Massey. The RLC, who finished second bottom of Division met RAC, runners up in Division 2. Played in Bicester on the last day of June a late goal gave RLC a 2-1 win to ensure they retained their topflight status just four years after they had won the league on three successive occasions.

The decision to focus on the league campaign meant that the Woolwich Cup was cancelled for 2020/21. Plans are already in place to get the 2021/22 season up and running in September. The QUADS Tournament is due to be held between 13/ 17 September with the Massey due to commence on 24 September.





## MASSEY TROPHY - DIVISION 1 - LEAGUE TABLE

Pos	Team	P	W	D	L	GD	PTS
1	Infantry	5	5	0	0	13	15
2	Royal Engineers	5	3	1	1	5	10
3	REME	5	2	0	3	-2	6
4	Royal Signals	5	2	0	3	-3	6
5	Royal Logistic Corps	5	1	1	3	-5	4
6	AAC - Men	5	1	0	4	-8	3

## MASSEY TROPHY - DIVISION 2 - LEAGUE TABLE

Pos	Team	P	W	D	L	GD	PTS
1	Royal Artillery	5	5	0	0	11	15
2	RAC	5	4	0	1	8	12
3	Army Medical Services	5	2	0	3	-3	6
4	RAPTC	5	2	1	2	3	5 *
5	Adjutant General's Corps	5	1	0	4	-9	3
6	INT Corps	5	0	1	4	-10	1

\* adjustment made





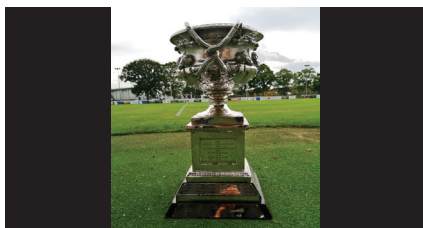
Thank you @Jon\_Knighton @ForcesNews @BFBSSport for your coverage today in Bicester at our 19/20 Edwards Challenge and @Armyfa1888 Minor Units Cup finals. A long, but hopefully, productive day. Your attendance is greatly appreciated.

**23 Sept**



Congratulations to @sapperfootball on winning the delayed 2019/20 Woolwich Cup Final beating @RoyalSignalsFA 2-1 in Aldershot Stadium under Covid-19 rules. Reversing 18/19 final. Thank you to all for flexibility, understanding and cooperation as another Cup final is completed

**28 Sept**



1<sup>st</sup> @Armyfa1888 Cup Final in a Rugby Stadium in 131 year history. Thank you @armyrugbyunion. Different due to Covid-19. No marching bands, changing rooms, tannoy, programmes but it is our Cup Final, one of oldest in world. We are immensely proud of it. Show goes on in Aldershot

**30 Sept**



Congratulations to @7RegtRLC on winning the 2019/20 @Armyfa1888 Cup Final with a 4-0 win v @3\_rsme\_fc at Aldershot @armyrugbyunion Stadium keeping a tradition of completing the competition (outside of wartime) every year since 1889. One of the oldest cup comps in the world.

**30 Sept**



Our Covid-19 target was to complete our 19/20 Major and Minor Unit plus Men and Women's Corps Cup Finals before end of September -mission accomplished. Thank you to all who made it possible. Now onto the commencement of the 20/21 season starting with Massey Trophy this Friday.

**01 Oct**



100 years ago @Armyfa1888 Referees Committee was formed. From @premierleague thru to grass roots football. A peak of 2000 in 1955. 27 Chairmen, 100's of volunteers and divisions too. Mentors, Observers, tutors. That 1st unit appointment thru to Army Cup Finals Thank you to all

**09 Oct**



Congratulations to Maj Gen GI Mitchell MBE (Mitch) @Mitchies4 on being granted state honours by Her Majesty the Queen in the annual Birthday Honours List awarded as Companion to the Order of the Bath. Mitch was Trustee of Army Football for 10 years and our most recent Chairman.

**10 Oct**



Good to see our @Armyfa1888@ArmyFAMensTeam back in action today at @armyrugbyunion (thank you @ChrisFowke) A lively 3-3 draw v @AcademyATFC U23s. Importantly thank you to all who made it possible during continued stringent Covid-19 restrictions ensuring match could be played.

**14 Oct**



# KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE ARMY FA

Effective communications are imperative. The Army FA have the following central outlets to provide news and information into the public domain:



Website: [www.armyfa.com](http://www.armyfa.com)



Twitter: [@armyfa1888](https://twitter.com/armyfa1888)  
(4195 followers)



Facebook: [ArmyFootballAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/ArmyFootballAssociation)  
(4544 followers)



Instagram: [armyfa1888](https://www.instagram.com/armyfa1888)  
(Our new addition recently)  
(607 followers)

The Army Sports Control Board also operates the following social media channels:



Linktree:  
<https://linktr.ee/BritishArmySport>



Facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/britisharmysport/> (14,586 followers)



Twitter:  
<https://twitter.com/ArmySportASCB>  
(6567 followers)



Twitter:  
<https://twitter.com/ArmySportsLTRY>  
(8728 followers)



Instagram:  
<https://www.instagram.com/britisharmysport/> (12,200 followers)

Hashtag: **#BritishArmySport**

POC: Clare Simpson [csimpson@ascb.uk.com](mailto:csimpson@ascb.uk.com)

Tel: 07539 872007 (mob)

Many individual sections including representative, corps, units, development and referees have their own social media outlets. For clarity the following is advisable from the Army FA with regards to use of social media:

- Provide consistent and regular news features.
- Highlight events/fixtures/achievements
- Raise the awareness through social media.
- Any news items to be promoted into the wider domain via Army FA /Army Sport HQ in Aldershot to be sent to the above personnel and included where deemed appropriate through the central Army FA media channels including websites and publications.
- For Twitter posts please consider the following hashtag where appropriate #Armyfootball

