



ARMY  
FOOTBALL

# THE SOLDIERS' GAME

## ANNUAL REVIEW 2021/22

### ISSUE 21



# Taking British Armed Forces sport to the next level

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.

Fujitsu Defence & National Security



© Fujitsu 2022 | 8474-02





# PRESIDENT

General Sir Patrick Sanders KCB CBE DSO ADC Gen

# LIFE VICE PRESIDENT

Major (Retd) Billy Thomson BEM

# VICE PRESIDENTS

Lt Gen Sharon Nesmith

Maj Gen Darren Crook

Lt Gen Stuart Skeates

Maj Gen Celia Harvey

Lt Gen Tom Copinger-Symes CBE

WO1 ASM P Carney

## ARMY FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

Mackenzie Building

Fox Lines

Queens Avenue

Aldershot

Hampshire

GU11 2LB

Email: [info@armyfa.com](mailto:info@armyfa.com)

## OUR BOARD OF TRUSTEES



**Chair:**  
**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. 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.



## Capt Kev Haley MBE (2022)

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



## Lt Col Chloe Plimmer-Sayce (2020)

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



## Major Nigel Bamford (2020)

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



## Lt Col Tony Frank (2022)

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



## Lt Col Jill Rogers MBE (2021)

Jill joined the Board a year ago as an advisor on Diversity and Inclusion. She has over five years professional experience in diversity roles and has used that knowledge to help the Army FA achieve the first level of the UK Sports Equality Standard. A total football novice, her sporting interests are sailing and cycling.

## CO OPTED PLAYER REPRESENTATIVES:

Men: WO2 Keith Emmerson

Women: Cpl Teri Harfield-Brown

## PROUDLY SPONSORED BY



## THE SOLDIERS' GAME

Designed and published: esports Publications Editor: Graham Brookland




**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. He was appointed Secretary upon the retirement of Major Billy Thomson in August 2022.


**ASSISTANT SECRETARY and REFEREES SECRETARY: Major Steve Clout**

Email: [steve.clout@armyfa.com](mailto:steve.clout@armyfa.com)

Steve commenced the role in August 2022. He joined the Territorial Army in 1986 and is also Secretary for Army Reserve football in addition to the role as SO2 of Army Reserve sport. Steve is also a Level 6 Referee. Steve completed his basic course in Grantham during the summer of 2021 after initially becoming a referee in 2009.


**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**

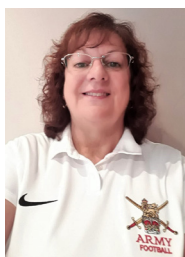
Email: [steve.stone@Armyfa.com](mailto:steve.stone@Armyfa.com)

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.



Hello all and thank you once again for clicking the link to see what the Army Football family has been up to this last season. I am very pleased to report to you that we returned to football in stunning fashion. At unit level, the leagues and Army Cup were up and running from the off and we competed in 7 and 5 a side formats too. At the Corps level both the Women's and the Men's seasons went extremely well with the Massey's two divisions competing as well as the Edwards and Woolwich Cup for Women and Men respectively. For the Women's Corps competitions, it was a particularly significant season with the 1st and 2nd Divisions being named after Cpl Channing Day, an Army player killed whilst serving with the RAMC in Afghanistan, and Lily Parr, the first professional English Women's footballer. It was poignant to be able to hold the final games of each in Aldershot with Channing's parents there to present the trophy for the first time.

As I look forward to the coming season, I am very pleased to report that the Chief of the General Staff has accepted the position of President of the Army FA and that we will, with both the Army SM and DCGS as Vice-Presidents, have fantastic representation for our game at the very highest levels of the Army. Your Board of Trustees has met to set the conditions for 2022/23 and I share the vision with you below;

*In Season 2022/23 we will continue to ensure maximum participation and registration at Unit and Corps level across all areas of the game. Building upon the success of the Army 7s and*

*Edwards Cup finals we will seek opportunities to play our finals at local football grounds, tying such events where we can to Army sport outreach. We will, in conjunction with our Single Service partners, expand the reach of The Soldiers' Game to our retired community, creating the conditions for Veteran's football at both a local and Inter Service level. We will continue to mature our commitment to Diversity and Inclusion construct in line with FA guidelines. Through good governance and sound management will retain our position as one of the pre-eminent counties in the FA. We will continue to expand our sponsorship base, with particular focus upon the Army Crusaders. Finally, we will conduct an Overseas Tour in 2023, with Men & Women's teams in a combined construct.*

Finally my thanks to you all as the volunteers and supporters of The Soldiers' Game, you make it happen and you do it so exceptionally well. As we close season 2021/22 we close on too the involvement of the lynchpin of Army Football in the 21st Century. Our Secretary, Billy Thomson, retires this summer. Much will be said of him later, but from me; Billy the gratitude I feel personally and I know the Army game too holds no bounds, thank you and fair winds (I promise not to change the team colours on your departure...).

**Niall Stokoe OBE**

Chair





*In July 2022 the Army FA provided a presentation to the Football Association with the aim of approval of our 2022/23 Business Strategy. We are delighted that the FA Project Board have provided approval.*

*The bullet points of the plan are:*

## VISION

In Season 2022/23 we will continue to ensure maximum participation and registration at Unit and Corps level across all areas of the game. Building upon the success of the Army 7s and Edwards Cup finals we will seek opportunities to play our finals at local football grounds, tying such events where we can to Army sport outreach. We will, in conjunction with our Single Service partners, expand the reach of The Soldiers' Game to our retired community, creating the conditions for Veteran's football at both a local and Inter Service level. We will continue to mature our commitment to Diversity and Inclusion construct in line with FA guidelines. Through good governance and sound management will retain our position as one of the pre-eminent counties in the FA. We will continue to expand our sponsorship base, with particular focus upon the Army Crusaders. Finally, we will conduct an Overseas Tour in 2023, with Men & Women's teams in a combined construct.

## CHAIR

- Represent Army Football in the Inter-Service and Army Sports Control Board Executive Forums. Develop Veteran's Football in the former.
- Support all Trustees in the undertaking of their duties, ensure necessary MS recognition is provided.
- Seek further sponsorship opportunities in, as yet untapped areas of the game.
- Ensure greater representation from Army President and Vice-President's.

## EXECUTIVE/SECRETARIAT PRIORITIES

- In conjunction with Army FA Secretary, ensure good governance of the Army FA office, with particular reference to finance and assurance.
- Lead the development of an engagement plan for Army FA, to include social media presence and Trustee accounts and football's wider contribution to the Army and beyond.
- Develop and ensure a MS matrix for Trustee's and principal volunteers.

## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

- Ensure awareness of FA Governing Body initiatives and events wrt D&I, setting conditions for Army FA involvement where possible.
- Continue to progress Army FA's D&I maturity commensurate with FA expectations.
- Conduct benchmarking within the Sports Equality Standard Scheme with the aim of achieving the Preliminary Sports Equality Standard Award (we currently have the Foundation Level Award).
- In conjunction with the Army FA Office ensure we remain compliant with safeguarding regulations as a Bd and a game.

## UNIT FOOTBALL

- To deliver Flexible playing opportunities for all in order to increase participation in Unit Football.
- To deliver Inclusive playing opportunities for all in order to increase participation in Unit Football.
- To deliver Accessible playing opportunities for all in order to increase participation in Unit Football.
- Provide the support to the Regional Secretaries in order to fulfil the above and ensure they receive the necessary recognition.

## WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

- Develop Women's grassroots football at Unit level whilst continuing to enhance our successes within the Inter-Corps Leagues and Cup Competition.
- Secure sponsorship for the Inter-Corps League and Edwards Cup competition.
- Widen the reach of Army representative football across all parts of the UK through carefully selected fixtures and locations.

## MEN'S FOOTBALL

- Widen the reach of Army representative football across all parts of the UK through carefully selected fixtures and locations.
- Further professionalise the representative set-up and player experience to facilitate development as players, as a team and most importantly, as people.
- Develop closer relationships across all 3 representative sides to facilitate mentoring, learning and development opportunities and share ideas and best practice.





## ARMY RESERVES & ARMY CRUSADERS

- Joint training weekends between the Men's and Women representative teams, continue integration on future OSV. With the 2022-23 season planning an OSV to North America for the beginning of 2023-24 season.
- Women's representative team to maximise and build on the historical win against Army Women in 2021-22.
- Army Reserve football to be selected as the organisation to participate in a funded OS Defence Engagement - possibly the Balkans.
- Staff succession strategy - looking at the future especially in terms of senior leadership team.
- Formal recognition of the Army Reserve Men's Master's Team.

## ARMY CRUSADERS FC

- To organise centenary celebrations, with a range of games, an overseas tour concluding with a centenary dinner.
- To make sure that Army Crusaders FC remains a representative football team and receives the necessary funding and support.
- Seek to expand the Army Crusaders and incorporate a Womens' representative side.

## FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT

- Increased participation via more formats of the game including Futsal, 7 v 7's, Walking Football and Master's Football.
- Coach education relevant to the requirements of the adult 11 v 11 game at Unit, Corps and Representative level.
- Support and mentoring for new coaches (incorporating 11 v 11 and wider formats), with positive action to enhance diversity and the Women's game.

## OFFICIALS

- We shall continue to time Referee courses to coincide with Army FA competitions, thereby enabling new referees the chance to referee straight away.
- We shall take advantage of the FA's accelerate pathways for promotion to level 5(5ABC) whilst retaining the ability to train our own referees to level 4 and we will continue to pursue this avenue.
- We will be aiming to supply 3 officials to every game at Corps and above level and are looking to appoint an all-female team for the first female Corps fixture 22/23.
- Underpinning shall be CPD for all referees as well as the ensuring the continued requirement for tutors and mentors is addressed.





Friends and colleagues. It is well known; I fall off my perch on the 31st Jul 22 as the Secretary Army Football. A position I have enjoyed for 21 years.

During my tenure it has been a great pleasure to meet and make friends with so many likeminded people, who share, the same passion as myself for football. Without you, the volunteer, at all levels of the game, football in the Army, would not be as successful as it currently is.

Football will continue to go from strength to strength, the introduction of the Army Football Chairs Coin, will go a small way in recognising the volunteer. The Statement of Training Requirement (SOTR) will financially assist those, who want to develop their coaching pathway and for those who choose to become match officials.

I am also extremely grateful to the support of our Sponsors, Aldershot Town FC, The Football Associations (FA) and the ASCB, for their outstanding support to me and Army Football.

I have enjoyed some memorable moments particularly on overseas tours, with some lively characters. Unfortunately, I can't share those memories here, but over a beer or two, I could be persuaded to open up.

I am very appreciative and thankful to the home team, past and present, who have supported me over my 21 years. Only a small number left, during my time which is a mark of their loyalty to Army Football. I know the new team, will bring fresh ideas and support my successor as they did me and I wish them all every success.

Retirement comes with mixed emotion; I have looked out my hickory shaft golf clubs and will be looking forward to invites for a game or two. I was extremely pleased and surprised to be made a Life Vice President of Army Football, which will also keep me connected with the game.

Finally, there are too many names to mention and rather than miss any one out, can I collectively thank all those that I have met and known over the years, for your friendship guidance and support and may I wish you all well for your future.

**Billy**





*"I was extremely fortunate to be supported by Billy throughout my term as Chairman. It was a busy period with our 125th Anniversary celebrations including the match at Reading against an FA XI managed by Roy Hodgson and our tour to Brazil alongside the England team. We also went through a significant transition to the oversight and management of Army Football much of which was led by Billy. His knowledge and experience of Army Football was utterly comprehensive but, of even greater importance, were his positive outlook and good humour. Thank you Billy for your extraordinary service to Army Football and also for your friendship."*

**Bruce**

With best wishes,  
**Major Gen (Retd) Bruce Brealey CB**  
**Chair 2010-2015**

Billy is "Mr Football in the Army", particularly for the last 21 years as it's colourful, committed, and conscientious Secretary. Despite his north of the border accent and "Gunner" leanings his service and energy has taken football in the Army to new levels, on and off the pitch. A true servant of the Soldiers' game and a great character.

**Mitch**

**Major Gen (Retd) "Mitch" Mitchell CB MBE**  
**Chair 2015-2020**





## WELCOME..... SECRETARY ARMY FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

It is a privilege to be appointed as the new Secretary of the Army Football Association replacing Major (Retd) Billy Thomson BEM. Billy and I have worked closely over the past 15 years. We have had some great times and have developed many memories. Billy leaves the role with great distinction having been a fine ambassador over 21 years not just within the Army but for the Football Association too. I take this opportunity to wish Billy the happiest and healthiest of retirements.

I have been fortunate to work within the football industry for most of my working life. I will always be proud to be the Co-Founder of Aldershot Town Football Club as a mere 25-year-old when Aldershot FC was liquidated and lost its Football League status in 1992. We spent 16 years from being initially accepted into the 3rd division of the Isthmian League before finally reaching our target of returning the name of Aldershot to the Football League in 2008. During my time "within the walls" at Aldershot I served as full time Company Secretary for a decade and also, in the later Football League years, held the post as Head of Media including when the club reached the last 16 of the League Cup before playing Manchester United in the 4th round in 2011. These days I have reverted back to standing on the terraces as I did originally as a seven-year-old without any official involvement, but we retain strong links between the two organisations. Locally to the Army FA

HQ area I am proud to be the Vice Chair of the Aldershot Divisional Football Association which has a huge military heritage dating back to 1894. It was a day of personal pride for me when I was able to author a book "To Make A Dream Survive" in 2015 sharing the unique journey covering those experiences. (It's available on Amazon!!).

I have, however, developed a firm passion for the Army Football Association since replacing the legendary Brian Le Breton in October 2007. During that time, it has been a pleasure to be involved in so many aspects viewing the progression of the Association watching the noticeable enthusiasm and commitment from so many participants be them players, management, coaches, administrators or, indeed, referees. The period of 2014/18 included so many commemorative occasions that were a joy to be involved in too. Being able to view the growth of so many areas of the sport has been comforting and rewarding. People make that happen and we must never rely on the fact that somebody will step into the role when another person vacates. It is our responsibility with the mechanisms we possess to identify, encourage and nurture to help and support.

One of the most inspiring parts of that period has been as Secretary of the Referees'. To see so many officials progress from their basic course and progress through the levels to national football has been enlightening. Perhaps more remarkable has been the noticeable proactivity from those who have reached the higher echelons giving back their time to the next batch of Army officials. It is a wonderful camaraderie that has worked. The greatest example I can give is from 2016.





When Andy Halliday MBE officiated in the FA Cup Final between Manchester United and Crystal Palace only to follow four days later by taking a group of basic referee course students to the Army Sixes on Queens Avenue in Aldershot to mentor before taking charge of the Sixes Final. That photo of Andy with his FA Cup and Army Sixes medal epitomises to me what Army football should be all about. Giving back to help those who want that support and guidance to be able to make something of themselves for the benefit of the organisation too.

Travelling around the country last season from watching pure delight from teams competing in the Army Sixes or UK North Sixes through to seeing what it means to means to win the Edwards or Woolwich Cup. From small sided through to 11 a side I love to see the participation and enthusiasm and want to see more of it. It is a fantastic sight to see.

I look forward to working with Steve Clout and officially welcome my replacement as Assistant Secretary and Referees Secretary. Steve's vast experience within the Army Reserve and understanding of the ASCB will be a huge benefit as we look forward to the future.

I have always enjoyed working with and being able to facilitate with people at all levels of the game at local and national level. I also have a great zest to ensure that the key and important messages are made available as widely as possible for the benefit of The Soldiers' Game. Our team will continue to strive to provide for you and to develop opportunities throughout the Army football community.

I also welcome Major Steve Clout to our team. Steve is my replacement as Assistant Secretary/Referees' Secretary. We are in a transition period and ask for patience as we implement our plans looking to the future.

**Graham Brookland**

## SECRETARIES

1888	Lieutenant H McCalmont
1889	Lieutenant J Winn/Colonel F E Hambury
1891	Capt W P Pulteney
1894	Lieutenant H C Lowther
1898	Capt R Ford
1899	Capt W Simpson/Captain H E B Newenham
1900	Capt E G Curtis
1901	Capt R Ford
1902	Capt E G Curtis
1907	Reverend J T Hales CF
1909	Maj R C McCalmont
1912	Colonel R J Kentish CMG DSO
1922	Capt FA Bowring

1923	Maj H D Harrington DSO MC
1924	Reverend N G Railton CF
1928	Colonel C G Ling DSO MC
1930	Maj J C O Marriott DSO MC
1931	Maj A Webb DCM
1940	Maj T S Tate MBE VC
1941	Maj FA Sloan MC
1947	Lieutenant Colonel H M Prince MBE BEM
1953	Lieutenant Colonel G T Mitchell OBE
1970	Colonel J S S Gratton OBE
1974	Maj A Dobson MBE
1989	Maj T C Knight
2001	Maj W T E Thomson BEM
2022	Mr G R Brookland





In my first year in the role of the Army FA's Diversity and Inclusion Trustee, I had a straightforward mission – to achieve the minimum level within a benchmarking scheme for equality. This was the UK Equality Standard for Sport Scheme which is used by the wider FA. This work involved analysing the diversity of our board members and staff, reviewing our publications and communications and ensuring that we were stating our unequivocal commitment to Diversity and Inclusion at all levels of the game. We achieved the Foundation Standard Level in February 2022.

To some degree, the foundation level is a check list of the minimum requirements and to go further in this scheme we must look in greater depth at what

Diversity and Inclusion really means to us within Army FA. The Chair is clear on the need for Army FA to be a place of opportunity which welcomes all who have the desire and aptitude for the game.

By doing further benchmarking the board can identify who we might not be reaching and how we can break down any barriers. We can look at ways to increase Army football's capacity to act as a force for good within the communities we live among. I look forward to starting that work with the help and cooperation of everyone in Army FA.

Lt Col Jill Rogers



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 the Introduction to Coaching Football qualification (4 week online Course)
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: Mr Graham Brookland

Role: CFA Secretary

Tel Civ: 01252 787067

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

## THE FA SAFEGUARDING TEAM

The Football Association (The FA) Wembley Stadium, PO Box 1966, London SW1P 9EQ

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)





**MAJOR STEVE CLOUT**

On the 1st August 2022 Steve moved to a full-time post at the Army FA as Assistant Secretary and Referees' Secretary. Many of you will know Steve as the Secretary for football in the Army Reserve, a role he has held for the last twelve years. He has worked for forty years in the telecommunication industry which includes twenty-two years at Vodafone. Steve joined the Territorial Army in 1986 and currently holds the post of SO2 Army Reserve Sport. Last year Steve experienced an Army FA lead referees' course and went on to promote to a level 6 referee.