*\*Please note that whilst the Army FA is happy to provide guidance and advice regarding media issues it is not the responsibility of the Army FA central staff to produce individual news stories for any sections listed below. If you require help, assistance or guidance please contact Graham Brookland on 01252 787068 or email [brookland@Armyfa.com](mailto:brookland@Armyfa.com)*

**ARMY FA**  
[WWW.ARMYFA.COM](http://WWW.ARMYFA.COM)

**ASCB**  
[ARMYSPORTCONTROLBOARD.COM](http://ARMYSPORTCONTROLBOARD.COM)

**FORCES SPORT**  
[WWW.FORCES.NET/SPORT](http://WWW.FORCES.NET/SPORT)

**SOLDIER MAGAZINE**  
[WWW.ARMY.MOD.UK/NEWS-AND-EVENTS/SOLDIER-MAGAZINE/](http://WWW.ARMY.MOD.UK/NEWS-AND-EVENTS/SOLDIER-MAGAZINE/)





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**2021 feefo**

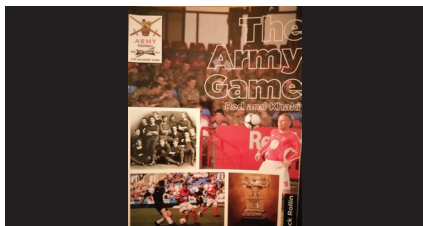
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We are saddened to learn of passing of Jack Rollin. One of the most respected UK football writers ever. In 2013 Jack (left) kindly scribed "The Army Game- Red and Khaki" commemorating 125 years of the @Armyfa1888 We send our thoughts and warm wishes to Jack's family. RIP Jack  
**25 Jan**



All at @Armyfa1888 are saddened to learn of the passing of Southern Counties Cup President, Len Cordell. A genuine football man. Wonderfully warm hearted and great character Len will be missed. We pass on our sincere best wishes to Len's family at this difficult time.  
**14 Feb**



1/2 Our General Manager, Lt Col Richie Bell MBE is nearing the end of his service after 37 years, a career that started as a Signaller straight from school and ended as a senior officer with a MBE, a degree in history, and gold medal from the World Masters'. 2/2 Richie has gone above and beyond supporting Army Football there is too much to mention. A true Army Football "LEGEND"! We wish you all the best for the future, football won't be the same without you @ArmyFA\_Chairman @Armyfa1888 @ArmySportASCB @BritishArmy @R\_Signals  
**12 Mar**



Some spirited performances all round and no small amount of pent-up energy expended in the year's first game. But the silverware went to the Corporals with a convincing 5-2 win over the combined Officers and Seniors @ArmySportASCB @Hq1tg  
**08 Apr ATR Winchester**



Our own @MrKEmmerson still going strong and flying the @BritishArmy flag high!  
@Armyfa1888 @RAPTC\_Official @ArmySportsLTRY  
**25 Jan**



Today's #InternationalWomensDay show case is.. Lcpl Jenny Whytock, 217 Sqn who has played for the Army Women's Reserve Football team and has tabbed the Marine Corps Marathon and 75 miles for VE Day 75 while raising £453 for @PoppyLegion@RFCAYH #ChoosetoChallenge #1WD21  
**150 Regt RLC 10 Mar**



Our @Armyfa1888 staff held a minutes silence prior to weekly "Teams" meeting to reflect on a year since original Covid-19 lockdown remembering loved ones sadly lost. We continue provisional planning to re-commence and will update further as soon as we are in a position to do so.  
**23 Mar**



English football, alongside other sports, organisations and individuals, will switch off social media accounts from 3pm today until 11.59pm on Monday 3 May. Social media companies must do more to #StopOnlineAbuse. Join us and switch off too, as we collectively demand change.  
**30 Apr**





## ARMY FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT

Three of football's most enduring qualities are: its ability to bring people together, the range of opportunities to be involved in the sport, and its thirst for continuous improvements; these are standards that also underpin Army Football Development (AFD). And despite the trying circumstances of recent times, the Development strand of Army Football has continued to seek and implement further improvements to the quality and structure of the Soldier's Game.

## THE ARMY FOOTBALL FAMILY

AFD underpins and binds all facets of football in the Army, regardless of gender, background or playing level. Our game is for informal players and community grassroots coaches, to those who strive to Representative level and beyond; it is also for the organisers and supporters, who create the opportunities for the game to flourish.

The diversity of our Football Community is our strength though it is not without its challenges - particularly for unifying our common interests and aspirations. Our Football Development Manager has overseen the collection of valued feedback from varied stakeholders, though much more input is required to ensure views from every level of the game are represented. Working groups, surveys and effective communication lines, will continue to be sought to ensure the Army game reflects the desires of all.

## COACH EDUCATION

*'What we know is a drop, what we don't know is an ocean' (Isaac Newton).*

The Army Coach Community is pivotal to the success and standard of football in the Army: not only for player development, but also to challenge and further each other as leaders in our game, whilst maintaining its values and standards.

Changes to the FA education programme, coinciding with the environmental necessity for online learning, has brought about challenges as well as opportunities. The importance of a collective of coaches learning from each other, is perhaps difficult to overemphasise. Army specific football education complementing FA courses, could enable the community of Army coaches to flourish. It will require a structured approach to learning, including Corps coaches taking more responsibility to mentor their Regimental coaches, and Representative coaches adopting a similar approach to those at Corps level. Our Football Development Manager has led the way in coach education for over two decades, and will continue to provide the structure to support and cater for the newest to most experienced coaches.

## WHAT NEXT?

The biggest beauty in the beautiful game may be in its ability to cater for everyone who is willing to be involved. Whether player, coach or facilitator, and be it 6-a-side, 11-a-side or futsal, opportunities are plentiful in the Army game. Be involved. Contact the Football Development Manager or myself if you are willing to volunteer to support and shape development opportunities across Army Football.