We welcome Steve to his new position.

**SECRETARIES OF THE ARMY FA REFEREES' COMMITTEE**

1920-22	Lieutenant AE Edwards Royal Field Artillery
1922-24	Captain PE Walton Royal Artillery
1924-25	Captain GH Syrett Royal Artillery
1925-32	Lieutenant/ Captain AV Kerrison Royal Artillery
1932-36	Captain AW Austin MC MM Royal Artillery
1936-38	Captain/ Major WR George RAMC
1945-47	Lt Col CE Bull OBE DCM RAMC
1938-47	Lieutenant HM Prince RAMC
1947-56	Captain/ Major JR Redding MBE Royal Artillery
1956-70	Lt Col GI Mitchell OBE
1970-71	Colonel JSS Gratton OBE
1971-74	Mr RA Sherstone
1974-85	Mr DC Trinder
1985-07	Mr BB Le Breton
2007-22	Mr GR Brookland
2022-	Major Steve Clout



# 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.**





I was humbled and honoured to be appointed Head Coach of the Army Men's Senior Team towards the end of August 2021, a prestigious and exciting role with big boots to fill following on from some high-quality Army coaches in recent years. Taking over a team that hadn't played a game since their 1-0 victory against the RAF in March 2020, a team which had lost quality players like Rob Farks and Dan Stoneman, to name but two, was a real challenge but a challenge which I looked forward to.

In October players and staff met for the first time for Training Camp 1, with some familiar senior players returning to the fold and some new faces joining the squad. Training camps between October and December were planned as a develop and rebuild phase, allowing time to get to know the players and opportunities for new and current players to stake their claim for a place in the squad come January 2022.

Our first training camp culminated in a friendly against Aldershot Town Academy team, a fixture that will become a traditional first game of the season and a game that allowed every player the opportunity to play at least 45 minutes of football in an Army shirt, a friendly, but competitive match that resulted in a last-minute goal to give Aldershot Town Academy a 3-2 victory.

November and December saw a repeat of October's camp with more friendlies and more new and current players showcasing their football skills and talent. Our second fixture was held at Billericay Town Football Club to play against Lloyds of London FC, a game in which Jamie Turner & Scotty Hynd scored hat-tricks. Our third fixture was a reinvigorated friendly against the Civil Service FC on a dark cold stormy evening in west London, which finished as a 1-1 draw against a resilient Civil Service side.





With a squad in mind for the IS competition, players were invited back for January and February training camps, which had three tough friendlies planned. In January we drew 1-1 away to a strong Guildford City team, followed by a convincing 5 -1 victory against Aldershot Town U23s. In February we travelled away to Windsor FC who hosted us superbly, but unfortunately the result did not go our way on an extremely windy night. But a good phase in which the camps and games enabled the selection of the squad to be fine-tuned in preparation for the IS competition.

Unfortunately throughout the IS competition, I had to watch from afar due to an operational deployment, although I was able to maintain good communications with my coaching staff. First up were the RAF who had come off the back of a comfortable 2-0 win against the Royal Navy; we'd analysed their team and knew this was going to be our toughest test. But we made a fantastic start, scoring within the first few moments of the game, but sadly it wasn't meant to be. A strong and well drilled RAF team took their chances well and won the match and the IS competition at a canter. To their credit, our staff and players regrouped and focussed with real intent for our final game against the Royal Navy, a must win fixture. A couple of experienced players came in to support the team, which the staff and I were grateful of, and they helped contribute to a squad that were determined to show how good they really are. With more emphasis getting our defensive play right, and a few adjustments from the first game, the squad bounced back with a fantastic attitude and togetherness. It was a tough night in Yeovil,

but the players fought hard, withstood some pressure from the Royal Navy, but importantly played their football and demonstrated their potential. The result was a well-earned and well deserved 2-1 win which saw us retain the Mercury Cup.

Over the whole season there were a few players that stood out with some great performances and outstanding commitment. But it was Fus Leigh Phillips that pipped a quality field, and he was named Player of the Season, an accolade and achievement he fully deserved. With 10 Army players selected for UKAF, lots of new talent to look at, and a squad full of confidence and determination, we look forward to next season with real optimism. Already we are better prepared, equipped and organised, ready for the season and the Inter Service games which will fully expect to competitive in.



Captain Jimmy Blair  
Coldstream Guards







With the impact of COVID 19 resulting in a pool of players being over-aged for this season's U23s squad, the start of the 21-22 season was heavily focused on identifying talent across all cap badges as we aimed to develop a new crop of future Army footballers. We received some excellent player recommendations by Corps and Regimental coaches and our staff got out and watched as many matches as possible. The new players have added great depth and value to this year's squad, proving that Corps and Regimental football is a great stepping stone to Representative football.

Our first training camp of the season was used to look at players in a competitive environment across two fixtures. The first, on day two of pulling the squad together resulted in a 3-0 defeat to a strong Royal Artillery outfit, followed by a 2-1 win away against an Andover Town XI later in the same week. Further fixtures in 2021 resulted in a 2-2 draw against Fleet Town, a good 2-0 away win in the Aldershot Senior Cup against Wessex side Fleet Spurs and a hard fought 1-0 away win against Devizes Town.

Our first fixture of 2022 was against a good Army Reserves, who we knew would be well-organised and disciplined, which proved to be the case as we struggled to get any momentum in the game. Nevertheless, we remained persistent, and we found a late winner through a Callum Vincent strike to seal a deserved 1-0 win. Two days later, we were away to high flying Godalming Town in the Aldershot Senior Cup QF. With only five minutes left on the clock and 2-1 down, the Army youngsters came back to score twice to win 3-2, with Callum Vincent capping off a fine hat-trick as the team got full rewards for a battling, gritty and hard fought performance with flashes of innate brilliance.

The Inter Services started with a dominant, confident performance against the Royal Navy, which resulted in an accomplished 2-0 victory, a

great start to the competition. Then the second game finished 2-2 in a gutsy draw away to the RAF, another fantastic, well-earned result which should have seen the team deservedly crowned IS Champions. Disappointingly an administrative misunderstanding saw the team receive a deduction in points which resulted in the Royal Navy being handed the trophy after a 3-2 win against the RAF in Portsmouth. Bitterly disappointingly for all involved, though we took solace knowing our performances on the pitch was that of a champion team. We dusted ourselves off and then focussed on the Aldershot DFA Cup semi-final against a very talented Fleet Town outfit. Fleet were well organised and strong and inflicted our first defeat in 9 matches; the prestigious competition was won by Hartley Witney, an accomplished Step 3 team.

On reflection, it was a fantastic, positive season and as Head Coach there was much to be pleased about and immensely proud of; great performances, good results and a crop of promising players with huge potential. Another 8 players had exposure with the senior side this season and 3 former U23 players prior to the COVID pause, Sean Thomson, Jordan Brooks and Scott Hynd, all featured in recent UKAF fixtures, the very top level of military football. Army U23 football continues to have a positive influence on young talented players that have a proven pathway to progress to the highest level of service football.

As we all look forward to what we hope will be another promising season starting early September may I ask if any Regt or Corps coaches have any promising young players that they wish to recommend for the new season, please contact Head Coach @GerwynGriffiths on Twitter.

**Warrant Officer Class 2 Gerwyn Griffiths**



## SEASON REVIEW

The Army Masters' Football Team made a strong return to competitive football, after moving into the 'Living with COVID' space in 2021/22. In our first year back we managed to squeeze in 5 fixtures in the space of 7 months from Sep 21 to Mar 22. The Masters concept is now fully imbibed with and supported by The Army FA and the Chairman and Trustees of Army Football. The 21/22 Season has been a considered success, with wins against the Prison Service and Wales FA, draws with the Army Reserve and RAF and a solitary loss against the Royal Navy. Competitive in every fixture, with enough chances and opportunities to win every game, we suffered with key injuries at early stages of each game, which cost us dearly. Additionally, we lost some of our best players this year, retiring from the Army after full careers. Despite the palpable effect this had on our season, we wish them all the very best in their future endeavours.

## LOOKING FORWARD

That said, the next 3 years look incredibly busy for us. We are moving forward with vigour and season 22/23 looks particularly exciting with the European Masters' Games (EMG 23) moving to Tampere, Finland in July.

Consequently, the Army Trustees have agreed to support a Trial, which is being planned for early Oct 22, the aim of which is capturing the talent across the Army, in time for EMG 23. There will be little time to rest between events post EMG23, as there is an additional Military OSV being planned for 23/24 as a tour of Australia, where we may have the opportunity to play in the Australian Inter Service Competition in November. Following that, the WMG25 are also being planned for delivery in Taipei in May 2025. The subsequent requirement is to generate a 30 strong team, that is rapidly becoming key activity and we are looking, specifically, for players in the 35+ category in order to provide the best opportunity for success and follow up our Gold Medal performance in Auckland 2017.

If you are over 35+, and a footballer who stills craves competitive sport and is keen to get involved, please make contact with the Army Football General Manager, Dean Boughen @ Boughen, Dean Maj (DSCIS-11SR-5SqN-OC) Joe Collins @ Collins, Joseph Capt (4LANCS-BHQ-RCMO) or Richie Bell @ Bell, Richard Lt Col (159RLC-125-OC).



Following what felt like an eternity, the gradual return of Representative football has been a welcome sight. The introduction of COVID protocols at the start of the season were a necessary addition and I am absolutely aware of the resources they relied upon to facilitate a return to football. A huge thank you and well done to everyone involved in Men's Representative football at Corps and Army level for helping us get the game we love back on track. As protocols have relaxed and the footballing calendar has grown it has been great to see participation increasing and smiles back on many familiar faces. We have seen a full season unfold in the Massey and the Woolwich Cup completed, as well as a full fixture list and Inter-Services for both the Senior and U23 side.

The Corps League and Cup competitions have been as competitive as ever and you can read more about them further down the page. Many congratulations to the Royal Engineers on winning the title this season and to the RAPTC on winning Division 2 of the Massey. The RA managed to retain their position in Division 1 after beating the RAC in the playoff final and commiserations to the Infantry who will be playing in Division 2 next season. Congratulations are also due to REME for their victory in a fiercely contested Woolwich Cup Final at Shrapnel Park in June. There is no doubt that the schedule is packed full, and the annual Quads competition further adds to the rich tapestry of Corps football.

Thank you to all of the staff, players and officials for making the return to football such a success.

The short-notice deployment of our Senior team Head Coach in his first season at the wheel and only 6 weeks before the Inter-Services competition was far from ideal, but I am proud of the way the wider team leant in and supported each other. In what was always going to be a year of transition after the departure of a number of key players and the interruptions of a pandemic, there is much to be optimistic about and I know that Capt Jimmy Blair is chomping at the bit to get started (again). The U23s had a fantastic season under WO2 Griff Griffiths, demonstrated not only by their results but the number of players that have made the transition to the Senior side and in some cases to represent the Armed Forces. Masters football is also growing in profile, and we look forward to an established Inter-Services competition next season. Thank you to everyone involved in the Army football set up and to the Army FA for the support provided.

Finally, I would like to wish my predecessor, Lt Col Alex 'Athers' Atherton good luck for the future. Thank you for all you have done for Army football, we are in a good place.

**Lt Col Tony Frank**  
Trustee, Men Representative and Corps







## MASSEY REVIEW – 2021/22

The 2021/22 season began with nervous anticipation following our slow emergence from the global pandemic. Safety was of course, of paramount importance and it was crucial that we maintained a balance between meaningful force protection and competitive competition. We must start therefore, by thanking all players, staff and officials for the extra work and dedication required to simply get the season off the start line; it has been no small feat.

### DIVISION 1

The Infantry were reigning champions following what can only be described as a unique season, and the Royal Engineers, continuing a nice habit, yet again won the Woolwich Cup. The Royal Artillery re-joined the top league following their promotion and producing a good run at the annual Quads tournament. There were certainly no clear favourites from the start.

The Royal Artillery started the season with blistering pace and topped the table after the first handful of games. The 2019 champions, REME got off to a slow start and found themselves at the foot of the table early on. As the season progressed the Royal Engineers strung together a batch of good results at the point where the Royal Artillery started to slip away. Operational commitments hit the Infantry hard which made reaching the standard set in the previous season difficult.

As the season drew to a close, the Royal Engineers found themselves out in front and eventually won the league by 2 points with the RLC coming a close second. The trophy was presented at the RE Corps Football Reunion which fittingly coincided with the 150th anniversary of their FA Cup win. The Infantry were relegated to Division 2 whilst the Royal Artillery were matched against the RAC in the playoff to play in Division 1; the Royal Artillery won the play-off in late June 22.

### DIVISION 2

The 21/22 season was set to be incredibly competitive, with the RAC missing out on promotion after losing in the play-off to the RLC and the AAC sliding to Division 2. It was anyone's guess who would finish top of the league heading into the start of the season.

The RAC set the pace and by midway through the season they were looking unbeatable although in hindsight too many draws were to cost them. The AAC were competing well alongside the RAPTC and were still in contention. The AGC seemed to struggle to find any momentum this year and will be looking to come back stronger next season and the Int Corps and AMS will be pushing hard to be in contention too.

As the season drew to a close, the RAC needed one point from their final game to win the league and gain promotion. As is so often the case in football the visitors found another gear for this

game and won convincingly 3-1. This left the door open for the RAPTC to snatch the league on goal difference if they could win their final two games and overcome a 7-goal deficit. The RAPTC went on to win both games and the league, scoring 11 goals in the process and displaying the benefits of rolling into some important games straight off the back of a successful OSV to Canada. In the playoffs, the RAC faced the Royal Artillery but were unable to get over the final hurdle.

### INTER CORPS WOOLWICH CHALLENGE CUP

The Inter Corps Woolwich Challenge Cup was introduced in 2007 having been presented by the Royal Artillery to commemorate their departure from Woolwich after almost 300 years. The current holders, the Royal Engineers were looking to retain the trophy in the 150th anniversary of their FA Cup win; yet another trophy they have been known to hold.

The first round of the competition saw REME get a bye whilst the RLC secured their place in the next round by beating the RAPTC by a single goal. The quarter finals saw a goal fest for both teams as the RLC scored 6 goals against the AMS without reply and the REME won their game against the AGC 6-1. The star of the show was striker Greg Peel who bagged himself five goals.

Next up for REME was the Royal Artillery who presented a much stiffer challenge. Both teams were in good form, taking the game to penalties. The REME came out on top with a magnificent performance from their keeper as he saved three penalties. The RLC ran out comfortable winner against the AAC at Aldershot to book their place in the final.

The final took place at Shrapnel Park, home of Gunner football and a fitting tribute to the Woolwich Cup. In a fairly even fist few minutes the REME took the lead through good.



**HOLT'S**  
**MILITARY**  
**BANKING**

We are delighted that from the inception of the 2022/23 season Holt's have become sponsors of the Army Men's Corp competitions including the Massey Trophy and Woolwich Cup. Holt's have been offering UK military banking services for over 200 years and currently serve over 33,000 military personnel across the world.







Major Si Oldrid signs off as in his final game as Manager/Head Coach as REME win the Woolwich Cup for the first time.

Si has been involved with corps football for 28 years spending the last decade or so at the helm. Congratulations Si.

After the disruption caused by COVID, I can now report that we are back on track and have enjoyed some excellent football during the past season. I am so pleased to see the beautiful game being played once again and would like to extend a massive thank you to everyone involved in helping us to get the Leagues and Cup competitions back up and running. This season we split the women's league into two and created the Cpl Channing Day League 1 and the Lily Parr League 2. The aim was to allow all teams to play opposition both home and away but also to allow the teams who historically occupy the lower half of the league, to actually have some silverware to play for.....who doesn't like silverware! The result was a resounding success, creating more interest and a much more level playing field. I also decided to hold all 4 final games of the season in the same location, hoping this would help create an atmosphere and also ensure the two league winners would have a good crowd present when lifting their respective trophies! The day was fantastic and made even more special by having Cpl Day's parents and best friend, WO2 Jody Mardling, there to award the League 1 trophy. The league competitions are covered in more detail later in the review but I would like to congratulate the RLC on winning the Cpl Channing Day League and the RE on winning the Lily Parr League and gaining promotion to League 1. I would also like to extend my commiserations to the AMS who were relegated to League 2. Lastly I would like to congratulate the AGC who won the Edwards Cup in a competitive, hard-fought match against the REME. John Edwards was in attendance at Cirencester Town FC to present the trophy and enjoyed the day.....despite his beloved REME not being victorious! Yet again Cirencester Town looked after us really well and the plan will be to hold it there again next year.

Whilst Women's football is continuing to grow, we need to work on developing grassroots football at Unit level. This is harder to achieve within the women's game due to a lack of numbers in a lot of locations, however my Director of Football, Maj Mark Normanton is working hard in this area and has a number of initiatives that he would like to bring into the game. Capt Caitlin Lower has stepped up to be the Assistant Director of Football and alongside Mark will help develop Unit football by creating a Southern League to match the Northern League (already in existence) as well as running other national and regional tournaments.

The Army FA is also working hard to attract sponsorship for both the Inter Corps leagues and representative teams which I am very grateful for - hopefully the Women's EUROs will create even more interest in Women's football!

The Army Snr and Amazon's Development sides have had a good season which is covered in detail later in the report. Build up work for the Inter-Services went well and I was so pleased to see the fantastic way the teams worked and trained together and how this represented itself on the pitch via some competitive matches. The Inter-Services did not go our way, both games were hugely contested and unfortunately the Army were unsuccessful in the pursuit of the trophy. However, there were some really good lessons learnt and highlights included 6 Amazon players stepping up to the Senior Squad; this bodes well for our development as we look forward to the new season. In addition to this we also had 5 players selected for the UKAF Trg camp and Presidents Cup in the Netherlands in May which is fantastic. The Assistant Director of Football has been working hard to set up matches for next season and will be handing responsibility for the Representative teams to Capt Jack Dimmer when he returns from Ops in Jul/Aug. This season both the Snr and Amazons will be conducting training and matches in different regions of the UK. The aim is to try and widen the pool of opposition beyond Aldershot whilst also promoting Army football in areas we don't usually get access to, such as the South-West and North West. The aim is to build on this in future seasons by playing in other regions such as Scotland and Wales. Our ultimate goal is to showcase Army Women's football across the UK.