**Jim Fallon**

Football Development Trustee





The stop / start Covid-19 effected season coincided with the FA deciding to change how FA coach education course are delivered. The suspension of courses coupled with this FA change of direction and has left some Army learners “in flight” between courses, observation visits and completion of projects.

I have managed to deliver some Level 2 blocks in between lock downs and suspensions to ensure all our learners are able to complete the course they are on.

The FA have provided a ninety minute on- line module to replace the block 3. All learners that have completed Level 2 block 2 have been invited to attend.

I will continue to support all our learners to complete their projects and observation visits, obviously this will be difficult until the new season starts.

Ideally the FA would like all Level 2 in flight learners to be complete and signed off by October 2021 and all UEFA B Licence in flight learners by July 2022

If you need any further information or support please contact [steve.stone@armyfa.com](mailto:steve.stone@armyfa.com)

### THE NEW GENERATION OF COURSES WILL START IN JULY 2021 AND REFLECT A NEW PATHWAY:

1. Playmaker (on-line)
2. Introduction to coaching, including IFAiF and Safeguarding modules (all on line) which replaces the level 1 course
3. UEFA C Licence will replace the Level 2 course and should be available March 2022.

There will be no new Level 2 courses delivered before the UEFA C Licence comes on-line next year.

Please note:

- Courses can be accessed on-line via [thefa.com](http://thefa.com) and the Bootroom websites
- In the drop- down menu please select your County FA as Army this will give us a small amount of revenue return to invest in Army Football Development
- A bursary to cover the cost of the Introduction to Coaching Course is available from the Army FA please contact [gill.jones@armyfa.com](mailto:gill.jones@armyfa.com) for information.

Thank you for your continued support, hopefully I will see you all next season

Kindest Regards  
**Steve Stone**  
Army FA FDM





We wish Sean Birchnall @seanb556 every success for the future and express our thanks and appreciation as he leaves the Army after 31 years service and also as Head Coach of the @ArmyFAMensTeam Good luck for the future Sean.

10 May



Great to see @Armyfa1888 football back up and running. Plenty of enthusiasm, commitment and determination in leaps and bounds at Bicester for the @ArmyWomensFoot1 Edwards Cup.

19 May



Well done @Infantry\_FC - it has been a long time coming but what a tribute to the players' talent and graft and to the leadership of @JamesHFBlaire and Wagsy. Enjoy the celebrations.. and thank you @Armyfa1888 for an excellent League.

Major Tom Copinger-Symes CBE  
June 18



RLC WFT Head Coach Sgt Baxter handed out old strips and training kit to local Kenyan team Nanyuki Express Academy today. Great day all around, not only for the RLC but for womens football. With help from SSgt Butlin (BATUK) @9RegimentRLC @RLCCorpsSM @Armyfa1888 @UKArmyLogistics

11 May RLC FA



A privilege for @ArmyFAReferees to provide officials at Keepmoat Stadium, home of

@drfc\_official in aid of @Soldierscharity The match played in memory of five soldiers sadly killed in Afghanistan. Ref: Cpl Harry Scott Assts: SSgt Luke Fabry and SSgt Nick Mason, all AGC (RMP).

22 May



Congratulations to the @agcwft on winning the 2021 Women's Corps Edwards Cup Final beating @RLC\_FA 2-1. Thank you @CirenTownFC on being fantastic hosts at a wonderful venue.

June 23



Spr Sogotubu of @33engrreg today became the first ever Fijian to represent Sapper Football. Welcome to the family and the way you played this afternoon we can't wait to have you down for pre season in Sept.

@FijiSupportNet @ArmyEOD\_Searh #UTS #SapperFamily

18 May Sapper Football



Well done to LCpl Demi Edwards QARANC who played for

@QPRWFC

in the capital cup final yesterday! This picture sums up the feeling of her scoring the first equaliser! #oneteam @Armyfa1888 @BFBSRadioHQ @Demied1 @ArmyFA\_Chairman

26 May



Congratulations to the @GunnersRAFC on winning the Massey Trophy Division 2 title and promotion to Div 1 after 4-0 win v Int Corps. Trophy and presentations made post match in Larkhill. @ArmySportASCB @rhqra @BFBSSport

June 25

# Over 100 years invested in the UK's future.



Leonardo has over 100 years of history at the leading edge of advanced design and manufacturing in the UK.

Over 7,000 highly-skilled employees and a vast network of suppliers and partners design and develop industry-leading aircraft, electronics, space, defence and security systems for UK and export customers, worldwide.

**Inspired by the vision, curiosity and creativity of the great master inventor - Leonardo is designing the technology of tomorrow.**





Army Crusaders Vets socially distanced pre match photo ahead of victory v Double H Sat Jun 21

Army Crusaders is the Army Officer Corps' representative football team. Formed in 1922 it consists of a First Team and a Veterans (Over 35s) Team. This obviously means we are entering our Centenary season and details are noted in specific paragraph below.

## 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 that former and current Army Crusaders are playing a major role in Army Football, Namely

- Chairman Army FA. Brig Niall Stokoe. Former First Team Manager and Vets Capt
- Vice Chairman Army FA. Col Colin Francis. Former First Team Manager and current President
- Reserves Chair Army FA. Col Davy Jones. First and Vets player and current Chairman
- Referees Chair Army FA. Maj Nige Bamford. Current Vets player
- Representative Trustee Army FA. Lt Col Alex Atherton. Former First Team player



## FAREWELL AND WELCOME

The Club would like to express our thanks to Col Colin Francis CBE who has contributed to Army Crusaders for more than 15 years, most recently as President. Col Colin steps out to a civilian career shortly and we wish him continued success in his new life.

We are pleased to welcome Maj Gen Darren Crook as our new President. Gen Crook is currently Director Land Equipment based at MOD Abbey Wood and is a keen football fan. See photo below.



Maj Gen Darren Crook –  
New Army Crusaders President

Col Davy Jones, said "it is a major coup to attract Gen Darren to this role and I look forward to working in partnership with him to develop Crusaders football further. It is a great time to have him on board, especially as we move into our centenary year".

## ARMY CRUSADERS 100TH CELEBRATION.

Army Crusaders FC will be celebrating its landmark anniversary across the whole of 2022.

Plans are well underway in the organisation of a range of activities to celebrate what should be a great year for Army Crusaders Football. These include the re-introduction of some of the traditional games that Crusaders First Team have not played for many years including Oxford and Cambridge Universities; Charterhouse and Eton Schools.

We are planning our traditional showcase game against UK Parliament FC at one of the London professional grounds. Our scheduled overseas tour is planned for Brunei or Canada, as well as other games against RMAS, RAF Officers (Icarus) and our annual Easter Festival tournament at Liverpool Ramblers. We intend to hold a centenary dinner at RMAS and organise a 6 aside competition for Officer Teams across the Army also at RMAS. Other initiatives are being worked up, so please watch this space.

Col Davy Jones states that "2022 will be a fantastic opportunity to celebrate the Club's rich heritage and uniqueness". He also intends to create a book to mark the anniversary so anyone that has been involved in Army Crusaders over the years is invited to contribute, particularly with stories and photos. Please contact him on comksfadvise@gmail.com

## UPDATES

Clearly, along with all Grass Roots Football COVID-19 decimated the majority of the season for both teams.

## ANNUAL EASTER TOURNAMENT

This was cancelled for the second year but the organisers are hoping to create an Autumn event dependent upon Step 4 requirements.

## FIRST TEAM UPDATE

The intent was to build upon the 2019 season where the foundations were laid for longer term success. Crusaders First Team fixtures are considered "friendly" but these were not authorised within the

Army COVID-19 structure so regrettably no games have been played since May 2020. Step 4 should allow us to get back on the pitch from Sep 21 to ease the frustrations of Manager Maj Joel Springall. See the Centenary paragraph for more details.

## VETERANS UPDATE

### Div 2 of West London Veterans League (WLVFL).

We started very well, winning our first couple of League games followed by a resounding 7-2 thrashing of our opponents in the League Cup in between Lockdown One. The second Lockdown had a much more significant impact from Nov 20 and the end result was a closure of the League season and a complete reset until Sep 21

Under Step 3 we have been able to get back on the pitch and have played a couple of WLVFL Pre Season games, both victorious by 4-1 and 3-1 score lines so look ahead to the revised season with confidence. See photo below

### Triangular Tournament Sep 21.

The annual triangular tournament played between Army Crusaders, AGC and RAF ICARUS Vets in commemoration of former AGC player Jack O'Regan is still on schedule for 4 Sep and we hope to maintain our biannual win ratio.

### Engagement.

The Secretary and Veterans Team Manager remains Major 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  
07977 478038



Colonel Davy Jones, Chairman of Army Reserve Football and Army Crusaders Football, as well as an Army FA Trustee spent nearly a year in Baghdad as part of the NATO Mission Iraq, Ministerial Advisory Division [MAD]. As with previous overseas deployments Davy got involved in supporting in country charities and kicked off his efforts initially running a full marathon around his Baghdad FOB home, raising £2500 for Save the Children Iraq, for their Covid relief efforts.

As football is always close to Colonel Davy's heart, and as he did previously in Kosovo, he reached out to other charities working across the country using the medium of football to work alongside the most deprived individuals and communities. As we all know Iraq is still in an extremely fragile state with real security issues and running alongside they have had to deal with the real difficulties of Covid. So Davy had many challenges with making contact with organisations playing football and supporting disadvantaged groups and people.

However, through his links with the United Nations in Iraq, two organisations were highly recommended and he got to know their work and would become very worthy recipients of surplus football equipment from the Army Football Association in supporting their excellent efforts.

The two charities were OROKOM for Relief and Development and Al-Nawaeer Organisation for Development Rehabilitation & Training. OROKOM is a non-profit, non-religious and non-political NGO formed in 2009 aftermath of the sectarian conflict that took place in Iraq in order to build the peace in the community and assist the vulnerable groups which affected by this conflict. They use sport and especially football to break down the barriers. Al-Nawaeer, work with the poorest in Iraqi society providing education, training and employment opportunities. Their model is to empower individuals and communities on a journey towards a stable future for the country and its population.



OROKOM Relief & Army FA banner



Al-Nawaeer Organisation & Army FA banner



OROKOM Presentation



Al-Nawaeer Presentation



OROKOM Kit Presentation





Covid-19 has provided unique challenges for all and Army Refereeing is no different. We were delighted that some of the 2019/20 season was able to be completed in September 2020 and able to provide a full complement of officials for the Army Challenge Cup Major and Minor Units, Woolwich and Edwards Cups. This was also carried over to being able to field officials for the conclusion of the 2020/21 Massey Trophy in May/June and the appointments of WO2 Dan McLaren (RE), Sgt Leon Bradley (R Sigs), WO2 Graham Cairns (REME) and Capt Andy Desroches (REME) for the Edwards Cup Final at Cirencester Town FC. Congratulations are also due to WO2 Niall Anderson (R Sigs), WO1 Simon Towe (Infantry) and Cpl Luke Quinton (REME) for their appointment to the delayed 2019/20 Reserve Cup Final between 4 Lancs and 154 Regiment RLC, played at Annan Athletic FC in July.

Looking ahead to the 2021/22 campaign the challenge of retaining referees will be hugely balanced with the resumption of acquiring new officials through the basic referee courses. Indeed, the gap between the last course prior to the inception of Covid-19 and the July 2021 course in Grantham was 20 months; during that time close to 100 individuals expressed an interest in becoming a referee.

We were delighted that we could re-introduce the courses and an initial 15 attended in Lincolnshire. (Please see separate article).

Dates for four more courses during the 2021/22 season have now been or are being finalised.

Please view page 59 for confirmed dates.