Finally I would like to welcome Capt Chloe Scott-Mearns into the Committee as the new Inter Corps League Secretary. I must also mention that unfortunately Sgt Lee Barry has decided to leave the Army, he will therefore be hanging up his boots as the Army Snr Team Head Coach after the Inter-Services in Mar 23. I will be working with the Army FA to advertise the post during the early part of the season with formal arrangements for interview thereafter.

Regards

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



The season for both teams started in late September 21 with the Trials Week in Aldershot.

Numerous players were identified for both squads and the week culminated with a fixture away

against the University of Nottingham which saw both teams playing against the squad. A hugely contested game saw the Army put to the test against a well-developed team.



November saw both teams come together working independently in Aldershot for a short training camp before December when the squads travelling for a camp in Catterick.

Cold weather ensured that the players had a feel of the North as well as playing

two competitive fixtures against Spennymoor Ladies (Army Won 5 – 1) and York City at Marne Barracks. Again, both squads were fused together due to numbers of 16 players, so each player had ample time to shine over the two nights.



Pictures showing ever changing conditions in Catterick Garrison



The team using the facilities at 4 SCOTS in Catterick during the December Camp

January came around quickly and saw both squads arriving in Larkhill for another training camp before playing Oxford

United in another hugely contested battle.

The team used this camp as a preparation ready for the Inter Services in March and



A crisp night-time warm up in Larkhill

was good for the Amazons to showcase their ability in the hope of a call up to the Senior Team.

February was soon upon the teams and

two fixtures were arranged for both the Senior Team to play Southampton away and the Amazons to play Salisbury City in Bulford.



Players preparing for Southampton and Salisbury

Both games were played in miserable wet conditions and a great learning opportunity for the players and staff to assess where they were in terms of preparation going forward.



The final fixture before the Inter Services saw both teams come together in Aldershot against the Army Women's Reserve Side. The game was played in great spirits with the Reserves narrowly winning 2-1.

### INTER SERVICES

This year's competition started with the current holders the RAF playing their game first against the Navy. With the RAF winning the fixture meant that if the RAF beat the Army, it would see them lift the trophy even before the last game was played.

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

Overall, a successful year for both teams, new players joining the squads as well as the collaboration together which bode well for the future.



Players getting instruction in preparation for IS



Gabby & Emily in the bin during a break



On Friday 6 May 2022 the first ever “final day of the season” was hosted on Queen’s Avenue, Aldershot by the Army FA. All eight teams from the Corporal Channing Day Division 1 and the Lily Parr Division 2 league played their final league fixtures, with three teams from both divisions still within a shot of winning their respective leagues.

REME vs AGC and RE vs Int Corps kicked off the day’s matches. With the other four teams anxiously looking on hoping scores would go their way. A narrow 4-3 victory for the AGC ruled out REME from clinching the title. A very impressive RE performance saw them win 9-0 and go back to the top of the table.

RLC vs AMS and RA vs Sigs were the final two games. With all four teams watching on. A large crowd had now gathered round both pitches with the silverware on show. The setting was perfect, and all teams were impressed by the fantastic environment.

RLC brushing aside the AMS with ease and finishing the game 7-0 winners. RA done everything but win against the Royal Sigs. With a highly exciting 1-1 draw. The results meant that RLC won Division 1 and RE champions of Division 2.

A very fitting tribute to mark the first ever season of the Women’s Inter Corps league split into two divisions. Cpl Channing Day’s parents and close friend WO2 Mardling AGC were present in Aldershot, with her parents presenting the Division 1 trophy to the RLC.

Some fantastic football on display from all Corps squads and with RE moving into Division 1 and AMS playing their football in Division 2 for the 2022/23 season, all is to play for and some very exciting fixtures to look forward to.





## CPL CHANNING DAY League Division 1

	P	W	D	L	GD	PTS
RLC	6	4	1	1	13	13
AGC	6	3	1	2	-2	10
REME	6	2	-	4	2	6
AMS (Relegated)	6	2	-	4	-13	6

## LILY PARR League Division 2

	P	W	D	L	GD	PTS
RE (Promoted)	6	4	-	2	8	12
RA	6	3	2	1	6	11
R Signals	6	2	2	2	8	8
Int Corps	6	1	-	5	-22	3







This year's Edwards Cup Final was fiercely contested between the AGC and REME in what was a repeat of the last game of the league season. The AGC were looking to retain the trophy for the second consecutive season and started off the better team taking a 2-0 lead at the break with both goals coming from Capt Krissy Wright (a legend of the Women's Corps game).

In the second half of the game the REME came out battling and was it not for the post and crossbar being hit on a couple of occasions then the game would of certainly got interesting towards the end. Sgt Lisa Ward then made it 3-0 to the AGC before the REME pulled one back via SSgt Yvette Kemp.

The AGC came out 3-1 winners in a game full of quality football, great attitude from both teams and was an excellent spectacle to watch.





# S.T.E.P.S.

TO FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES



**ARMY**  
BE THE BEST

## SHE KICKS CAREERS



Are you a better-than-average footballer, with ambitions for a career that offers you experiences outside of the norm and opportunities to develop both on and off the pitch? Or do you perhaps need a 'Plan B' in case your dream of making a living from playing the beautiful game evades you?

## EDWARDS STEPS UP AS AN ARMY FOOTBALLER

Professional playing contacts are still limited in the Women's game, but one way to continue to pursue sporting success, whilst also earning and gaining valuable trade skills, is through the Armed Forces.

This is how QPR's energetic forward Demi Edwards combines her work as a medic [until joining a medical regiment recently, she was working c.30 hours a week full-time in A&E at Frimley Park Hospital] with FAWNL Division South East football. She is a LCpl in the Queen

Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps (QAEANC), employed as a Nurse, and also represents the Army and UK Armed Forces (UKAF) in prestigious matches and competitions in the UK and overseas.

Having grown up in Hereford Liverpool fan Edwards was part of the Wales international youth set-up, but after leaving school, being too far away from big cities and clubs severely restricted her footballing options.



### Demi Edwards

**DOB:** 29 April 1994

**Place of birth:**  
Hereford

**Position:** Forward

**Current club:** QPR

**Previous clubs:**  
Portsmouth Dev, Christal Palace

**Rank/Regiment:**  
LCpl/4Medical







IAN RANDALL PHOTOGRAPHY

She decided to follow her older sister - also a footballer but her main sport was hockey - in joining the Army.

"I was at that age where I either pushed to pay football full-time by moving to an academy or I had to get a job, and my family couldn't afford it really. So I thought 'well, I can play football in the Army and get paid.'"

Her first stint actually ended in Phase 2: "I think I was just young, I was training to be a medic... I made the silly decision to leave, which I regretted quite quickly. Two weeks later, I re-applied." And, after re-joining in 2015, she has never looked back.

Football was absolutely the driver behind her career choice: "Being a footballer, you're naturally into fitness and stuff, and obviously the Army is all fitness, so it was just an easy decision for me.

"The Army's done amazing things for me and I've had so many opportunities, which I probably wouldn't have got if I had not joined. And realistically, I'd probably have been dropped [by Wales], because of all the girls I was playing International football with only one of them for U19s is now in the International Women's side [Angharad James]."

The 28-year-old is certain that being in the Army has helped her football particularly with being based more centrally so she can find good, accessible and suitable 'civvy' (civilian) clubs for her standard; first Crystal Palace and now QPR. Her football also helps her Army life and hospital work in terms of understanding team cohesion and mental health: "If I have a really bad shift, I know I've got training that evening. It takes my mind off it and it keeps me going."

"Edwards says her Army coaches were and are always very supportive in helping find civilian clubs because it's good for the player, and for the team, to be playing regular league football.

All male and female soldiers have the chance to play Corps football for their regimental teams [all 'Cap Badge' sides have a positive 'one club' ethos] against other regiments.

The best, like Edwards, then get to step up to a squad representing the British Army, with increased competition, training demands and the coaching and surround support to match. They play against high-level opposition, go on overseas tours, as well as taking on the Navy and RAF in the hotly-contested annual Inter-Service tournament. The real cream of the talent, again, like Edwards, are selected for the UKAF squad (from across the three services) and play against European counterparts.

"We played against the Chelsea development team," offers Edwards enthusiastically, as an example, "I'd never, ever have been given that opportunity otherwise, to play against girls at the top level."

What do her teammates at QPR, who have had a very decent season and should secure a top-five finish say about Edwards Army career?

"They're always interested and ask a lot of questions about it. One or two recently asked me about joining up and I told them, 'It would be the best thing you've ever done.' They're probably not going to break into the WSL and become professional so, join the Army; you'll be playing football nearly full-time and getting paid for it."

*Article originally placed in SheKicks June 2022 edition*



Twenty-four Army Reserve units entered the 2021/22 Army Reserve Challenge Cup with the first-round games kicking off way back in September. This was an excellent turnout post Covid, and everyone was encouraged for the future. With most of the Army Reserve units having to squeeze their military training into the last half of the year finding suitable weekends for matches was a challenge leading to a delayed May final.

The Army Reserve Challenge Cup Final was held at the Aldershot Military Stadium on Saturday 7th May 22. 6 SCOTS lifted the trophy for the first time following a 3-1 win over 4 LANCS. A first half goal by Pte Ryan Campbell gave 6 SCOTS a half time lead. Pte Danny McInness scored two in the second half and although 4 LANCS LCpl Jake Swarbrick pulled one back to give the two-time winners a lifeline they could not capitalise on the strike. 6 SCOTS will now meet the Army Challenge Cup holders 4 Regt RLC in the Army FA Super Cup later in the year. The match will be played at the home of 6 SCOTS in Glasgow.

## SEASON REVIEW

Football restarted in the Army Reserve in August 21 when the Men's representative team held a training camp based in Middle Wallop. The Station side provided the opposition for an afternoon training match, there were also fixtures against a Fleet Town XI and a strong Farnham Town side. Three matches and three wins was a great start to what would become an undefeated season. In January the men played out a draw against the U23s before playing and winning against United Hospitals of London. Another draw against the Army Masters team was played at the home of Aldershot Town FC.

The Army Reserve Women's Team had a challenging season with many late pull-outs from their opposition. The team did manage to play the Army Women's Team with a historical 2-0 win.

The Army Reserve Men's Sixes competition was held over a stormy weekend in November 21.







A small number of teams braved the extreme weather that hit the usually sunny Grantham on Saturday. A sunny Sunday morning was more of what the players are used to from a Grantham sixes competition and 152 Regt RLC went on to become Sixes Champions with 81 Sig Sqn winning the plate. All will be glad to know that we will switch the tournament back to the August slot for 2022.

In May both the men and the Women's teams enjoyed the Army Reserve Football training Camp in Cyprus. Based at RAF Akrotiri the women played a Combined Service XI and also participated in the inaugural 5-a-side competition held in Ayios Nikolaos Station. The men played the Royal



Anglian, RAF Akrotiri and the Yorkshire Regiment with three wins out of three, being the only team to beat the Anglian Regiment all season.

The final outing of the season was as part of the Armed Forces Celebrations. The Army Reserve Men and Army Reserve Masters Team played against their respective Scarborough District League XI teams.

Both teams drew which was a fitting outcome for this event which saw a good crowd, media interest and a visit by the Mayor of Scarborough.



## SUPER CUP

In November 4 LANCS retained the Army FA Super Cup defeating 7 Regiment RLC, 4-2, at the Mike Riding Ground, the home of North West Counties League Longridge Town. The match is competed by the winners of the regular Major Unit Challenge Cup and Army Reserve Challenge Cup. This was carried over from the holders of the 2019/20 competition due to the interruption of Covid-19. 4 LANCS, who defeated 21 Engineer Regiment 7-2 in the 2019 final, came from behind to win the match with four second half goals.

*The Army FA has been an outstanding supporter of UKAFF. The Army's players, coaches and officials have been vital members of both squads as we returned to our first full season of football since the Covid-19 pandemic. Both the UKAFF Men and Women's team have played several high-profile competitive and friendly fixtures, concluding with the Men's team hosting the Centenary of the Kentish Cup in June '22.*



## UKAF WOMEN

After nearly 2 years without a fixture, the UKAFF Women's squad became the first UKAF team to return to action post pandemic. In July 2021 we travelled to Hyde FC south of Manchester to play an important and poignant fixture against the GB Police. The fixture was arranged to commemorate and pay respect to the victims of the Manchester Arena terrorist attack. With families of the victims in attendance it was a truly special and moving occasion. After a very competitive 90 minutes the game ended in a 1-1 draw with Sgt Kelly Davis opening the scoring for a dominant UKAFF side, only to see the GB Police team equalise late on.

Next up was a previously arranged Remembrance fixture versus Chelsea Women's Super League Academy squad. The game was well attended virtually via BFBS steam, but also with a crowd of over 550 in attendance at the Kingsmeadow Stadium. The crowd witnessed an outstanding display from UKAFF Women that showcased the talent currently in Women's football across all three services. Chelsea started 7 Youth Internationals and there was even a start for 1st team player, Lauren James, a full England International. UKAFF Women surprised their hosts and took the lead through an excellent counterattack which saw Cpl Olivia Dixon force an own goal from the Chelsea defence.



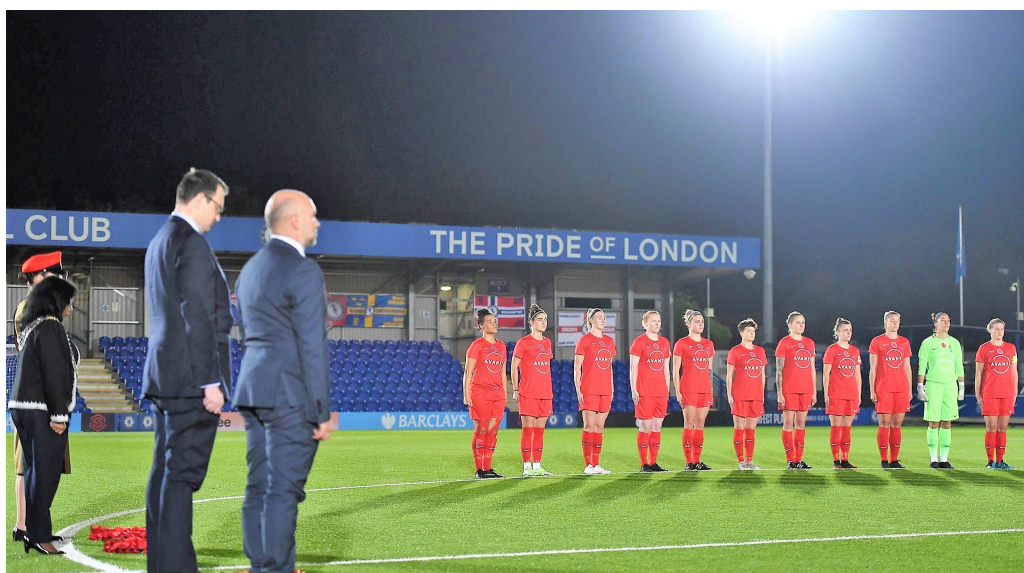




Chelsea revitalised after HT came flying out the blocks, but some great defending allowed UKAFF Women to hold onto the lead and still create the best two chances at 0-1 through Cpl Dixon and Officer Cadet Jade Widdows. An unfortunate end to the game somehow saw Chelsea managing to score two late goals in the 94th & 97th minute to win the game 2-1.

The season ending fixture saw the Dutch Women's Squad visit the UK for the President's Cup competition in May '22. A very strong UKAF

Women side were totally dominant during the first half and could have easily been leading early on, but against the run of play the Dutch managed to score. UKAFF women reacted well and brought the score level before half time through Cpl Olivia Dixon. UKAFF Women produced another dominant 2nd half display and created several chances which they were unfortunately unable to capitalise on. With the game finishing 1-1 at full time, the Dutch secured the win in a 4-3 penalty shootout.







## UKAF MEN

UKAFF Men's squad returned to action in Sept '21 with a fixture against Loughborough University at Aldershot Military Stadium. The game finished in a comfortable 4-0 win for UKAFF Men with several new debutants impressing the coaching staff and giving them something to think about ahead of the upcoming Kentish Cup.

Next up was the annual fixture for the Friendship Trophy against the Irish Defence Forces (IDF) which has become one of the most important fixtures for UKAFF – both in terms of squad development but also prestige. As always it was a highly competitive fixture with excellent football on display from both teams. With UKAFF men went into the final stages of the game with a 2-1 lead after going a goal down early in the game, and it looked like the Friendship trophy would be staying in the UK, however the game ended 2-2 after a last-minute equaliser. The IDF took the win on penalties, and the Friendship Trophy travelled back across the Irish Sea for the first time in a few years.

With the Centenary of the Kentish Cup pushed back to Jun '22 due to the inability for the Dutch and French Squad due to Covid travel restrictions, UKAFF Men finished the calendar year with another solid performance with a 1-1 draw against Luton Town FC Academy.

In May '22, in build up for the delayed Kentish Cup, UKAFF Men played another friendly fixture against Loughborough University (winning 6-1) before travelling to Ireland to avenge the loss on penalties, 7 months before. This fixture lived up to its expectations once again with UKAFF taking the win with a last-minute winner (after the Irish had equalised in the 91st minute). An outstanding 2-1 win in Dublin at the home of Shamrock Rovers saw the Friendship Trophy return to UK shores and provided the ideal preparation for the Kentish Cup.

UKAFF Men finished the 21/22 season by hosting the Kentish Cup at Havant & Waterlooville FC. Named after Brigadier General R J Kentish CMG DSO, the Kentish Cup was first played in 1921 with the purpose of fostering relations between Armed Forces. The tournament was originally played for between The British Army, French and Belgian



Forces, but the British Army handed the competition to the Combined Services Football Association in 1980. The French temporarily withdrew in 1986 and were placed by the Netherlands. France came back into the competition in 2005 when Belgium withdrew.

The competition took place over the period of the 20-24th June 2022. UKAFF men opened the tournament against the Dutch with a 3-1 win. The Dutch then faced a very strong French team 48hrs later and suffered a 4-0 defeat. This meant the final fixture of the tournament, UKAFF Men against the French, would be the decider. With the French going into the game with the better goal difference, UKAFF needed to win the game to retain the Kentish Cup for a record-breaking 5th time. A highly competitive game saw the French go in at half-time 1-0 up. UKAFF Men dominated the second half and carved out several great chances, scoring an equaliser with 25mins left to play. Unfortunately,

despite constant pressure, the French defence held up and secured a 1-1 draw, regaining the Kentish Cup.

Overall, the 21/22 season has been a great year for both UKAFF squads, with the organisation going from strength to strength both on and off the pitch. As always, we remain indebted to the outstanding support of our sponsors and especially to the single Service Football Associations. Whilst the fixture calendar for 22/23 is still being finalised, it promises to be every bit as exciting with the Women due to travel to the Netherlands for the return fixture of the Presidents Cup, the Men's team hopefully travelling to Gibraltar for a competitive fixture, and both teams hosting their IDF counter-parts in May '23 for the first UKAFF combined fixture.





### WOMEN'S GRASSROOT FOOTBALL: UNIT PLANS 2022/23

- Plans are underway to re-invigorate Women's Grassroots Unit football after the difficulties of Covid-19 put a halt to proceedings.

**Competitions:** The following competitions are being planned:

- Northern/Southern League
- Northern/Southern Cup – winners of which play for the Army Women's Challenge Cup in Aldershot.
- Army Women's Sixes

**Dates:** Work is still ongoing but initial dates are as follows:

Ser	Competition	Date	Location	Remarks
1	UK North Cup	12 Oct 22	Catterick, Wavell Road 4G pitches.	Tournament style competition
2	UK North League	09 Nov 22	Catterick, Wavell Road 4G pitches.	
3		30 Nov 22		
4		25 Jan 23		
5		01 Mar 23		
6		26 Apr 23		
7	UK South Cup	26 Oct 22	TBC	Tournament style competition
8	UK South League	09 Nov 22	TBC	
9		30 Nov 22		
10		25 Jan 23		
11		01 Mar 23		
12		26 Apr 23		
13	Army Women's Challenge Cup Final	TBC	Aldershot Stadium	Will be held in Mar/ Apr 23
14	Army Women's Sixes	TBC		



**TEAMS:**

- Teams can be made up from within a single Unit or formed as Garrison/Joint Unit teams.

**PLAYER AFFILIATION:**

- It will be a requirement for all teams and players to be registered with the Army FA via WGS.
- Two new leagues will be set up on WGS (Southern/Northern Women's Leagues)
- Teams will need to affiliate separately from their respective Male Units teams.
- There will be no affiliation fee to promote the Women's game and increase participation.
- Further guidance on affiliation can be sought from Jenny Payne ([jenny.payne@armyfa.com](mailto:jenny.payne@armyfa.com))

If you have any questions or would like to know more please get in touch with one of the POCs listed below:

**ARMY WOMEN'S COMMITTEE POCs FOR UNIT FOOTBALL:**

- Lead: Director of Football: Maj Mark Normanton ([john.normanton649@mod.gov.uk](mailto:john.normanton649@mod.gov.uk))
- Asst: Assist Director of Football: Capt Caitlin Lower ([caitlin.lower129@mod.gov.uk](mailto:caitlin.lower129@mod.gov.uk))
- North Admin: Maj David Watts ([david.watts218@mod.gov.uk](mailto:david.watts218@mod.gov.uk))
- South Admin: SSgt Cal Charles ([calberth.charles148@mod.gov.uk](mailto:calberth.charles148@mod.gov.uk))





*‘Unit Football - maximising participation in the ‘Soldier’s Game’ through flexible, inclusive and accessible playing opportunities for all’*

This year marked the successful return of Unit Men’s Football, and the reinvigoration in grassroots football across the Army. The completion of all Unit Men’s Cup competitions, and the successful reinstatement of the Regional League System, has ensured that the ‘Soldiers’ Game” has bounced back from the disruption caused by COVID-19 restrictions.

A great start to the season saw League Football kick off in style with a tremendous Soccer 7’s tournament at Catterick Garrison. Seventeen teams and 170 players competed at the excellent new 4G facility. Congratulations to Plate winners - 34 Fd Hospital, and Cup winners - ITC Catterick. The competition was organised alongside a Referees Course, thereby providing an excellent opportunity for newly qualified officials to ‘cut their teeth’ in competitive football. November then saw the conclusion of the 19-20 season, with 4 LANCS and 7 Regt RLC competing for the Regular-Reserve Super Cup. Many congratulations to the Reservists of 4 LANCS on their 4-2 victory.

Latterly, 2022 witnessed the successful culmination of the Army Men’s Unit Cup competitions. In a closely fought final of the Army Men’s Minor Units competition, RMAS (Permanent Staff) secured a 1-0 victory over 5 Regt AAC. In the Challenge Cup

Final, 4 Regt RLC gained victory over 1 MERCIAN (3-2) in an ‘end to end’ and wholly entertaining game. A great season for 4 Regt RLC, having already secured the Southern League Sixes title. Finally, the Army Unit Men’s Sixes returned after a 3 year hiatus. A hard fought competition saw 3 RIFLES securing a win over 7 Regt RLC in an exhilarating final, which was ultimately decided with a penalty shootout. A great way to round off a fantastic season of Army Unit Men’s Football.

Finally, a big thank you to all at the Army FA; and all League and Unit Officials, Players and Supporters. Your enthusiasm, hard work and selfless commitment is greatly appreciated, and remains absolutely fundamental in ensuring Men’s Unit Football flourishes across the Army.







Captain (MAA) Kev Haley MBE RAPTC recently joined the Board of Trustees.

For the past 25 years Captain Haley has balanced an extremely demanding military career while playing representative sport at the very highest level. He has represented at every level, Corps, Army and UKAF and has won every major honour in Service football having won his first Inter-Services medal in 1998 and then finishing off his Army senior playing career with an IS win in 2018 two decades apart. An avid but patient Newcastle United fan he has recently handed over the role of RAPTC FC Manager to take up the appointment the of RAPTC FC Chairman.

## APPOINTMENTS IN SERVICE FOOTBALL

- 2 Div Football Secretary 2006 - 2009
- 4 Div Female Sport Secretary 2012 - 13
- 4 Div Football Secretary 2011 - 2014
- Unit Football Coach/Manager to several units including the following:
  - o 8 Transport Regiment
  - o 19 Regiment RA
  - o 42 Engineer Regiment
  - o 1 RSME
  - o 1 RRF

## CORPS FOOTBALL

- RAPTC FC Treasurer
- RAPTC FC Secretary
- RAPTC FC Manager
- RAPTC FC Chairman

## ARMY FOOTBALL

- BA Cyprus Coach
- Army Football Secretary 2018 - 2022

AFA Community Engagement OIC 2012-Present  
– Coordinate and conduct the Army Football Association Community Engagement activities in line with CGS intent.

## FOOTBALLING HISTORY

- Player – Represented every unit assigned to from 1997 - current.
- Player – Represented at Corps (AMS) level: 1997 – 2004.
- Player – Represented at Corps (RAPTC) level: 2004 - present.
- Player – Represented Army Youth Level : 1997 - 1999.
- Player – Represented Army Senior Level : 1999 - 2018.
- Player – Represented Army Masters Level : 2018 - present.
- Player – Represented UKAF (formally Combined Services) : 1997-2018.

## PERSONAL STATEMENT

Its an absolute honour to have been involved with Service football for so long, a sport in which I have loved and played since I could walk. I still have vivid memories of the first time I was selected to represent the British Army team, putting the shirt on for the first time and feeling an immense sense of pride. Although no longer representing at Senior level, I still get that hair raising on the back of the neck feeling and immense sense of pride I felt the first time putting the shirt on when donning the Army shirt to play for the Army Masters.

I now have the huge privilege of stepping into a new role of Unit Football Trustee and having played and administered unit football I see this pivotal appointment as a great opportunity to give even more back to The Soldiers' Game. From this position I will be best placed to see and hear about Army Football, how its developing at grass roots level and then be in a better position to give support to those Regional Secretaries and Unit Football Officers.



After a three-year gap we were delighted to be able to stage the 2022 Army Sixes in May. For the first time the event was held on the premises of a civilian football club and it proved an excellent move. Northern Premier League Grantham Town were superb hosts making four pitches available on 3G surfaces adjacent to their South Kesteven Sports Stadium.

The pitches were smaller in comparison to the previous home of the Army Sixes on Aldershot Queens Avenue, and it proved successful allowing for more competitive matches where all matches were close.

12 teams competed in a busy day of football where 33 matches were played. Edinburgh based 3 Rifles were the champions after overcoming 7 Regiment RLC on penalties in the final after a goal less draw.

The date of the tournament was chosen to coincide with the date of the Army FA Basic Referees' course, being held in Grantham at the same time. 12 newly trained referees officiated in the competition mentored by the instructors and senior officials in attendance.

In appreciation to the excellent hospitality shown by Grantham Town FC Army FA Trustee Major Nigel Bamford made a presentation to Grantham Town Director Sarah Pickles before presenting the officials, runners up and winners with their medals.

## *The competing teams were:*

3 Rifles  
10 QOGLR  
17 Port and Maritime  
2 Royal Anglian  
29 Regt RLC  
7 Regt RLC A and B  
5 Rifles  
9 Regt RLC  
30 Signal Regt  
ITC Catterick  
AFC Harrogate

The 2023 Army Sixes date has already been confirmed for Grantham Town for Wednesday 17 May 2023.



Trustee Major Nigel Bamford makes presentation to Grantham Town FC Director Sarah Pickles.





2021/2022 Season was a difficult season within the UK Midlands with many units still struggling with Covid related issues, return to work and deployments. As we breach out of the Covid hangover and return to some normality the 2022/2023 season is looking much more hopeful, with more teams available and registered. We actively look to encourage sport back within the Army.

Some units who were active preferred to play in the RAF Services Leagues, this is understood to be owing to the increased travel requirements within the Army Midlands Division. Previously, geographically East and West Leagues were created to counter distances, however, due to reduction in numbers it has returned to a single League format. The fact it appears the majority of

Midlands Units do not play in Army Leagues has been identified with the Army FA and a matter that will be addressed with the Army FA Leagues Committee to understand the reasons why and how this can be challenged moving forwards.

In total there were only 24 fixtures completed; everyone with at least a referee provided. The Referee section within UK Midlands had 52 registered match officials which included six progressing from trainee and a further six promoted. With a lack of military football in the region Referees have had the requirement of using civilian football more during their promotion packages.



The Army UK South Football League resumed in September of 2021 with some 65 teams entering. It was the first time football had been played in almost 2 years due to the global pandemic and for all it was welcomed addition to the year. Teams had the opportunity to win various leagues, the Major and Minor Unit Cups, the 6-A-Side Competition as well as the overall League Winners Play offs.

*After a long and keenly contested season, the following Units took the respective titles:*

<i>Central Premier League</i>	-	<i>26 RA</i>
<i>Central Division 1 League Winners</i>	-	<i>Hermitage Station</i>
<i>Eastern Premier League Winners</i>	-	<i>1 RSME Regt</i>
<i>Western Premier League Winners</i>	-	<i>4 Regt RLC</i>
<i>Western Division 1 Winners</i>	-	<i>1 RHA</i>
<i>Western Division 2 Winners</i>	-	<i>ARMCEN</i>
<i>Western Division 3 Winners</i>	-	<i>32 RA</i>
<i>Minor Unit Cup Winners</i>	-	<i>RMAS</i>
<i>Major Unit Cup Winners</i>	-	<i>1 RSME Regt</i>
<i>6-A-Side Competition Winners Male</i>	-	<i>4 Regt RLC</i>
<i>6-A-Side Competition Winners Female</i>	-	<i>4 Med Regt</i>
<i>League Winners Play Offs (UK South Champions)</i>	-	<i>4 Regt RLC</i>

The League Secretary would like to thank all the players, coaches and Unit CoC for your support in enabling us to resume football within the South.

Kind regards,

**SSgt (SSI) C Charles RAPTC**  
RAPTCI



**4 Med Regt 6-A-Side Female Winners**



**RMAS Minor Unit Cup Winners**





1 RSME Regt Major Unit Cup Winners



4 Regt RLC UK South League Champions



4 Regt RLC 6-A-Side Male Winners

## INTRODUCTION

1. The football season was severely impacted last season with minimal games being played forcing the season to be scrapped, however this season all three leagues have been re-established with 27 Battalions and Regiments taking part.

## AIM

2. The aim of this report is to promote UK North football and highlight future events, financial impact, kit requests and Coaching courses.

## COMPETITIONS AND FIXTURES

3. During 2021/22 three leagues (Premiership, League 1 and League 2) were created, the leagues were decided off ability, commitment and previous seasons. The North ran in conduction to the league a Major Unit Cup.
4. This season the Festival of Football took place on 15 September 2021, the competition was played on full size pitches with only 7 players from each team on the field of play, 19 teams entered from 17 Units and it was vastly successful, the competition consisted of 4 leagues, top 2 qualified for the cup and 3rd/4th qualified for the Plate.

5. Winners;

TEAM	LEAGUE/CUP
RAF Leeming	Premiership winners
3 RIFLES	League 1 Winners
32 Engineers B team	League 2 Winners
RAF Leeming	Major Cup winners
ITC	Festival of Football Cup Winners
34 Field Hospital	Festival of Football Plate Winners

## REFEREES

5. WO1 Halliday conducted a level one referee course 13 – 16 September 2021, all the referees successfully passed the course and were used on the festival of football. SSgt Garsrud Light dragoons is the UK North referee secretary, and we are frequently in contact for future courses.

## GOOD PRACTICES

6. To make it easier to fulfil games, I allowed flexibility on the fixture list, and created league WhatsApp groups, which changed to Signal groups. The groups allow managers the opportunity to contact units quicker and easier without logging onto their military emails, all fixtures must be officially arranged via military email once agreed on WhatsApp.





## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**7.** The next scheduled events following:

UK North football league (prem, league 1, and league 2) Aug 22 – June 23.

**a.** UK North referee Course – 11 – 15 September 22.

**b.** UK North festival of football – 14 September 22.

**c.** UK North football league cup (Major and minor) Jan – May 23.

**d.** UK North football indoor 5-a-side Jan – Feb 23 TBC.

## SUMMARY

**8.** In summary, since taking over from SSgt Garsrud, I have managed to deliver the festival of football, construct the league for the season and build relations with all the managers. There are some areas we can improve and in my first season as secretary, I look to continue to drive football next season.

**SSgt R Lowe**

1 Yorks





Taking over the role as UK Scotland Secretary in late 2021 has been challenging with a league structure not having been established for a number of years due to previous COVID-19 restrictions, Operational commitments / deployments and additionally the small number of Units that are located in Scotland. It is my main effort as the new League Secretary to put Football in Scotland back on the map and improve participation for the coming years.

Furthermore, there has been some outstanding achievements from teams within the Region over the Season; most notably with 3 RIFLES winning the Army 6's Competition and 2 SCOTS progressing to the Final of the Infantry Cup and narrowly missing out on penalties. Within the last 6 months, various players have been capped by their respective Corps at Representative level; highlighting some of the talent that is coming through, promoting awareness and supporting the progression of player quality that can sometimes go unnoticed due to geographical location.

The main aim for the 22 / 23 Season is to re-establish a competitive and challenging League and Cup structure as well as continuing to highlight talented Players for UKAF, Army and Corps level respectively. In addition, encouraging and

promoting coaching and officiating qualifications to support the increased demand for supporting the Army FA, grass roots and competitive Unit football.

Yours in Football,

**SSgt (SSI) P Noble RAPTC**  
UK Scotland League Secretary







The Army Sports Engagement Team is now rolling out the STEPS programme to Professional Academies and Sports Colleges, it highlights the fantastic football and trade opportunities on offer in the Army.

The programme has been well received and endorsed by the Premier League, EFL and PFA and will also bring a lot of benefits to the continual development of the Soldiers Game.

As well as the engagement workshops with the likes of Stoke City, Lincoln City and Doncaster Rovers, presentations were well received by the Association of Colleges England male and female national teams. The programme has forged links and excellent opportunities for the Queens Gurkha Signals when they hosted Long Eaton United. The women's game has also seen the benefits during the Royal Signals vs Royal Engineers home fixture earlier in the season where the fixture was played at Newcastle Under Lyme College with Will Bratt from the Andy Griffin Football Academy providing quality in depth analysis of the game including individual player performance.

These link ups will continue into the new season where the vision is for all Massey League sides will form similar relationships to allow for team progression.

The superb She Kicks article featuring Army Medical Service, Army and UKAF player LCpl Demi Edwards (QARANC) further showcased the opportunities within the Soldiers' Game in the UK's most popular female football magazine.

Army Sports Engagement is looking forward to what experiences can be provided for both scholar and soldier in the 22/23 season.

We are also working closely with "player 4 player", <https://www.player4player.com/a> a group of consultants and ex pros Gaizka Mendieta, Emile Heskey, Stiliyan Petrov and Gareth Farrelly in the Midlands. Their company focus on Player care and Player wellbeing. We are aiming to arrange a charity match between the Masters/Vets against retired select Pros in November to highlight Mental Health when Pro footballers and service men and woman retire.



After the turbulence of Covid-19 putting paid to the 2020/21 Army Challenge Cups for the first time outside the war years since 1899 outgoing Trustee Col (Retired) Neil Blenkinsop was keen to emphasise the point of Unit football in his programme notes for both competitions. He stated, "Unit Football is the foundation of all Army Football. It critically underpins and nurtures our higher representative game. The Army FA constantly strives to maximize participation in the 'Soldiers' Game' through flexible, inclusive, and accessible playing opportunities for all. The Army Cup competitions provide an excellent opportunity to deliver on this objective".

This was further endorsed with the excellent number of 124 teams entering both competitions. Add a further 32 for the Reserve Cup and Unit football is indeed in encouraging hands.

The finals didn't disappoint either at the Aldershot Military Stadium.

After disposing of 2020 runners up 3RSME in a seven-goal semi-final thriller 4 Regiment RLC lifted the coveted trophy for the first time since 2006. Pte Terrence Cuffy netted a late winner to cement a 3-2 victory versus 1 Mercians whilst also completing his hat-trick in the process; Cuffy was also awarded the Man of the Match. It had been a tough route to the final for 4 Regt who progressed through the quarter finals with a penalty shoot out success versus 21 Signal Regiment.

Army FA Vice President Lieutenant General Stuart Skeates CB, CBE led the presentation party alongside FA Premier League Referee Chris Kavanagh and Pam Howson, representing Towergate Insurance, sponsors of the Unit Cup competitions for 38 years. The match was also shown live via Forces News Facebook page.