In line with the recent submission of the 2021/2024 FA strategy to reinvigorate The Soldiers' Game we have been set targets by our governing body and we relish the challenge faced to achieve. During the course of the season the following has been set:

Recruit 43 officials,

Convert 26 officials (Trainee to Level 7)

Progress (promote): 12 officials

Retain 136 officials.

During Covid-19 training and development has changed within the Football Association structure with an initial online course required prior to face to face activity headed up by Andy Halliday MBE, recently appointed as the voluntary Referees' Development Officer (RDO) supported by Tutors Simon Thorburn, Dan Smith and Chris Steadman.



It is also imperative that we reinvigorate the interests of those referees who have re-registered but have not had the opportunity to officiate over the past 18 months or so and need support to get back involved in the game. Divisional training programmes have been or are being devised within the regional committee structure. We are also planning a "Return To Football" RAFA Training Day and Awards dinner for October in Grantham where we will also recognise those who have departed during the past two seasons and we haven't had an opportunity to pay our own tributes and respect.

There has been success with regards to promotions gained within the past season between Levels 7 and 5. The periods were extended and for Levels 5 to 4 all candidates who originally applied during 2020/21 had their applications carried forward to the new season.

The following were successful in gaining promotion:

**Levels 7/6:** Sgt Leon Bradley (R Sigs), WO2 Graham Cairns (REME), WO2 Rhys Davies (AGC), WO2 Barry Ellison (RLC), SSgt James Garsrud (RAC).

**Levels 6/5:** Pte Macaulay Antell (RLC) (joins the Army from Hampshire FA), WO2 Dan Bishop (RAPTC), SSgt Gibril Jallow (RLC), Cpl Brian Russell (RAMC), Sgt Shaun Smith (Infantry)

We were also delighted to see Cpl Declan O'Shea (REME) appointed to the Football League list for 2021/22 as a specialist Assistant Referee; just two years after joining the National League list. There is a separate article on this in the review. He joins Capt Steve Finch (RLC) who completed his 150th professional match during last season.

The Army FA were one of 19 county associations to appoint a Mental Health Champion for its Referees with Secretary Graham Brookland appointed. There are plans afoot to develop this with involvement with the "Medicine Ball Challenge and particular military charities supporting ABF- The Soldiers' Charity, Mind and Combat Stress.

The following Committee structure has been agreed for the new season as follows:

Major Nigel Bamford- Chairman

WO2 Andy Moore- Vice Chairman

WO2 Andy Halliday MBE

Capt Steve Finch

Cpl Declan O'Shea

Sgt Simon Thorburn

Sgt Chris Steadman

Capt Richie Pickin

Sgt Jimmy McNee has also been invited to join the committee.

We are also keen to increase representation of minority groups among officials and are aiming to encourage the recruitment of a BAME and LGBT representative. The chosen candidates would act as ambassadors to encourage take up and act as a support mechanism for those ethnic minority/ LGBT personnel who are interested but hesitant.

We are also looking to recruit a committee member to be responsible for Social Media.

Anybody interested is seeking more information about the above roles are asked to email graham.brookland@Armyfa.com in the first instance.

I take this opportunity to thank the following who are stepping down from the committee: WO1 Bri Slinn, WO2 Chris Hastings and Sgt Ndoda Dlamini. Your contribution to Army Football Referees is greatly appreciated.

We look forward to the new season and hope that for the first time in three seasons it will be without any suspensions due to Covid-19. However, we must be prepared for all possibilities.



**Nigel Bamford**  
Chairman Army FA Referees





ALL RAPTC. Majors Lee Davison and Stephen Chappell with RDO Andy Halliday MBE at the Grantham Referees course in July.

## SIMON THORBURN UPDATES ON THE RETURN OF REFEREE COURSES.

The first Army FA Referees' course since the back end of 2019, took place in Grantham in early July.

15 learners arrived after completing the online Laws of The Game modules (arriving with a better start point & knowledge), & the online safeguarding course. A bigger commitment upfront, which will hopefully result in better retention.

This was an excellent course with all students getting fully involved from the start, which also gave them the opportunity to witness the team of referee developers, WO2 Andy Halliday MBE (RAPTC), Sgt Chris Steadman (RAMC) & Sgt Simon Thorburn (R Sigs) officiate in a fixture. Thanks to SSgt Dan Smith (RE) who provide superb instruction to the course as well, ensuring the first course back had a full team of developers.

Well done to the learners and we hopefully see them progress in the coming seasons.

Many thanks to Sgt James McNee (RLC) for organising the administrative side in Grantham. This didn't go unnoticed the efforts he put in and made the developers & students life's easier.

The course cost is £120. Learners are expected to pay this to the Army FA before arrival on the course. The registration fee of £20 to the Army and English Football Associations is covered within the course cost. SLC's are not to be used as SOTR through the ASCB is the only method now.

A note on SOTR – Learners will be reimbursed through the Standard of Training Requirement (SOTR) Scheme. This will be completed by the Army FA through the Army Sports Control Board (ASCB). This will cover the face to face training phase of the course and the online Safeguarding course. Learners will receive a reimbursement of £150 on completion of the criteria's set by the Army FA. Criteria's can be found below:

- Completion of 5 fixtures (4 fixtures being open aged).
- Completion of 1 mentor report from a senior official.

Dates have been arranged for the 2021/22 calendar. The face-to-face part of course will take place over a three or four-day period. Dates and locations can be found below:

- Catterick Garrison – Monday 13th September 2021 to Thursday 16th September 2021.
- Football Development Centre, Aldershot – Tuesday 18th January 2022 to Thursday 20th January 2022.
- Prince William of Gloucester Barracks, Grantham – Tuesday 29th March 2022 to Thursday 31st March 2022.
- A course will take place in May, in conjunction with the Army sixes. Location and date TBC.

In the first instance please email:  
[graham.brookland@Armyfa.com](mailto:graham.brookland@Armyfa.com) if you are interested in the Referee courses.

Referee Development Officer and Chief Instructor WO2 (QMSI) Andy Halliday MBE said, *"It was great to get back to conducting Face to Face courses after a long break. The tutoring team thoroughly enjoyed the interaction with all the students who were full of enthusiasm and left the course with a drive to get straight into officiating their first games. All the Army FA Refereeing fraternity look forward to seeing their progression and helping with their development in the future."*



@armyreferees



armyfareferees







**CPL DECLAN O'SHEA (REME) WAS PROMOTED TO THE FOOTBALL LEAGUE LIST AS A SPECIALIST ASSISTANT REFEREE DURING THE SUMMER; JUST TWO YEARS AFTER PROMOTION TO THE NATIONAL LEAGUE. THE SOLDIERS' GAME CAUGHT UP WITH DECTO REFLECT ON A MARVELLOUS ACHIEVEMENT:**

### **YOUR PROMOTION TO THE FOOTBALL LEAGUE**

*"Promotion to the Football League has been an ambition of mine since I started officiating. It was always dubbed the 'Hallowed Ground' by colleagues I come through the system with and that no one slips through the net onto the Football League, and successful selection was because you were good enough to be there. I think that's what makes it such a special achievement for me as I've always looked forward to this point. I've been very fortunate to have friends that were/are Football League officials so have always aspired to be where they are and not jealous of them in a nasty way, but jealous in the fact I wanted what they have got and that on its own turned into being a fantastic motivator but also a great support mechanism. The officials I know have offered advice whenever I have asked for and ultimately helped me to achieve promotion."*

### **THE PROGRESS YOU HAVE MADE JUST TWO SEASONS AFTER BEING APPOINTED TO THE NATIONAL LEAGUE.**

*"The National league is a fantastic division and also a great achievement to obtain that status as a match official, it's real football, the journeys could be hundreds of miles, overnight trips, live TV games and a lot of teams who have dropped out of the EFL and have some very experienced pros playing for them. I think 90% of the division is full time professional which just shows you that it doesn't really fit it's 'Non-League' title."*

*"I had a really strong first season when I was promoted to the panel which ended with me being appointed Reserve Assistant to the playoff Eliminator between Yeovil and Barnet, I finished high up the merit table but unfortunately made a KMD error by ruling out a goal for Offside which was in fact onside between Fulham v Swansea in*

a Premier League 2 fixture, this decision alone probably stopped me promoting in my first year, and that's how tight it really is, one KMD error can define your season and I don't think people quite understand the pressures we work under even at that level of the game.

My Second season was much the same without the error, I worked extremely hard on my fitness and image and my technical performance with my coach, and I am by no means the finished article now but I'm certainly better than I was 12 months ago, and I think that the real difference is the work you put in away from match day.

My second season had a few more pressures in terms of tv exposure, I was appointed to seven live games across all competitions, which naturally brings its own challenges.

At the End of Season two I was appointed Assistant Referee to the Play Off Semi Final between Torquay Utd v Notts County, Not only was the game huge because of the competition, it was also another live broadcast game and one of the first occasions fans were allowed in the ground post COVID-19 restrictions, I think there were around 3000 in for the lunch time kick off but it sounded and felt like 10,000 which took so real focus to block out after 10 months of football behind closed doors."

## THE ROLE THE ARMY FA HAVE PLAYED IN YOUR PROGRESSION

"I've spoken about the importance of the Army FA in a few other things I have been involved in, and the same applies the support mechanism from everyone top to bottom is second to none, from good luck messages before certain games to openly advertising my success and appointments.

The opportunities are there for everyone if they want them, and the Army FA can facilitate that, the desire to achieve the next level has to come from the individual, but when that desire is shown the Army FA have the tools, the contacts and the capability of making it happen."



## A THANK YOU TO ALL

"The List is too long to be honest, there will be people who don't even realise they have helped me along the way, and that could be something as simple as reviewing a clip of a decision for me and giving an honest review, or answering the phone whilst I'm sat in the car travelling to grounds for hours on end and just giving up time in there day to talk about what I'm about to do, and how I can do it well, which sounds very selfish when you say it out loud but it shows how invested people have been in me as well. I think it's important to never lose sight of that. And that's why I try to attend everything I can to support the people at the start of their refereeing journey.

I think I'd be in a spot of bother if I didn't mention the family! From my parents and Sisters who have always shown the support of everything I do to the family members and friends around the country I've called in on randomly for a brew and a bite to eat whilst travelling.

The two that get the brunt of everything though are my wife Jade and Daughter Ruby, they have been there when the bag has been slung in a corner over the years and the words 'I've had enough of this get mouthed' and they have been there watching the live games I've been on and to celebrate when the promotion letters drop. I am hugely fortunate to be able to do what I do and come and go two/three times a week sometimes without question. Without their support, it is absolutely not achievable."

## WHAT IT WILL MEAN TO YOU OFFICIATING IN THE FOOTBALL LEAGUE?

"It still has not really sunk in to be honest and I'm not sure it will until Matchday 1 appointments come out. The game of football doesn't change as a concept it just gets technically better and faster, so I will work harder and get fitter to match the challenge. I look forward to the next season and who knows what the future holds, the competition from officials is stronger, and promotion spots are fewer, but I will certainly try to keep progressing."