The Minor Units Final saw a new name on the trophy as a first half goal from CSgt Nigel Hanson confirmed a 1-0 victory for RMA Sandhurst (PS)



Col Neil Blenkinsop presents Minor Units Final Man of the Match to 5 Regiment AAC's Airtpr Sabin Thapa



Brigadier Stokoe forms part of the presentation party prior to Minor Units Final



versus 5 Regiment AAC. 5 Regt's Airtpr Sabin Thapa was awarded Man of the Match. Sandhurst were a formidable opponent throughout the competition netting 27 goals and conceding just once. The post-match presentation party was Army FA Chairman Brigadier Niall Stokoe OBE, Pam Howson from sponsors Towergate Insurance, Army FA Unit Trustee Col Neil Blenkinsop and Col (Retd) Tony Workman OBE.

It was also a rewarding moment for W01 Gavin Bloomfield. The RMA Head Coach also previously led 7 Regiment RLC to Army Challenge Cup Final

and also the UK North Major Units Cup whilst at 6 Regiment RLC 2017.

*The dates for the 2022/23 Army Challenge Cup have already been confirmed as follows:*

**MINOR UNITS CUP FINAL -  
Wed 26 April 1500hrs**

**MAJOR UNITS CHALLENGE CUP FINAL -  
Wed 03 May 1500hrs**



W02 Gavin Bloomfield, successful Head Coach for RMA Sandhurst (PS)



Lt General Stuart Skeates presents Challenge Cup Final Man of the Match Award to 4 Regiment RLC's hat-trick hero Pte Terence Cuffy





# S.T.E.P.S.

TO FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES



**ARMY**  
BE THE BEST





Major (Retd) Billy Thomson BEM retired as Secretary of the Army Football Association in July after serving 21 years in the post; the longest in the history of the association.

Driver Thomson originally joined the Royal Corps of Transport (RCT) in March 1971. On completion of Basic and Trade Training he was posted to 402 Tp, to be part of the ANZUK Force, Singapore. In 1976 he was posted to 68 Sqn Rheindalen BAOR where he played for the Sqn before injury cut short his playing days. Whilst in BAOR Billy coached 4 ADTR before, upon returning to the UK, WO1 (RSM) Thomson enjoyed success coaching Junior Leaders Regiment (RCT/RAOC).

In 1991 a posting to Aldershot saw Lt Thomson as Team Manager and Coach of the permanent staff within Depot and Training Regiment RCT. In 1992 they were winners of the Army Minor Units Cup (UK) before travelling to Dusseldorf to win the overall competition. The same year Lt Col (Retd) Stan Gould approached Billy to become Assistant Secretary of the Army Youth team. After a year in that post Capt Thomson was then approached by the Vice Chairman of the Army FA, and at the time Commander of the RCT Training Group, Brigadier Andy Massey, to become Assistant Manager of the Army Men's team. Upon the retirement of the Army Team Manager Lt Col Tony Workman in

1994 Capt Thomson was appointed Team Manager. This also included the same role within the Combined Service Football Association (CSFA) now known as United Kingdom Armed Forces Football Association. (UKAFFA).

During a 10-year period there were many successes including Inter Service Winners (1992/93 and 1993/94 (shared)), South West Counties (1992/93 and 1998/99) and Kentish Cup (1996 and 1998) This was alongside successful Defence Engagement tours over the years to Mauritius, South Africa, Brazil, Thailand, Nepal and later to Croatia; the latter saw the Men's senior team visit to commemorate the 65th anniversary of the Liberation of the Dalmatian coast. Tours of Australia and China also took place within the UKAF Football Team.





In 2001 upon the unexpected and sudden death of the Secretary Army Football, Major (Retd) Terry Knight, Major Thomson made the decision to apply for the post. Having been successful with his application, he retired from the Army five years early, and a new career began that would last 21 years.

At the time of his appointment, The Football Association (FA) were just beginning a new Development Strategy, that required all County Football Associations, which Army Football is one, to submit Development Plans. Development/Strategy plans, which continue today, are linked to FA funding, which is crucial for the progression of Army Football.

He also became the Army Representative on the Football Association Council. A position he has held throughout. During his tenure, he has sat on several committees, Representative Matches, Judicial Panel, and National Game Finance.

As a Representative Match Committee member, Major Thomson became the Vice Chair followed by Chairman of the England C Team which features players who play for clubs outside the Premier League and English Football League. Currently, the majority of selected players are full-time professionals with National League clubs

As Chairman of the England C Team, Major Thomson represented England, at varying tournaments in which the England C Team played, at home and throughout Europe. Competitions which Maj Thomson attended included visits to

Russia, Estonia, Bermuda, Barbados and Turkey.

There have been some huge initiatives during Billy's tenure within Army Football. Over a 20-year span three representative teams has grown to nine, now including Reserve (Men and Women), Crusaders and Masters teams in addition to the growth of a Women's Development team.

A vital period for the Association was in 2011 when the Army FA became a registered Charity alongside the formation of a Board of Trustees under the Chairmanship of Major General Bruce Brealey. The following year saw the Army Sports Control Board's move from the traditional home of Clayton Barracks to Fox Lines, adjacent to the Aldershot Military Stadium and all Army sports facilities.





In 2013 the Army Football Association (AFA), Football Development Centre, (FDC) opened, and was registered with the FA as an approved centre to deliver Coach Education. The facility was a hub of activity hosting courses until the FA's recent switch to online courses.

In May 2013 the Army FA commemorated its 125th anniversary. As part of the celebrations a charity match against an FA Legends team at the Reading FC was organised. The then England Manager, Roy Hodgson, managed the FA Legends team, who were captained by current England boss Gareth Southgate. England U-21 manager Stuart Pearce coached the Army prior to the match and on the day.

2013 was a busy year as it also initiated the Army FA Civil Engagement Road Show where a group of eight soldiers held a UK tour visiting Football League clubs enabling integration with community groups in addition to taking the Army's brand and its people into the heart of the communities. This continued through to Covid-19 when a halt was brought to proceedings. In November the inaugural FA Premier League Under 12 Truce tournament was held in Aldershot hosted by the Army FA. This was defined originating from World War 1 providing educational purposes initiated by a moving ceremony commencing with An Ode To Remembrance followed by the poem "In Flanders Field" before The Last Post and the laying of wreaths. Billy was always at his happiest if Arsenal were tournament victors!

The period 2014 to 2018 was a special period for the association commemorating 100-year anniversaries of World War 1 and poignant fixtures versus German Bundeswehr. There was plenty of drive from Billy, his staff and the Board of Trustees. It all started in December 2014 at Aldershot Town FC where approaching 3000 spectators attended to commemorate the 1914 Christmas Day Truce. The Army were 1-0 victors in an occasion that was featured live on the BBC One Show. Guest of honour was Sir Bobby Charlton MBE. This was followed by the "Over the Top" commemoration of the Battle of the Somme event in July 2016 in Guildford before a further match v the Bundeswehr was held at Burton Albion and St George's Park to host Men and Women's matches.

Perhaps the biggest occasion was held in November 2018 driven by Chairman Major General "Mitch" Mitchell MBE. Nottingham Forest and Notts County joined forces with the Army in the The Greatest Games of Remembrance, Notts County hosted the

women's match at their stadium in Meadow Lane, and The City Ground hosted the men's match. Over 13,000 spectators attended including many school children involved in Educational Projects commemorating 100 years of the end of The Great War. The initiative raised £50,000 for local, national and international charities supported by the British Army and Bundeswehr.

Army football remains a hub of activity as we continue to return to normality post Covid=19 restrictions. When Billy joined the organisation, emails were in the introductory stage whilst social media was yet to be born. Whether it be the ASCB, Army FA Trustees or the FA Billy has been hugely respected throughout. We wish you every happiness and the best of healthy in your retirement Billy.

*Enjoy and Thank You!*



THANK YOU BILLY!





# We've got your back

**The Royal British Legion  
is here to help during and  
after service.**

**We can help you with:**

Transitioning into civilian life  
Physical & mental wellbeing  
Employment and financial support  
Local community connections  
Expert guidance

**Scan here to find out more**



Or contact our helpline  
on **0808 802 8080**



Registered charity number: 219279





# TOWERGATE INSURANCE

## PROUD SPONSORS OF ARMY FOOTBALL

**SPECIALIST COVER DESIGNED FOR YOUR CAREER AND HOME-LIFE IN THE ARMED FORCES. SPEAK TO US ABOUT:**



Kit and Contents



Travel and Adventure Care



Personal Accident

Call: **01242 533 747**  
or visit: **[www.towergateinsurance.co.uk](http://www.towergateinsurance.co.uk)**







Major (Retd) C M C (Mike) Crowe MBE (Centre)

The Army Football Association were truly saddened to learn of the passing of **Major (Retd) Mike Crowe MBE**, aged 90 in January. Mike was a stalwart of the Association first becoming involved as the Football Officer of the Queen's Own Highlanders in 1961. He remained involved as a volunteer for over 50 years.

Between 1971-75 Mike was the manager of the BAOR team and took great satisfaction when the British Army team were beaten 2-0 in 1975. In 1980 he was responsible for the Combined Services team in Hong Kong.

During his time in Scotland when Mike was 21 C/OC at HQ Company, The Bridge of Don he developed a friendship with Sir Alex Ferguson who was, at the time, manager of Aberdeen and used to train within the barracks where Mike was responsible for the organisation. They developed a firm friendship. Mike's involvement within Scottish football extended to being made an Honorary Life Member of the Scottish Football Association where he also served as a Council member. Mike retired from the Army in 1986 but always maintained his involvement as a volunteer with the Army Football Association living in Farnham, close to the Aldershot HQ.

He was particularly proud of being invited to become an Honorary Vice President of the Army Football Association in 2002 stating that the appointment was the "pinnacle of a long career in football". Prior to that appointment Mike had been the Secretary of the Massey Trophy for seven years.

However, Mike's first love was the Infantry. The "Crowe" Cup is still competed for on an annual basis at the Infantry Sixes.

Up until three years ago Mike still used to visit the Association offices on a regular basis and was always a welcome guest at staff functions.

Major (Retd) Billy Thomson spoke at Mike's funeral and recalled a story Mike re-laid to him in fondness. He said, "It was when Mike was based in Aberdeen. Sir Alex Ferguson was invited to a dinner night in the Officers Mess. A car was sent to collect Sir Alex and on returning to the mess where Mike was present to greet Sir Alex, he was surprised to see Lady Ferguson sat in the car. Sir Alex got out of the car and Mike boldly went up to him and said, *"It's a gentleman's evening Alex"*. *"Unfortunately, Lady Ferguson is not invited"*. Lady Ferguson returned home and the following day a large bouquet of flowers arrived from Mike and all at the Officers Mess.

Graham Brookland also recalled an occasion when he was Head of Media at Aldershot Town FC and they played Manchester United in the fourth round of the Football League Cup in October 2011. *"If you see Sir Alex, please send him my regards and let him know I am still about"*, Mike asked Graham. United won 3-0 and Graham did get the opportunity to speak to Sir Alex after the match and explains further, "As soon as I mentioned the name Mike Crowe Sir Alex stopped in his tracks holding up proceedings for his live interview with Sky TV. He expressed genuine interest and asked how he could get in touch with Mike. I gave him my business card and within two days a wonderful personal letter from Sir Alex arrived in our Army FA offices for Mike. The content of the letter was wonderful and showed the obvious affection Sir Alex had for Mike.



Army Crusaders First XI prior to game v RAPTC Feb 22

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. In our Centenary season there are several events taking place which are noted in specific paragraphs 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.

In recent years, alongside the Army's use of Warrant Officers in Officers posts Crusaders has employed this same tactic, particularly the Vets. This has allowed more players to continue participating later in life.

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

- Chairman Army FA. Brig Niall Stokoe. Former First Team Manager and Vets Capt
- Army First Team Coach. Capt Jimmy Blair. Current First and Vets player

- Reserve Chair Army FA. Col Davy Jones. First and Vets player and current Crusaders Chairman
- UK AF Manager and Representative Trustee, Lt Col Tony Frank. Current First and Vets player
- Referees Chair Army FA. Maj Nige Bamford. Current Vets player
- Representative Trustee Army FA. Lt Col Alex Atherton. Former First Team player

#### **ARMY CRUSADERS 100TH CELEBRATION**

Army Crusaders FC is celebrating its landmark anniversary across the 2022 / 2023 season.

- Overseas Tour is planned for Canada in Sep and a Centenary Dinner at RMAS in Nov for all current and former Crusaders – pass the word.
- The re-introduction of the traditional games that Crusaders First Team have not played for many years including Oxford and Cambridge Universities; Charterhouse and Eton Schools has stalled due to availabilities so is still a work in progress.



- Our traditional showcase game against UK Parliamentary FC is planned for Nov at one of the London professional grounds.
- The 6 aside competition for Officer Teams across the Army at RMAS is also work in progress.
- Col Davy Jones is in advanced stages of the Army Crusaders Book to mark the anniversary so all readers previously involved in Crusaders are invited to contribute, particularly with stories and photos. Please contact him on comksfadvise@gmail.com

**UPDATES** Although COVID-19 did not have the effect it had in previous seasons it did still determine some availability for both teams.

**TRIANGULAR VETS 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 took place at Aldershot Military Stadium with RAF ICARUS victorious after beating us and drawing with AGC.

With many First Teamers approaching 35 I expect to have a strong team to keep up our bi-annual winning streak next year.

**ANNUAL EASTER TOURNAMENT** After a 2 year postponement the Easter Tournament once again took place at the Liverpool Ramblers ground in Crosby. As above, COVID and availabilities affected to numbers so we were grateful to Capt Tony Sandle RLC who leant in to provide replacement players at short notice.

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

**FIRST TEAM UPDATE** A mixed bag on the return to a full season with a couple of games cancelled at short notice due to availabilities. However, there was a successful recruiting push with more than a dozen debuts across the season which bodes well for the future. Overall, we played 9 games with 3 wins and 6 narrow losses, particularly the Civil Service last minute offside winner! Maj Joel Springall as Manager is buoyant for next season.



Army Crusaders mixed team at Easter Tournament Apr 22



### VETERANS UPDATE

Ballerz World Cup Tournament Aug 21. Crusaders Vets took part in the over 35s element of this 9 a side competition and despite the first group game difficulties understanding how to play 9 a side we finished group runners up and progressed to Qtr Finals. Here we faced group winners but saw them off with a 1-0 victory. Onwards to the Semi Final where we faced a very strong and very just 35s team with a depleted squad due to other time bound commitments. We were also unable to play the 3rd / 4th play off with only 5 players remaining but overall, a good effort and result for a tournament we had not competed in before.

**TRIANGULAR TOURNAMENT SEP 21.** Notes shown in the Update above after a 2 year postponement.

**UK PARLIAMENTARY FC NOV 21.** This annual fixture took place at Burton Court with a large squad in attendance. Always a headache for selection but we took the game to the MPs straight away and built a lead in the first half. We allowed them back into the game for a short period but ran out 5-2 winners at full time. MID to Max Harper who not only marshalled the midfield but was put in front of the cameras for the post match interview – Crate due now! Further MID to Tony Frank who claimed his hat trick despite a potential deflected shot. With no VAR the dubious goals committee awarded it to Tony!

### DIV 2 OF WEST LONDON VETERANS LEAGUE (WLVFL)

We started poorly this season although it appeared we were drawn early against the top sides and by mid-season relegation was a real possibility. A good League Cup run seemed to galvanise the squad with regular turnouts from more players; including beating teams we had earlier lost to.

The Cup run came to an end in the Qtr Finals against the eventual winners but not without a fight; losing 3-2 in the last few mins of a hotly contested game at Windsor. Our second half of the season was much better with a string of wins put together to ensure mid table mediocrity.

### WHITCHURCH VETS INAUGURAL FIXTURE

**MAY 22** Through Ali Beard at Army HQ, we were invited to play Whitchurch Vets as a precursor to their annual Charity Grudge match in Hampshire. Billed as a Vets game once we had taken a 2-0 lead into the second half the slightly under 35 year olds started to appear... However, we hung on to retain the 2-0 victory for the start of what we hope will be an annual event.

**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





Army Crusaders Chairman Col Davy Jones presenting the Centenary Pennant to Ramblers FC Martin Prescott



Crusaders Vets annual fixture v UK Parliamentary FC at Burton Court Nov 21

The Army FA held an Awards Dinner in Aldershot in October with restricted numbers to finally be able to recognise achievements of individuals who would have been presented awards during the Covid-19 lockdown.

The following received presentations:

Presented by Maj Gen Celia Harvey (Vice President):



### **Lt Col Sandra Hodgson MBE (RLC)**

A superb Ambassador for Army women's football spent commenced playing for the Army in the late 1990's, made 70 appearances and 20 for UKAF (Combined Services) Became Assistant Coach in 2005 and Head Coach the following year going on to win six Inter Services and the Southern Counties Cup in 2012. This presentation to Sandra was in recognition as Army Women Representative General Manager 2015-21; a post she took after stepping down as Head Coach.



### **WO1 (RSM) Mags McAteer (AAC)**

Army Women Head Coach 2015-2019

Mags stepped down as Head Coach of the Army Women's team in 2019 after four years at the helm. She led the team to the Inter Service championships in 2016 and 2018. Mags is now thriving in the position as Head Coach of the Army Men Reserve team, a role she took prior to Covid-19 and continues to serve Army Football with an outstanding contribution



### **SSgt Lee Carter**

Presented in recognition to outstanding commitment to Women's Unit football.

Presented by Maj Gen Shaun Burley

Director, Army Sports Control Board

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



### **LCpl Andy Redford (R Signals)**

Presented by Maj Gen Shaun Burley (DASCBC) recognizing Andy's contribution to Army Reserve men's football dating back 10 years.

Presented by Maj Gen Darren Crook

Vice President, Army FA



### **Maj Steve Clout - 10 Year Award**

Steve has been Secretary of the Army Reserve football since 2010 and, during that period, there has been a remarkable period of advancement within Football within the Army Reserve





### **Maj Andy Campbell - 10 Year Award**

Andy has served as a player and official with Army Officers Football since 2001 involved in approximately 350 matches for the Army Crusaders.



### **Maj Sean Birchnall (RLC)**

Sean was the Army Head Coach between 2018 and 2021 before stepping down due to leaving the Army. Under his leadership the Army won the Inter Services and Southern Counties Cup in 2019 before Covid-19 intervened during the 2020 competition after a 1-0 victory v RAF at Shrewsbury Town FC.



### **WO2 (QMSI) Keith Emmerson (RAPTC) 100 Appearances for the Army**

Keith made his debut for the Army at the start of the 2004/05 season and apart from two deployments on Op Herrick has played every season since. A winner of numerous Inter Services and UKAF Kentish Cup tournaments he also captained the Army team in the historic Game of Truce at Aldershot Town FC in 2014. Unfortunately, there is a gap in the early records of appearances to be precise, but Keith is one of the most capped players in the history of Army Football and this award is to recognize 100 appearances for the Army.

*Presented by Brigadier Niall Stokoe  
Chairman, Army FA*



### **Col Ash Boreham - Retiring Trustees**

Ash joined the Board of Trustees in 2017 and served three years as the Trustee responsible for Women's football during which there was a huge



### **Lt Col Gary Connolly REME**

Gary stepped down in 2020 as Trustee for Referees and after spending 16 years as an Army Referee. He served two years as Chairman of the Army Referees Executive Committee and also previously as the Chairman of the UK South division. An excellent servant to army football who was the epitome of a committed and professional volunteer who ensured the Referee's cohort was superbly managed.



### **Maj Gen Mitch Mitchell CB MBE**

The recognition of "Mitch's" service as our Chairman has been long outstanding as he originally retired from the role on Tuesday 28th April 2020, not long after the outset of Covid-19. Mitch has been an outstanding Chairman of Army Football. Initially becoming involved as a Trustee in 2010 he spent five years as Vice Chairman under General Brealey before becoming Chairman in 2015. He oversaw the Game(s) of Remembrance between 2014 and 18 in particular the momentous occasions in Nottingham commemorating 100 years. As a Trustee, Vice Chair and Chair it has been a truly special period for the association.



A quote I read in Ben Bartlett's book 'Constraining Football' stated, 'Football means searching' (Rene Maric). For me this description aptly illustrates the nature of the game and is particularly suitable for the Army Football Development area of our sport.

For whilst the initial focus on the return to traditional affiliated football has been successful, other areas of football development have changed significantly. Our traditional methods of training and developing our coaching staff for Unit, Corps and Representative teams are no more, and the course content, method of access and the coaching pathway has changed significantly. Online education is the new norm, so we will have to change how we do things to avoid a return to the days of unqualified, poorly prepared coaches with little support or direction just doing the best they can.

We must also embrace the FA concept of participation. This involves us adopting other playing formats such as Futsal, 7v7 leagues, Walking Football and Masters Football; this will ensure we meet the FA's targets on affiliation and player registration, as well as maximising opportunities for all to be involved. The popularity and participation in walking football is increasing nationally. We have an over 35's community eager to still play competitively and remain involved in the game. Futsal provides opportunities in a highly technical environment that will challenge players and coaches, and transfer to traditional formats of

the game. Units may not be able to field 11 players but competitive leagues and cups of smaller numbers of players can be implemented.

The Football Development Manager, Steve Stone, has been advocating these changes for some time now. And with all the adjustments being experienced both internally and externally in relation to Army Football, there are opportunities to move forward and embrace the changes.

Our football community is spread across a large demographic unlike any other County FA. For successful implementation and adaptation, local and regional organisers and leaders will be required - forward thinkers who will be innovative, motivated and determined to support new initiatives and work with Steve on these ideas. We need to provide a steadfast, committed volunteer network of coaches, organisers, committees, secretaries and innovators to support and drive new ideas in Army Football Development.

Please contact [Steve.stone@armyfa.com](mailto:Steve.stone@armyfa.com) if you believe you have the drive and passion to be part of a new Football Development team to increase participation and enjoyment of the game for everyone.

Regards,

Jim

*Lt Col Jim Fallon*



Now that the FA have taken the organisation and administration of all coaching courses in house, and the County FA's are no longer responsible for delivery and assessment of courses, we can reflect back on the figures for the last version of the FA Level 2 football coaching course.

Despite losing 18 months of courses to Covid restrictions, The Army FA still managed to qualify 93 coaches at level 2. It literally became a race against the FA deadline to get learners over the line but fortunately by the end only 8 learners failed to complete their projects and/or visits before the deadline.

The replacement course for the level 2 is now titled the UEFA C Licence and can be accessed via the FA Boot Room website now.

I have asked the FA if we can host 2 UEFA C courses to allow military personnel to access the course, as it appears that military learners are compromised by not always living and working in the same County when applying on-line to attend courses. At the time of writing, I have had no reply to this request so unfortunately, I can't provide any dates for planning purposes. As soon as I get any further information, I will let you know.

A UKAF, in conjunction with Jersey and Guernsey, UEFA B License course is being held at HMS Temeraire in Portsmouth starting on 25th October 2022. At the time of writing, we had 9 Army applications, successful selection and loading for the course will be decided by FA staff. It is hoped that if the course is successful, we can host the next one for 2023-24 season.

Graham Brookland will be taking over as Secretary of Army Football from 1st August so any new initiatives will be on hold until then.

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

*As a reminder, the pathway for the new Generation of FA coaching courses is:*

1. **Playmaker** (on-line)
2. **Introduction to coaching**, including IFAiF and Safeguarding modules (all on-line)
3. **UEFA C Licence**: 3 blocks of 2-day face to face modules, plus on-line support seminars and one observation/ support visit by FA Coach developer over a 4 to 6 month period.
4. **UEFA B License**: 4 Blocks, 1 x 3 days, 3 x 2 days plus observation visits and on- line support over a 9 to 12 month period.

*Please note:*

- Courses can be accessed on-line via <https://thebootroom.thefa.com>
- 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





FA Premier League Referee Jon Moss at our Catterick course in September

It has been a busy season for Army Refereeing, especially adapting from the Covid-19 enforcements to being able to complete a season but adjusting to the expectations and requirements of this.

The submission of the 2021/24 The Soldiers' Game strategy to the FA during the summer of 2021 saw challenges set to meet set criteria from the governing body to reach. We are delighted to be able to report in the annual assessment that we have met the targets set in the first season.

We have had a hugely successful year in terms of referee progression and promotions up the referee pyramid with the following officials promoted during the course of the season:

## LEVEL 7-6 (12)

Pte Emmanuel Adeeko (AGC), Sgt Leon Bradley (R Signals), Major Steve Clout (R Signals), Cpl Ash Foster (Infantry), Pte Elihu George (RLC), Sgt Sheridan Grant (RE), Colonel Dave Jones (RE), Cpl Andrew Lawlor (RE), Major Michael Lowry (RLC), Cpl Sawhalhang Rai (AGC), WO1 Arturo Robinson (RLC), Sgt Brian Woods (R Signals)

## LEVEL 6-5 (10)

WO1 Maurice Davies (AGC), Major Andrew Desroches (REME), Sgt Sean Dunn (RLC), WO1 Barrington Ellison (RLC), Cpl Ash Foster (Infantry), SSgt Jimmy Garsrud (RAC), Colonel Dave Jones (RE), WO2 (SSM) Daniel McLaren (RE), WO1 Arturo Robinson (RLC) Sgt Chris Vaughan (RLC)

## LEVEL 5-4

May 2022 (5), Pte Macaulay Antell (RLC), Cfn Will Rumsby (REME), SSgt Gibril Jallow (RLC), Cpl Brian Russell (RAMC), SSgt Jimmy Garsrud (RAC)

## MID SEASON (6)

SSgt Andy Biggin AGC (RMP), WO2 (QMSI) Dan Bishop (RAPTC), SSgt Nick Mason AGC (RMP), WO2 John Reed (REME), CSgt Lewis Royle (Infantry), WO1 Simon Towe (R Anglian)

## LEVEL 4 – 3

Sgt Tom Maher RLC

## LEVEL 3 TO 2B (2)

Capt Lewis Sandoe (REME), LCpl Mike Robertson-Tant (AGC)



## STEP 1 ASSISTANT (VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE) (2)

W01 Ash Allen (RAPTC)

SSgt Dan Smith (RE)

In total there have been 38 promotions from Level 7 through to 2b during 2021/22.

In addition, there was an upturn in conversions from Trainee Referee to Level 7 after completing five matches upon attending a basic referee courses during the season. They did this by also utilising the Army Sports Control Board (ASCB) Statement of Training Requirements (SOTR) scheme whereby they would receive a full funding of their course upon meeting the criteria set.

Andy Halliday and the Referee Developer Workforce, Si Thorburn, Chris Steadman and Dan Smith have been busy running four more basic referee courses around the country all of which included a small sided competition for the trainee officials to be able to experience first-hand in refereeing immediately. 53 Military personnel have successfully completed their basic referee course this season with 28 already meeting the criteria to receive promotion from 'Trainee' to Level 7.

## 2022/23 COURSE DATES

The dates for 2022/23 are:

13/15 September Catterick

8/10 November Stafford

25/27 April Aldershot/Abingdon

16/18 May Grantham

If you are interested in future referee courses, please contact Simon Thorburn- Simon.Thorburn891@mod.gov.uk for more information.

We were tasked to retain 137 officials from the 2020/21 season and met this with a total of 141.

There are to be changes to the Grassroots Referee Progression Pathway which will be implemented by the Football Association and this will have an effect on Army Refereeing. FA Referees Manager Lou Saunders outlined the new plans at the RAFA Day held in Aldershot in May. There will be more to follow on this, and the Army FA are in a position where it must balance how the foundations can be implemented with the awareness that we have a voluntary structure unlike many counties who are in a position to employ a Referee Development Officer (RDO). The new levels will introduce 5C (L7), 5B (L6), 5A (L5).

There were also changes to the Army FA Executive Referees Committee during the season including the confirmation of a new Vice Chair in W02 Gaz Dunn (REME). We are also grateful for the role Cpl Dec O'Shea (REME) has played during the season as RDO before stepping down from this position recently.



Presentation made to Billingham Synthonia FC for their support during the Catterick course



Congratulations are also due to Committee member and UK Midlands Chair WO1 Bri Slinn (REME) on receiving the Meritorious Service Award in the New Year Honours List 2022.

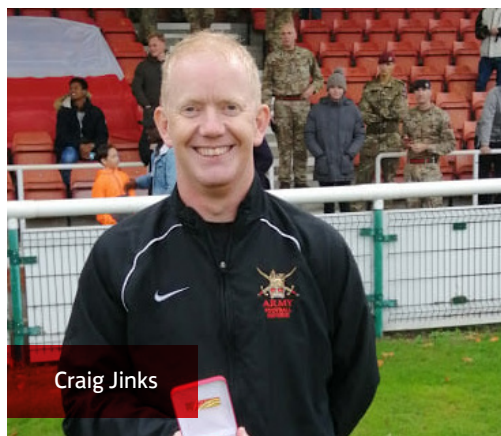
As we look ahead to the 2022/23 season Capt Steve Finch (RLC) and Cpl Dec O'Shea continue in the Football League. Steve will be approaching 200 professional matches during the season whilst Dec made excellent progress in his first season in the Football League with some fine appointments including the EFL1 match in April between promotion challengers MK Dons v Sheffield Wednesday.

Within the divisions the UK South area saw over 70% of referees officiating on a fixture during the season (either at Unit, Corps or Army level), with the majority of inactive match officials either deployed or tied down with priority work commitments. The UK South committee will ensure that inactive officials are supported on their return to refereeing and provided a mentor report within the first few games back.

Currently there are 40 military referees across the North, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The UK Midlands has been successful with appointments, development, and promotions but there has been a severe lack of league football in the division. Many Units are preferring to play in the RAF Services Leagues, this is understood to be owing to the increased travel requirements within the Army Midlands Division. Previously, geographically East and West Leagues were in created to counter distances, however, due to reduction in numbers it has returned to a single League format, this is out of the control of the Referees' Committee.

There have been many departures from the Army during the course of the season. These include Sgt Colin Allan (Infantry). Colin became a Referee in 2003 and officiated in the 2014 Army Cup Final. WO2 Chris Bonnar (Infantry) has been an excellent administrator as UK Scotland Secretary for many years. Capt John Brown (Infantry) refereed the 2018/19 Army Challenge Cup Final. WO1 Rob Finn (RE) has been a huge influence especially within the UK South mentoring officials whilst also officiating in the 2017 Cup Final and an excellent support mechanism to many. Sgt Craig Jinks (R Signals) has been an Army FA official for over 20 years and provided superb commitment and dedication during this period. He received the Meritorious Service Award in 2013 whilst also being awarded the most prestigious individual honour for an Army Referee in 2017- the Dobsons Trophy whilst representing British Forces (Germany). SSgt Tony Ficetola (RA) became a referee in 2016 and soon progressed to Level 4 whilst being an enthusiastic member of UK North Referees. We thank all referees who have left the services during the past year and wish them well in the future.







## KEY APPOINTMENTS 2021/22



### ARMY SUPER CUP FINAL

21 November 2021

7 Regiment RLC v 4 Lancs

Referee: Cpl Harry Scott (AGC)

Asst: LCpl Elle Hamilton-Dewhirst (RLC)

Asst: SSgt Jimmy Garsrud (RAC)



### UNDER 23 INTER SERVICES RAF V ROYAL NAVY

19 February 2022

Referee: SSgt Steve Tymms (AAC)

Asst: Cfn Will Rumsby (REME)

Asst: Major Dicky Halloran (Infantry)

4th: WO1 (ASM) Bri Slinn (REME)

### MEN INTER SERVICES ROYAL NAVY V RAF

16 March 2022

Referee: SSgt Dan Smith (RE)

Asst: WO2 (AQMS) Gaz Dunn (REME)

Asst: Sgt Jimmy McNee (RLC)

4th: SSgt Andy Biggin (AGC)

### WOMEN INTER SERVICES ROYAL NAVY V RAF

17 March 2022

Referee: Sgt Bri Russell (RAMC)

Asst: WO1 Rhys Davies (AGC)

Asst: WO2 George Postings (AGC)

4th: Cpl Ash Foster (Infantry)



### MINOR UNITS CUP FINAL

27 April 2022

RMA Sandhurst (PS) v 5 Regt AAC

Referee: Bdr Lucas Bomela (RA)

Asst: SSgt Jimmy Garsrud (RAC)

SSgt Calberth Charles (RAPTC)

4th: Major Andrew Desroches (REME)



## ARMY CHALLENGE MAJOR UNITS CUP FINAL

04 May 2022

4 Regt RLC v 1 Mercians

Referee: Sgt Chris Steadman (RAMC)

Asst: Sgt Kierron Corrigan (R Signals)

Sgt Barry Brooks (RAC)

4th: WO2 (AQMS) Gaz Dunn (REME)



## ARMY RESERVE CUP FINAL

07 May 2022

4 LANCS v 6 Scots

Referee: CSgt Billy Fuller (Infantry)

Asst: WO2 George Postings (AGC)

Asst: Major Martyn Day (AGC)

4th: Cpl Phil Trask (RLC)



## EDWARDS CUP FINAL - AGC V REME

26 May 2022

Referee: Sgt Sheridan Grant (RE)

Asst: SSgt Kabir Rai (RAMC)

Asst: Cpl Ash Foster (Infantry)



## WOOLWICH CUP FINAL – REME V RLC

10 June 2022

Referee: Sgt Kierron Corrigan (R Signals)

Asst: WO2 (SSM) Dan McLaren (RE)

Asst: WO1 Baz Ellison (RLC)





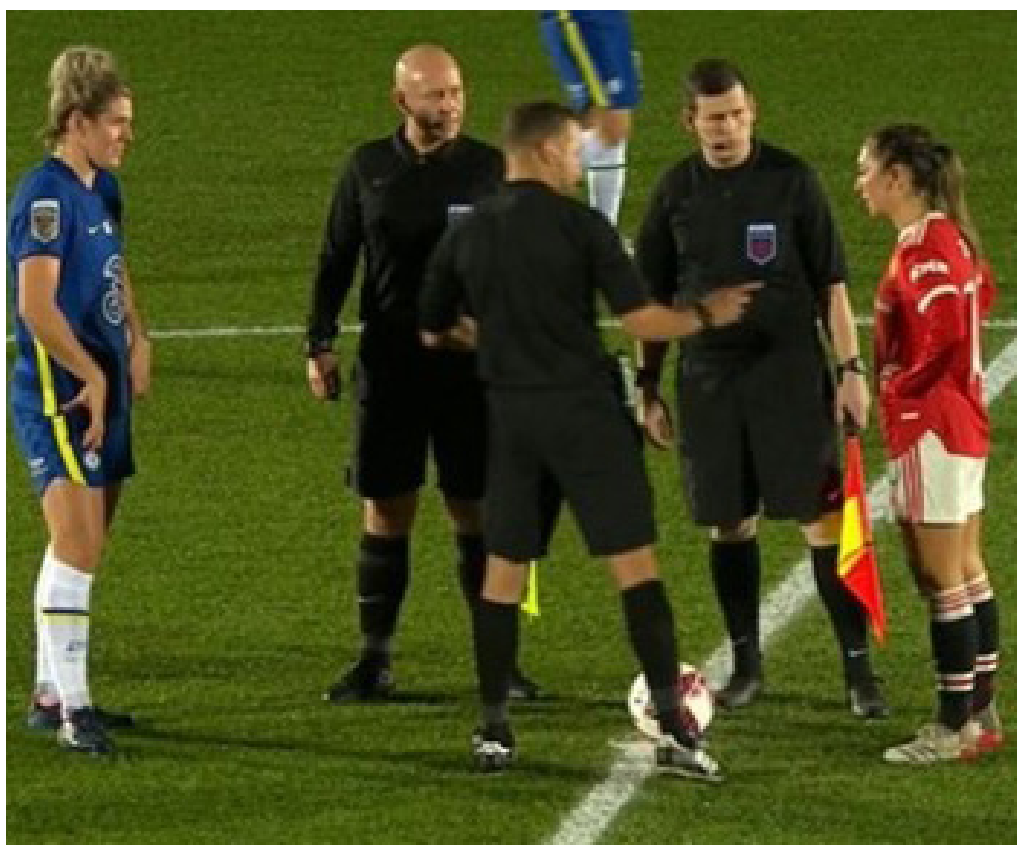
On the 2nd February 2022 WO1 (SMI) Rob Finn (RE) and WO2 (AQMS) Gaz Dunn (REME) were appointed to officiate the Women's League Cup Semi Final between Chelsea and Manchester United. Three first-half goals helped Chelsea to the final of the FA Women's Continental Tyres League Cup with a 3-1 win, with Manchester United's having keeper Sophie Baggaley sent off late on.