# 100 YEARS OF THE ARMY FA REFEREES COMMITTEE

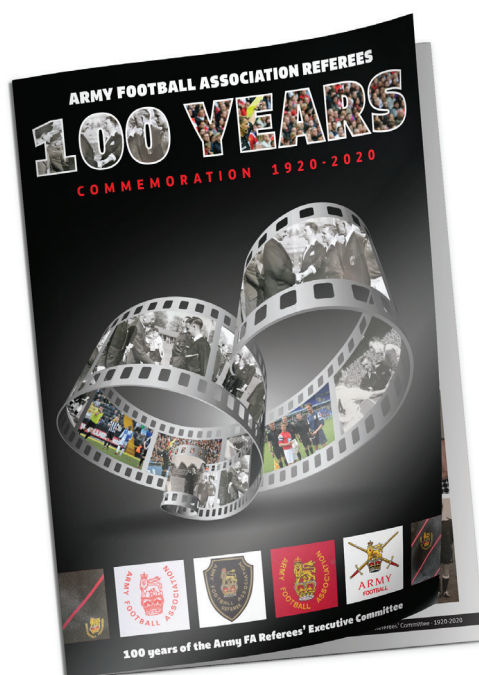
## COMMEMORATIVE BROCHURE

During the initial lockdown in March 2020 Referees' Secretary Graham Brookland noticed in the archives that the Army FA Referees' Committee was formed in October 1920 and that during the course of the 2020/21 season it would celebrate 100 years of existence.

In order to commemorate the centenary appropriately he decided to author a small brochure highlighting the achievement. He told The Soldiers' Game, "Initially the plan was for a 12/16-page documentation of the key events. However, after delving into the archives more thoroughly it was quite apparent that, to do justice to a wonderful organisation, it would warrant more pages. Once I started to view the history it was obvious that there was so much to cover. I then met with Major Retd Eric Trengove who, as part of his many voluntary roles with Army Refereeing over the years he was a former Editor of the Referee's magazine. Eric provided me with all the magazines dating back to the 1960's. They were fascinating to read."

"I then decided that I wanted to capture as much as I could. Every Cup Final during those 100 years to every committee member and Chairman. Every achievement that was recorded to individual contributions from the current era with people like Andy Halliday MBE who officiated in the FA Cup Final only five years ago to Danny McDermid who was the last Football League Referee in the Army. Then from the past with characters such as Ray Coleman who was a Football League official in the 1960's and still registers with the Army FA to this day; Ray is 90 during the 2021/22 season. Former Secretary Brian Le Breton provided a detailed article too and it just grew and grew. The most noticeable aspect of putting the brochure together was the fondness everybody who I spoke to had with regards to their time as an Army FA Referee; for many it was highest point of their Army life. They spoke with such affinity and passion."

*"By the time the brochure was completed we were on 104 full colour pages. The aim was to cover the extensive history whilst also looking to the future too. I am pleased with the response and grateful to all those who helped support the project and those who sent goodwill messages on receipt of the publication. I want it to be a record of the wonderful achievements that have been made within Army FA Refereeing over that 100-year period. There are some phenomenal pieces of history recorded."*



**YOU CAN VIEW THE PUBLICATION**  
by clicking on the link above.

**ENJOY THE READ.**



We were sorry to learn of the passing of **Tony Collins** on 08 February 2021, aged 94. Tony, the first black manager in the Football League, was originally spotted through Army Football, just after WW2.

A remarkable man Tony had an active Football League career covering over 300 appearances at York City, Watford, Torquay United, Crystal Palace and Rochdale. In 1960 he became the first black English Football League manager when he took charge of Rochdale and led them to the 1962 Football League Cup Final; a remarkable feat for a Fourth Division club. After seven years in charge at Spotland Tony had started to make a name for himself as an exemplary scout with an eye for talent. He made a huge impression as Chief Scout and Assistant Manager to Alan Dicks at Bristol City as the club progressed to Division One during the most successful period in their history. He was also Chief Scout at Leeds United under Don Revie and continued to work for Revie when he became England manager in 1974. After another stint at Elland Road he joined Manchester United for whom he worked for between 1982 and 88 responsible for the signings of players such as Paul McGrath and Lee Sharpe. Tony also worked for QPR, Newcastle United, Millwall and Derby County in a distinguished career.

It was, however, through Army Football that Tony was originally spotted. As a teenager during the war Tony played for local club Acton United. He then signed as a junior player for local Football League side Brentford. In January 1944 he received notification to join the Army eventually joining the REME as Cfn A Collins 14735335 after basic training. He originally took up Boxing in the Army but was not so keen. After a posting to Italy a football team from "639 Platoon" was formed to play other units

in the area. A league followed shortly after and Tony became the heartbeat of the team that won the league and cup on a regular basis.

Tony actually caused some concern when he organised a challenge match with some of the locally held German POWs. His CO was somewhat unsettled as he pointed out to Tony that there would be some "very unwelcome consequences for the British if the POWs won the game". Tony scored several goals in the game and the Germans were well beaten on the day. A follow up game was, however, not arranged on instruction from above.

When Tony left the Army as a 21-year-old in 1947, he was approached by Sheffield Wednesday manager Eric Taylor. It all emanated after one of Tony's colleagues in the Army, Pte Ibbotson of C.M.F had written to the Yorkshire club recommending his talents. Taylor responded by letter stating to Tony, *"I have had you recommended by Pte Ibbotson as a promising inside left, and I extend an invitation to you to take part in a trial with us at the earliest date convenient to yourself. I look forward to an early reply from you and enclose stamped addressed envelope"*.

Tony duly attended a trial and was signed by Sheffield Wednesday. It was the start of a flourishing life in football and also, by chance, saw him meet his future wife Edith Murdoch. Edith had served in Italy at the same time as Tony and was the confidential secretary to the Director of Mechanical Engineering (REME). However, whilst catching each other's eye in Italy once they had never spoken. By surreal chance they bumped into each other whilst Tony was at a cinema in Sheffield after signing for Wednesday. They made their introductions and started talking. Tony and Edith married in 1949 and were together until Edith sadly died in 1989.

**\*Photos from the excellent book- Tony Collins- Football Master Spy- written by Quentin Cope and Sarita Collins**





We are delighted to be forming a partnership with The Football and War Network and will be providing more detail in our 2021/22 Mid-Season Review with regards to the partnership and how we will be working together in the future.