An absolute honour to be appointed by the PGMOL to such a high-profile game with over 1500 in attendance at Kingsmeadow, the match was also Live on the BBC iPlayer and Red Button. It was a privilege to be able to work with referee for the night Paul Howard, a great opportunity to be able to learn and develop from someone who officiates on the Football League. To share this occasion with Rob, who throughout the last few years has always been on the end of the phone after I have had a tough game or to push me on with advice and encouragement when needed made the night even better.

The atmosphere on the night was brilliant, with the likes of Millie Bright and Sam Kerr playing the standard of football was high and the match was played at a high tempo throughout, and the requirement to focus was high due to the noise from the crowd. There is so much opportunity for Army Officials to officiate at the professional level of the game and we have so many officials starting to operate at the high ends of the football pyramid. This season has been amazing for the Army Referees on the promotion front and long may it continue. I say to all, don't think it's too late to take up the whistle, I didn't start to officiate civilian football until 2016 and to now be appointed to one of the biggest games in the Women's Professional Game was a massive achievement and can be achieved by anyone within the Army with dedication and a thirst for development.

*WO2 Gaz Dunn (REME)*

Vice Chair, Army FA Referees





*The Army FA Referees' annual awards dinner was held in May at Aldershot Town FC.*

*Due to Covid 19 this was the first awards evening since 2019 and there were plenty of presentations to be made:*



## **DOBSON'S TROPHY – W02 DAN BISHOP (RAPTC) (UK SOUTH)**

*The trophy awarded for the official who has provided the most significant contribution to Army Referees during the season. Only completing his basic referees course in 2019 it has been a remarkable rise for Dan, who is shortly to leave the Army. His citation added, "It has been an incredible season for Daniel both on and off the field. He inspires and guides other Army FA Referees to be the best they can be. In such a short period of time, he has become a vital member of the Army FA Referees Society. He is someone who Army FA can always count on in the future".*



## **LE BRETON TROPHY – W01 ARTURO ROBINSON (RLC) – UK MIDLANDS**

The trophy presented to the newly qualified official who has shown the most potential and commitment. W01 Arturo Robinson originally applied for promotion from Level 7 - 6 for during season 2020-21, but COVID put his package on hold. He reapplied for promotion this year and nothing has held him back. He has been incredibly proactive and committed over this season to improve and progress in addition to providing excellent support to Essex FA whose Referee Development Officer was highly praiseworthy of Arturo's, support, commitment and performance ratings concluding in seven end of season cup final appointments within the Essex FA.

## **OUTGOING CHAIRMAN (2018/20):**

Lt Col Gary Connolly (REME)





WO2 Gaz Dunn (REME)

Cpl Dec O'Shea (REME)

Sgt Andy Cuthbert (RLC)

WO2 Hastings will also receive this award at a later date.

Former Chairman Lt Col (Retd) Tony Rock spoke at length about the significant contribution of Major (Retd) Danny McDermid (RLC) who served the Referees committee between 1998 and 2013 and was a referee on the Football League until his retirement in 2012. Danny also won the Dobson's Trophy in 1997 and referees the Challenge Cup Final in 2003.

## OUTGOING COMMITTEE MEMBERS (2018/20):

Major Andy Carter MBE (RA)

WO2 Brian Slinn (REME)

Sgt Ndoda Dlamini (RLC)

A presentation will be made to WO2 Chris Hastings (AGC) RMP at a later date.

Meritorious Service Award (recognition of loyal and dedicated service over 10 years including serving a minimum of five years on a divisional or executive committee:

Capt Ash Allen (RAPTC)

Capt Steve Finch (RLC)





Every Chairman from 1997 through to the current tenure was present. As per the image above from left to right: Lt Col (Retd) Gary Connolly (REME), (2018/2020), Major (Retd) Brian Murdoch (REME) (2009/12), Graham Brookland in his final dinner as Referees' Secretary having commenced the role in

2007, current Chair Major Nigel Bamford (RAMC) (2020). Lt Col (Retd) Tony Rock (R Signals) was Chair between 1997 and 2009 whilst Lt Col (Retd) Pete Conn MBE (RE), Chair between 2012 and 2018.



A presentation was also made in appreciation to outgoing Secretary Major (Retd) Billy Thomson who retires in the summer after 21 years in the role. Graham Brookland was also at his last dinner as Referees Secretary after 14 years in the role.

The two guests for the two days were FA Premier League Referee Chris Kavanagh who took charge of Manchester United and Brentford two days previously and Daniel Robathan. Daniel is a Select Group 1 Assistant Referee.





## STOKE CITY APPRENTICES STEP INTO A SOLDIER'S SHOES AT PARSONS BARRACKS

Stoke City U18s were put through their paces during last week's visit to Parsons Barracks in Donnington, Telford, where the players participated in a range of team building, problem solving and educational activities.

The event was organised by LFE partners, The Royal Corps of Signals, who are the British Army's information and communication specialists.

While it was a valuable transition event, in which players got a real-life insight and learned about apprenticeships and degree-level funded education and career opportunities, it also served as a personal development and team-building activity.

Under 18's Coach and Player Care Officer Danny Pugh was pleased with how the players adapted to the environment and the impact it had on them as a group:

"I was not sure how they would take to it, but from the start, they were all really involved and threw themselves into it. The staff were excellent with the players, from the way they communicated and their demonstrations. The next day the players were still on a high, talking about the different things they were doing and how each of them coped with each scenario," he told LFE.

On arrival, the players broke off into two teams of five and were taken through six different activities, from dealing with road traffic accidents to coping with the physical demands of carrying heavy rucksacks and working through assault courses. Each scenario demanded leadership to find the best way to solve a situation and Pugh, who kept a close eye on the young Potters throughout, noticed some individuals stepping up.

"The activities encouraged players to take ownership of a situation, organise one another, and give and take orders. Personalities started to come out, they relaxed, and players that you might not see as leaders took control of situations that they would not have at the training ground.

"In a way, it was very relatable to the leadership qualities you need on the football pitch, giving out key pieces of information. It provided lots of different experiences – was very hands-on and they were fully immersed in it.

"I am new to the role, so it gave me the chance to see them in a unique environment and I was really pleased with how they bought into it. They spend five days in the building with us, with a structured routine of football and education, so each day can be very similar for them. This provided something completely different – it got them out of their comfort zones, away from training ground and college, and gave them a real eye-opener."

As part of a wider commitment to transition, LFE offers career opportunities to apprentices through partnerships with external organisations such as The Royal Corps of Signals. Alongside the opportunity to study for qualifications through apprenticeship schemes and degrees in information technology and cyber engineering, The Royals Corps of Signals career pathway also encourages soldiers to pursue their sporting ambitions and hobbies throughout their careers.

The Royal Signals Football Association, for example, is one of the most successful outfits in the British Army, boasting alumni of Scottish and English Leagues, FA Cup and World Cup winners, as well as having a strong representation at both Army and UK Armed Forces level.

WO2 Barry Rizza, who is an ex-Inverness Caledonian Thistle footballer, and WO2 Lee Fraser, are delivering the STEPS programme; an initiative formed to help young footballers transition into an army career using the traits they have acquired during their footballing journeys. Through the partnership with LFE, Barry and Lee visit academies around the country and help organise career events for the players to gain an insight into the opportunities available.

Speaking to LFE about the work he and Barry are doing, Fraser said: "We did a lot of research and we recognised the lack of pathway for released academy players and, from that, produced the STEPS programme that we have been building ever since. The STEPS anagram takes you through what the programme offers: you become a soldier, get trade skills, experiences, personal development and sporting success.

"Our most recent success story is Tom Broadbent, who came to us after being released by Bournemouth earlier in his career. In 2017, he was the left-back in the army football team. He came away from the army with lots of football experience, confidence and was a top athlete, and ended up signing for Bristol Rovers, before winning promotion with Swindon Town in 2020. His journey with the army is fantastic and is a fitting example of the opportunity that we can offer. A lot of young footballers are well equipped for an army career, because of the great work academies do with them from a young age."

And like Pugh, Fraser was delighted with how well the Stoke City youngsters engaged with the activities.

"The career days give the players a really good insight and it was great to see how much Stoke City enjoyed the day," he said. "The feedback has been really positive. They threw themselves into everything and that is something that we find with all of the academy players. The coaches are watching them and they naturally have that competitive edge.

"When we ask them questions, what we usually find is that most do not know about how much sport you can play in the army, the number of jobs



there are and we discuss the stereotypes, like how dangerous it is.

“It is not about recruiting soldiers; it is about opening their minds up to different things and getting them away from the training ground environment. We want them to think about a plan B and the importance of having a plan B in their back pocket.”

In his new role, Pugh not only looks after the apprentices’ football development but also supports released players with their transition via a three-year tracking and monitoring process. Something that the former Premier League midfielder is keen to encourage his young Potters is exploring other interests away from the game.

“We want to make them all professional footballers, but we are aware that that can’t happen,” Pugh explains. “It is important that these young players understand that there is no harm in having other interests away from football. You have so much time on your hands while you are playing, so using that spare time to explore and make yourselves aware of other things, whether you are going to

stay in football or not, can only be a positive thing.

“We will do things like this, the education side of it, cooking lessons, but also, we are looking at the transitional phase. When they leave the club, whether that is to another team or another career, my role is to help them with that next step. Through the tracking and monitoring, it will be a case of looking at ways we can help them – there is a real sense of responsibility to do that across the board.

“It is something we want to grow over the next few years and events like this tie into that commitment.”

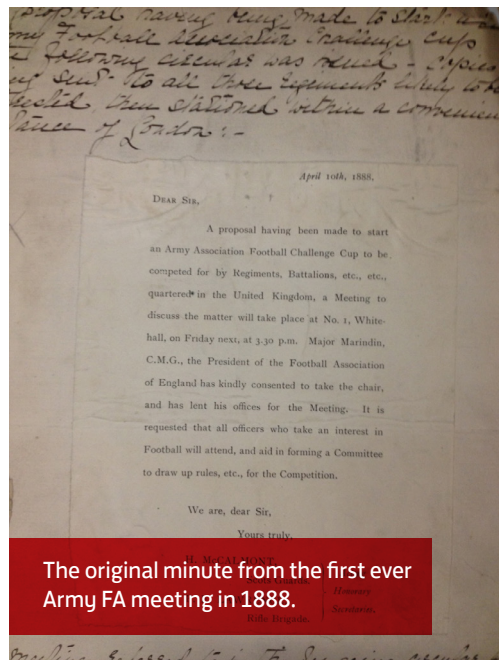
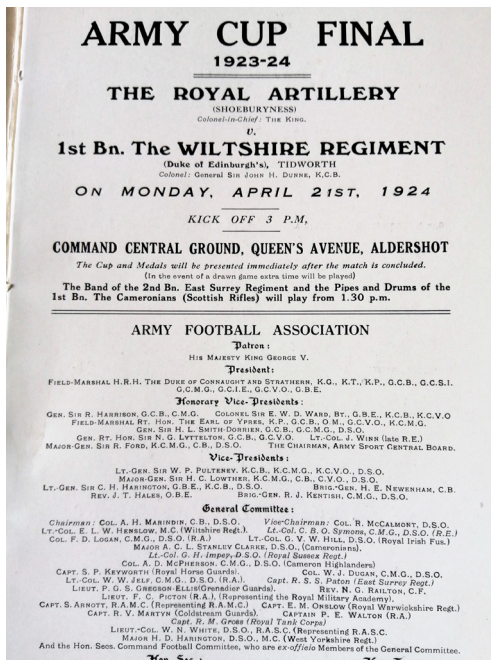
***This article originally appeared on the League Football Education website***

***Stoke City Apprentices Step into a Soldier's Shoes at Parsons Barracks - League Football Education (LFE)***

***on 22 March 2022***



Tom Broadbent to the right of Sir Bobby Charlton CBE at the Game of Remembrance at Burton Albion in 2016







The Army FA has a long and distinguished history. Since its inception, records have been kept as well as a multitude of artefacts, many of which are of historical significance from both a football and military perspective. Whilst the documentation and the artefacts have been safely maintained and stored, they have never been on public display or shared with the wider public and history research community. However, in 2021, Army FA officials Graham Brookland and Billy Thomson sought to rectify the situation.

In the first instance they sought out colleagues from the Football and War Network whom they had developed a working relationship that originated from the Games of Remembrance in 2018. Following a number of preliminary discussions between Graham Brookland and Dr Alex Alexandrou, Chair and Co-Founder of the Network, Alex visited the Army FA headquarters in Aldershot in August 2021, to examine the historical artefacts and documentation, as well as meet the Army FA team.

It is fair to say that Alex was blown away by what he was shown. He immediately recognized not only the historical significance of the documentation and artefacts but also agreed with Billy and Graham that a significant project had to be developed from a number of perspectives that included: preserving, digitizing and archiving minute books, Army FA Challenge Cup Final programmes and other documentation dating from the late 1800s onwards; organizing, documenting and cataloging photographs, pennants, trophies, medals and other artefacts; developing exhibitions based on the artefacts and documentation; developing a web-based resource platform that will act as a research tool for historians and members of the public;

as well as creating school-based and veterans engagement projects. Further vindication of the significance of the artefacts and documentation came in the form of Alex's son, Louie, who was fascinated by what he saw, read and touched. Thus, giving credence to the aim of engaging young people in relation to the history of the Army FA.

Following this initial meeting and viewing, it was agreed that Alex be tasked with connecting with Network colleagues with expertise in key areas who could further advise on all aspects of the proposed project. This led to a number of meetings and visits in the year to date. The first visit was by Dr Alex Jackson, a curator from the National Football Museum, who examined the documentation and artefacts with his expert eye. He advised the team on issues such as preserving, digitizing and storing the fragile and faded 19th and early 20th Century documents, preserving and displaying artefacts made from fabric; how to maintain the trophies, as well as ideas and topics for exhibitions and community engagement activities. Alex went away and compiled a comprehensive report with his observations, thoughts and recommendations, which would prove to be very beneficial in further developing the project.

Alex Alexandrou then facilitated a visit by the Army FA team to Exeter City with Dr Will Barrett acting as the club host. Will has played a pivotal role in developing the club's history from being hidden out of sight in boxes in a cupboard, to turning the whole of the St James Park stadium into a museum that is open to all and has at its heart not only telling the wonderful history of the club in every nook and cranny but also heavily engaging with the local community.

Will spoke about how the club achieved this transformation in partnership with the University of Exeter supported by a number of National Lottery Heritage grants, explaining the grant application process and the importance of community engagement activities. The Army FA team came away extremely impressed by what they had seen and heard, which has enabled them to develop ideas about how to create exhibitions from the various artefacts at their disposal. Will then visited Aldershot to examine the documentation and artefacts and give his expert advice and guidance as to how to further develop the project. His observations were extremely beneficial from a number of perspectives and are being acted upon.

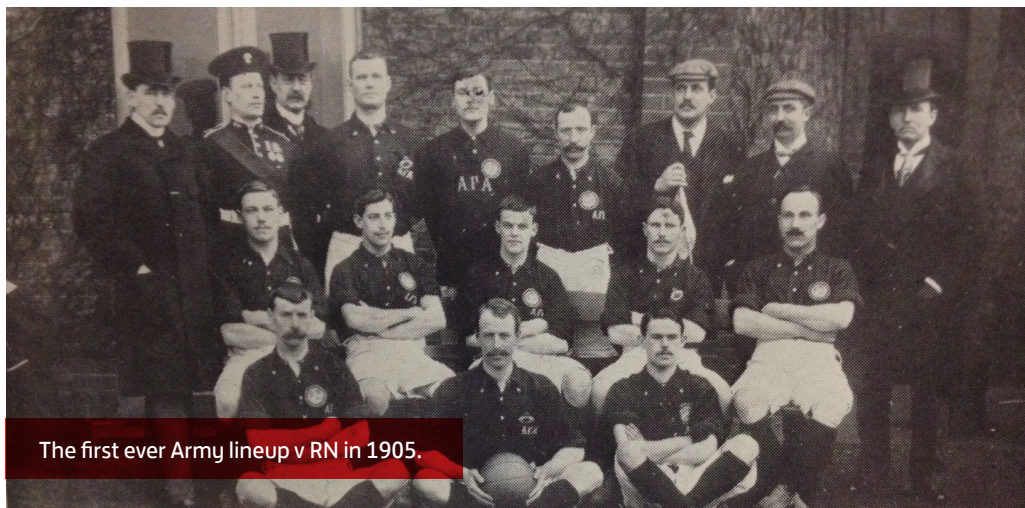
Based on the advice and guidance of Alex Jackson and a briefing paper he had produced, the Army FA team along with Alex Alexandrou then made contact with colleagues at the National Army Museum. This led to Dr Glyn Pryor, Director of Research and Dr Tasha Swainston, Archivist, hosting the Army FA team and Alex Alexandrou at the Museum. It was a very positive meeting and it was agreed that the National Army Museum would become a partner in the project. This will entail preserving, archiving, digitising and storing key documentation; preserving and exhibiting key artefacts; developing an online open access research resource; developing seminars, talks and school and community-based projects. Following on from this meeting, Glyn and Natasha visited Aldershot to view the documentation and artefacts. They advised on how to catalogue each item, as well as explaining how they would preserve, archive and store individual documents and artefacts at the Museum.

Since that visit Alex and Gill Jones have meticulously sorted and catalogued each item by subject, date and type of document and artefact, as well as the condition of them. This task has now been completed and the inventory sent to Natasha who will now begin the acquisitions process in relation to the transfer of documents and artefacts to the Museum.

We are now entering the next phase of the project which will firstly, seek and bid for grant funding from both internal and external sources. Secondly, develop topics for exhibitions both at Aldershot and at the National Army Museum.



1957 Army Cup Final. Capt C H Dennis at coin toss before final



The first ever Army lineup v RN in 1905.



A poignant occasion in the Royal Signals calendar was held in May with the final of the McBean Trophy. Originally the Signallers Cup the competition was renamed in 2017 after Major Tony McBean; a brave and gifted goalkeeper who was involved within the Corps football team for over 20 years. Tony tragically lost his life in 2016 to motor neurone disease but remained involved and embraced his role with enthusiasm and passion until the end.