The Football and War Network was formally launched in 2016 and is based at the Centre for Historical Research, University of Wolverhampton. The Network is made up of military, football club, and other historians who have an interest in the link between football, the military and war. It aims to bring together historians from the academic and football worlds so that for the first time all the academic, practitioner and fan research centred around football, war and history can link up. The Network discusses and disseminates subjects such as: football and the two world wars; footballers involved in armed conflict; football clubs and their relationship with the armed forces; social impact of football on the populace during times of war; the military and political implications of the role of footballers and football clubs during times of armed conflict. In the main, this covers the period 1900-1965.

The Network's activities include firstly, holding seminars at both the University of Wolverhampton and individual football clubs such as Charlton Athletic, Exeter City, Dulwich Hamlet and Solihull Moors.

Secondly, running bespoke school-based football and history projects providing them with football club historians who run sessions on the history of their clubs, incorporating aspects of football, the military and war. These are curriculum-linked school projects for three distinct groups of students. Firstly, for mainstream Year 4 and 5 primary school children. Secondly, for disengaged Year 9 students

in mainstream secondary schools. Thirdly, for Year 9 students in Special Educational Needs and Disability schools. The project is based on social and military history as well as the history of the club. The aims of these school-based projects are: to help children and young people develop their curriculum understanding of history using football and military historical artefacts; and to develop curriculum literacy and numeracy skills with a number of activities. To date these have been run in both Bedfordshire and Oxfordshire.

Thirdly, the Network has created a free access website that has a number of resources that can be accessed and downloaded, as well as an ever-expanding Network Blog Article series that now has 80 articles written by all types of individuals from different walks of life. All these activities are supported by an active Twitter account that has helped to create a vibrant collegiate network of like-minded individuals and organisations who share information and resources, as well as assisting each other and anyone else with research on either particular events or individuals that have a football and military/war link.

*For more information please visit:*

<https://www.wlv.ac.uk/research/institutes-and-centres/centre-for-historical-research/football-and-war-network/>

Linked below is a recent blog from Army Football covering the 2014-18 Games of Remembrance:

<https://www.wlv.ac.uk/research/institutes-and-centres/centre-for-historical-research/football-and-war-network/football-and-war-blog/2021/a-time-to-remember--a-time-to-reflect/a-time-to-remember--a-time-to-reflect.php>



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### ARMY SUPER CUP FINAL

Sunday 21 November (1100hrs)  
4 LANCS v 7 REGT RLC  
VENUE: LONGRIDGE TOWN FC



### KENTISH CUP- 100TH ANNIVERSARY

SUNDAY 28 NOVEMBER  
UKAF v FRENCH AF  
HAVANT AND WATERLOOVILLE FC

THURSDAY 02 DECEMBER  
UKAF v DUTCH AF  
HAVANT AND WATERLOOVILLE FC



### UNDER 23 INTER SERVICES

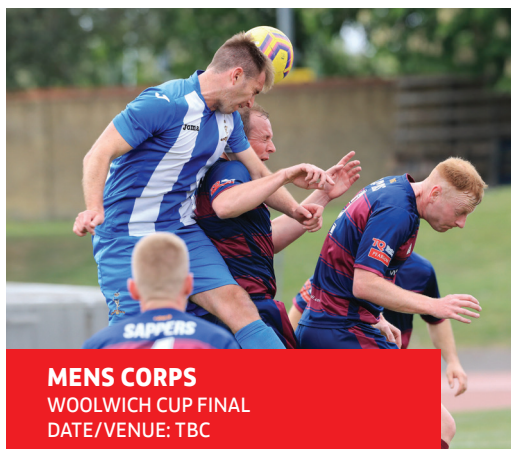
WEDNESDAY 09 FEBRUARY (1500hrs)  
ARMY U23 v ROYAL NAVYU23  
ALDERSHOT MILITARY STADIUM

WEDNESDAY 23 FEBRUARY  
RAF U23 v ARMY U23  
VENUE: TBC



### WOMEN'S CORPS

EDWARDS CUP FINAL  
DATE/VENUE: TBC



### MENS CORPS

WOOLWICH CUP FINAL  
DATE/VENUE: TBC



## WOMEN INTER SERVICES

WEDNESDAY 23 MARCH (1500hrs)  
ARMY WOMEN v RAF WOMEN  
ALDERSHOT MILITARY STADIUM

WEDNESDAY 29 MARCH  
ROYAL NAVY WOMEN v ARMY WOMEN  
VENUE: TBC



## MEN INTER SERVICES

WEDNESDAY 23 MARCH (1900hrs)  
ARMY v RAF  
ALDERSHOT TOWN FC

WEDNESDAY 30 MARCH  
ROYAL NAVY v ARMY  
VENUE: TBC



## ARMY FA RESERVE CUP FINAL

SATURDAY 23 APRIL  
ALDERSHOT MILITARY STADIUM



## ARMY FA MINOR UNITS CUP FINAL (1500hrs)

Sponsored by TOWERGATE INSURANCE  
WEDNESDAY 27 APRIL  
ALDERSHOT MILITARY STADIUM  
4 LANCs v 7 REGT RLC  
VENUE: TBC



## ARMY FA MAJOR UNITS CHALLENGE CUP FINAL (1500hrs)

Sponsored by TOWERGATE INSURANCE  
WEDNESDAY 04 MAY  
ALDERSHOT MILITARY STADIUM

**PLEASE ALWAYS CHECK  
WITH ARMY FA SOCIAL  
MEDIA WITH REGARDS TO  
DATES, TIMINGS.**

**KICK OFF TIMES  
(WHERE ALREADY CONFIRMED)  
ARE INCLUDED.**





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3rd Prize	£4000
4th Prize	£3000
5th Prize	£2000
6th Prize	£1000
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15 x	£200
10 x	£100



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- Given **£20 million** in cash prizes
- Awarded over **£25 million** in grants to Army personnel

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For further details visit our web at:

**[www.armysportslottery.com](http://www.armysportslottery.com)**



**ARMY**



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