Royal Signals Chair Lt Col Simon Smith said in advance of the final, "The trophy is named after our dear friend, fellow footballer, and much missed Corps legend, Tony McBean. The McBean Trophy remains an integral part of the Royal Signals Football season and has once more provided an opportunity for our units to compete against one another. This year two teams that have a great legacy in the competition and linkages with Tony compete for the coveted title. Our celebration of football, drawing together both serving and veterans from across the Corps, continues to highlight new talent, especially our most junior of Signallers as they complete their trade training in Blandford".

Army Football Chair Brigadier Niall Stokoe OBE added, "It would seem that as the arc of Newcastle United's season began an upwards trajectory, so it did too for two of Tony's previous teams in this, his own Cup. We come together as the family that

is Royal Signals football to celebrate that we are once more playing The Soldiers' Game at a cracking venue and between two excellent sides. He will be watching as ever, in a black and white shirt all the while exhorting the keepers to be braver while nodding and saying 'quality' under his breath when they are.

Tony's family were in attendance as guests for the final where 11th (Royal School of Signals) Signal Regiment were the victors in the final defeating 216 (PARACHUTE) Signal Squadron 4-1 played at Tamworth FC.





To mark the 150th year anniversary of the FA Cup. A Generations Cup competition was formed to include all the 15 teams that took part in the competition 150 years earlier.

The Royal Engineers were placed in Group A alongside The Civil Service and Clapham Rovers.

The games were played at the home ground of Reigate Priory FC in Surrey, a fitting venue for the competition. Which is the oldest known football pitch in Great Britain.

The Generation Cup came with a set of rules which meant all different age ranges would feature on the pitch at any one time. 3 under 30's 5 30 - 50-year-olds and 3 over 50's had to be on the field of play at any one time. Although some sides took these rules as relaxed. In true Sapper fashion REAFC stuck to these rules firmly.

The first Sapper fixture was against Clapham Rovers. REAFC coming away 5-2 winners after Clapham took an early 0-2 lead. The second fixture saw The Civil Service win 3-1 win. A great fixture which could've gone either way. A truly great occasion to be part of. The winners of the group would then go on to the final at St George's Park a few months later. Unfortunately, REAFC missed out on goal difference.

But not all of them.....

Winners from Group C were Crystal Palace and Group B Upton Park. Due to unforeseen circumstances, Crystal Palace were short of a couple more "experienced" players. Up stepped REAFC Club Manager Major Si Mayers and former player Jamie Scarisbrick. Si and Jamie played both fixtures for Crystal Palace on the main pitch as St George's Park. The Sir Bobby Charlton pitch as it's called is the exact replica to the pitch at Wembley and is utilised by the English National teams when they train in Burton before a fixture.

Crystal Palace went on to win the Generations Cup with 5-0 victory over The Civil Service and a closely fought battle against Upton Park saw them lift the trophy after a 1-0 win.





2022 marked the 150th year of the Football Association (FA) Cup. The oldest and most famous cup competition in the world. Very few are aware that The Royal Engineers participated in the first ever FA Cup competition way back in 1872, reaching the final but unfortunately suffering a defeat to Wanderers FC on the day. Three years later, The Sappers got their hands on the FA Cup after a 2-1 victory over Old Etonians FC in the 1875 final.

To celebrate the anniversary of the competition, two members of The Royal Engineers Association Football Club (REAFC) were invited as guests of the FA to Wembley Stadium to watch the final. Furthermore, Colonel Alan Mason, then Club Chairman of REAFC was given the honour of walking the FA Cup out onto the Wembley pitch before the kick-off of the final between Liverpool and Chelsea.

The idea was for the Chairman's of Wanderers FC and REAFC to both walk out before kick-off carrying a trophy each. Wanderers carrying out a replica of the FA Cup they won 150 years earlier and REAFC to carry out the current trophy which Liverpool would go on to win a few hours later. A fantastic day for both members of REAFC (Col Alan Mason and Sgt Matthew Kenny) and for them to celebrate the proud history of an amazing football club.





On the 14th May 2022 I was honoured to represent the Army FA at the 150th Emirates FA Cup Final at Wembley Stadium as part of the medal award ceremony, this was extra special for me being a lifelong Liverpool fan.

The day started with myself and the two other service representatives meeting with the England FA staff for a rehearsal and for them to take us through our duties for the ceremony, I was chosen to carry the winner's medals. We were then shown around the stadium prior to kick off.

The game started at a frenetic pace with both sides coming close to scoring, the atmosphere was electric but very tense. Time seemed to pass by so quickly and with 20 minutes to go the FA Staff came to meet us to take us to our changing rooms to get into service dress in preparation for our ceremonial duties.

Once changed we went to the FA office to collect the medals and the FA Cup then escorted back up towards the Royal Box to ensure all the medals and the trophy were in place and ready for the final whistle, with just the winners' ribbons to be changed when the result was known.

The game went to extra time and penalties, a very nerve time for me, but a Chelsea miss and a cool

Liverpool penalty saw the game won by Liverpool. The trophy ribbons were changed, and I managed to get a couple of photos with my family and the other service representatives. The time had now come to walk up the famous steps to the Royal Box to hand over the medals to HRH the Duke of Cambridge. A truly great day that will live long in my memories.

*Major Joe Collins*



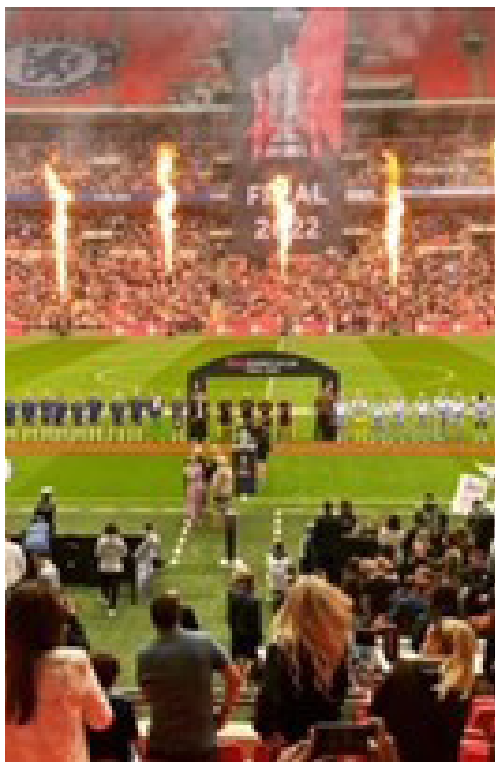


The Vitality Women's FA Cup Final 2022 at Wembley Stadium on the 15th May was contested by Chelsea and Manchester City. Ceremonial Military rep, LBdr Anna Birtwhistle presented the winning Team with the Medals in the Royal Box after the conclusion of the game alongside her fellow Tri-service team members AB Sophie Perrin (Centre) and Cpl Philippa Wilson (Right).



*"It was a huge privilege and honour to represent the Army as part of the Tri-service Team involved in the Medal Presentation. It was a spectacular event with a record breaking 49,094 Fans contributed to a fantastic atmosphere at Wembley Stadium. This is a clear representation the appetite for Women's Football has grown."*

*"It was a memorable Day, being able to represent the Tri-service at such a prestigious event, it is definitely a highlight of our service to the Armed Forces"*



Chelsea Women completed a domestic double in 2021/22 with a thrilling 3-2 extra time victory over Manchester City. It was a triumph by Chelsea to secure the win, it was a special day for Women's football.





In November an Inter Services match was resurrected between British Army (Cyprus) and the RAF fully funded by the Army FA including the supply of a new kit.

Although the RAF were eventual victors in the match, 3-1 Army Coach WO2 Dave Tuck was pleased with regard to the overall experience. He said afterwards, .

*"Although the final result did not go our way, it was a really positive experience for the British Army (Cyprus) Football Team. Within two weeks we managed to provide a management team together, a training camp set up, facilities & resources booked and a squad of players. It was always going to be a tall order; but we pulled it off.*

*"We were fortunate to get 18 players released (compared to 40+) but in true army fashion, they gave everything they had for the opportunity to wear the shirt and represent their service.*

*"To the game and for some this would be the biggest game they have ever played or will ever play again. The occasion, the pride, standing for the national anthem and the passion."*

*"It was a great opportunity for everyone involved and an experience we will all learn from.*

*The RAF were worthy winners, and we sent our congratulations to them afterwards. Hopefully now this match has been resurrected we hope it is something that can be build on in Cyprus."*







## AUGUST

Former Army FA Referees' Secretary Brian Le Breton received two awards at the Hampshire FA Grassroots Football Awards for contributions to Refereeing.



## NOVEMBER

Our Chair Brigadier Niall Stokoe OBE represented the Army FA at the FIFA World Cup qualifier at Wembley between England and Albania. This was alongside the RAF FA and Royal Navy FA at the pre match Remembrance Ceremony.



## SEPTEMBER

ITC Catterick won the UK North Festival with 34 Field Hospital winning the Plate Tournament. 170 players participated during the course of the day.

22 teams, 220- soldiers /officers competed in the Infantry Sixes. 5 Rifles beat 1 Rifles in the final to win the Crowe Cup.



Cpl Declan O'Shea was shortlisted for the Official of the Year at the Army Sports Control Board Awards Dinner at RMA Sandhurst.





## FEBRUARY

The Aldershot Queens Avenue 3G pitch was put out of bounds for the season after a large Oak tree crashed through the security fence and onto the pitch during Storm Eunice.



## MARCH

A presentation was made to Aldershot Town FC Director Waleed Khan for the continued support of the club after staging the 2022 Inter Services mens match v RAF at the EBB Stadium.

## APRIL

A good day for 4 Regiment RLC whose male team won the UK South Sixes with the Women's team finishing runners up in their competition.



## MAY

Ellis Langford (RLC) was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award. Originally approved in 2018 Ellis is the epitome of a top-level sportsman having represented and coached at the highest levels of





## JUNE

Our Secretary Major (Retd) Billy Thomson awarded the Medallist of the Order of the British Empire (BEM) for services to sport in the Queen's Birthday Honours list.



90-year-old Ray Coleman pictured with Dan Smith at the Kentish Cup centenary competition at Havant and Waterlooville. Both Royal Engineers' Ray refereed the Kentish Cup in Belgium in 1967 whilst Dan took charge of the 2021 encounter between UKAF and Dutch AF.



Army football stalwart Capt Kev Haley (RAPTC) awarded the Member of the British Empire (MBE) in the Military Division of the Queen's Birthday honours list.



Former Army Referee Andy Biggin was named "Telford Referees' Association" Referee of the Season for 2021/22. Andy (ex AGC) commenced as an Army FA Referee in 2018 and progressed all the way through to Level 4 before leaving the Army in 2021 and joining Shropshire FA. Congratulations Andy.



Former Army Women....

Former Army Women's Head Coach and currently Head Coach W01 Mags McAteer (AAC) receives the Meritorious Service Medal (MSM) in the Queen's Birthday Honours list.



Graham Brookland has been presented with a Hampshire FA Certificate of Commendation awarded to an individual for an additional 10 years' service following a 25 Year Hampshire FA Service to Football Award.

## Brigade of Gurkhas



Match Officials 2022 Nepal Cup Final

Referee: Cpl Pradeep Gurung (3RGR)

Asst (Left) : Cpl Moti Limbu (AGC (SPS))

Asst (Right): SSgt Kabir Rai (RAMC)

The 2022 Nepal Cup Final was played on Queens Avenue, Aldershot in July forming part of the annual Bhela Event. The competition dates back to 1948 when the cup was first presented by the Prime Minister of Nepal. It was also the highlight of a busy day which provided the opportunity for the current serving and veteran community to mix from across the Gurkha Brigade Association in a wonderful environment which included many trade stalls together with the popular Nepalese food stalls.

Prior to the Nepal Cup Final events during the day included the Kathmandu Football Cup for Veterans. There were also men and women's Volleyball demonstrations and a Khukuri and Taekwondo Display by the Gurkha Recruit Intake 22. There was also a funfair.

The Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas entertained the crowds with two marching band displays who were on display prior to the final and at half time. The modern Nepal Cup is competed for across the United Kingdom on a knockout basis. This year the final was between the Queen's Gurkha Engineers (QGE) and the Queen's Gurkha Signals. A terrific competitive match witnessed by a large crowd in excess of 2000 saw a 1-1 draw after extra time before QGE won on penalties after a 1-1 draw after extra time.









The 2022 Army FA Awards Evening was held at St Omer Barracks in Aldershot in July. This was a follow up to the original "Return to Football" event held in October 2021 that covered presentations that would have been made but prevented by "Covid-19".

This was the final dinner hosted by Secretary Major (Retd) Billy Thomson BEM before his retirement after 21 years in the post.



During the course of the evening Army Chair Brigadier Niall Stokoe OBE informed those present that Billy has been nominated and approved as a Life Vice President of the Association in a formal letter from our President and Chief of the General Staff, Sir Patrick Sanders KCB, CBE, DSO,

ADC Gen. A presentation was made to Billy before a standing ovation after his response expressing his appreciation and talking about his extensive career.

**Presented by Vice President LT GEN TOM COPINGER-SYMES CBE**

Player of the Season – Men's Senior



**FUS LEIGH PHILLIPS (Infantry)**

After two seasons playing at corps levels for the Infantry this was Leigh's first season for the Army men's team. A versatile midfielder who has pushed on significantly during the course of the season.









**Player of the Season – Men's U23**  
**SPR CALLUM VINCENT (RE)**

Callum was a valuable player for the U23's throughout the season scoring key goals from midfield. A player with excellent technical ability with a tenacity and drive to match. During the season he was still on his trade course within the Royal Engineers.

**PRESENTED BY Vice President MAJ GEN SHARON NESMITH**



**Player of the Season – Women's Senior**  
**LCPL EMILY ELLIS (AMS)**

This was Emily's first Inter Services having stepped up from the development squad. A versatile and intelligent player Emily can play in a variety of positions and was selected due to her communication and range of passing.



**Player of the Season – Women's Amazons**  
**LCPL AMY DOYLE (AGC)**

Amy has completed her fifth season of Army football. A player who has experience, knowledge and natural leadership ability having represented Scotland at youth level and playing since the age of 13 as well as being an FA Coach and referee.

**PRESENTED BY Vice President MAJ GEN CELIA HARVEY**



**Player of the Season – Men's Reserve**  
**Pte Sean Murphy**

Sean is an integral member of the team who has demonstrated commitment, loyalty and an attitude that keeps him and the team motivated. He is a very worthy recipient of the award.





### Player of the Season – Women's Reserve

#### LCpl Alex Smith

Alex has shown excellent commitment and is always a pleasure to be around. This season she has really worked hard and embraced a number of roles and new ideas from coaching staff and her potential is finally coming through.

### PRESENTED BY CHAIR BRIGADIER NIAL STOKOE OBE



### Referees – Dobsons Trophy- W02 Dan Bishop

After extensive involvement in Army football at all levels of the game Dan completed an Army Referee course in 2019 and has progressed rapidly from Trainee through to Level 4 in three years. After winning the Le Breton Trophy in 2020 (junior referee showing most potential) he has followed this with the award for the most significant contribution to Refereeing during the season (Dobson's Trophy).

### SPECIAL AWARDS



#### Lt Col Atherton – Retiring Trustee

Army FA Trustee for Representative and Corps Men's football before stepping down earlier this year.



#### Col Neil Blenkinsop – Retiring Trustee

Neil also retired as a Trustee during the course of the 2020/21 season. He served as Trustee for Unit football.

Other presentations were also made to Billy upon his retirement including from sponsors Townergate Insurance and from Aldershot Town Football Club Chair Shahid Azeem.



# STARRED CUP FINALS 2022/23



## ARMY FA SUPER CUP FINAL

**Sat 10 September**

6 SCOTS v 4 REGT RLC

Petershill Park, Glasgow

1830hrs



## UNDER 23 INTER SERVICES

**Wed 15 February**

Army U23 v RAF U23

Aldershot Military Stadium

1500hrs

**Wed 22 February**

RN U23 v Army U23

HMS Temeraire, Portsmouth

TBC



## WOMEN INTER SERVICES

**Tue 20 March \***

Army Women v RN Women

Aldershot Town FC

1900hrs

**Tue 27 March \***

## INTER SERVICE

RAF Women v Army Women

TBC

TBC



## MEN INTER SERVICES

**Wed 21 March \***

Army Men v RN Men

Aldershot Town FC

1900hrs

**Wed 28 March \***

RAF Men v Army Men

Shrewsbury Town FC

1900hrs





### ARMY FA MINOR UNITS CUP FINAL

Sponsored by Towergate Insurance

Wed 26 April

Aldershot Military Stadium

1500hrs



### ARMY SIXES

Wed 17 May

Grantham Town FC

0900hrs to 1700hrs



### ARMY FA 122nd MAJOR UNITS CHALLENGE CUP FINAL

Sponsored by Towergate Insurance

Wed 03 May

Aldershot Military Stadium

1500hrs



### WOMEN'S EDWARDS CUP CORPS FINAL

Wed 24 May

Cirencester Town FC

TBC



### ARMY FA RESERVE CUP FINAL

Sat 06 May \*

Aldershot Military Stadium

TBC



### MEN'S "Holts" WOOLWICH CUP CORPS FINAL

Fri 26 May

TBC

TBC



*A Sporting  
Chance*

**ARMY**  
SPORT CONTROL BOARD  
FOUNDED 1918

## THE ARMY SPORTS LOTTERY: SUPPORTING SPORT IN THE ARMY

**In addition to a variety of sports grant available every week members will have the opportunity to win the following prizes:**

1st Prize	£10,000
2nd Prize	£5000
3rd Prize	£4000
4th Prize	£3000
5th Prize	£2000
6th Prize	£1000
2 x	£500
15 x	£200
10 x	£100



Since its creation in 1993 the  
**Army Sports Lottery** has:

- Raised **£50 million** in proceeds
- Given **£20 million** in cash prizes
- Awarded over **£25 million** in grants to Army personnel

gambleaware.co.uk  
GAMBLE RESPONSIBLY

The Army Sports Lottery is a non-profit making organisation that exists to support sport in the Army

For further details visit our web at:

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



**ARMY**



### CONTACT US

**ARMY SPORTS LOTTERY**  
Fox Lines, Queen's Avenue,  
Aldershot, Hampshire, GU11 2LB

**Tel: 01252 787065 / 94222 7065**

**Fax: 01252 787066 / 94222 7066**

**Email: [lottery@ascb.uk.com](mailto:lottery@ascb.uk.com)**

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