

REPORT OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ASSOCIATION

1st January – 31st December 2004

MEMBERSHIP

The number of Clubs affiliated is as follows:-

Open Age	1717
Junior	<u>400</u>
	<u>2117</u>

COUNCIL

During the year, two of our Vice-Presidents, Mr B G Chaplin and Mr B J Goodall became Life Vice-Presidents having completed 21 years service as a member of the Council of the Association. Their positions as Vice-Presidents were taken by Mr J Dolamore and Mr D J Rose.

We welcomed new members, Mr R H Green (Leeds & District FA) and Mr M Greenwood (Harrogate & District FA) who were elected as divisional representatives as well as Mr J Pollard who was nominated to represent Bradford City AFC in succession to Mr S Harvey who had left the club. Mr A Roantree (Bradford & District FA) resigned as a member of Council having left the area.

Mr J Holmes (Keighley & District FA) was elected as a Director of the Company and Mr I Silvester (Leeds United AFC) was chosen to represent the senior clubs on the Board.

We were saddened by the deaths during the year of Mr J Hartley, a member of the Heavy Woollen District FA and the Heavy Woollen Gate Sunday Alliance League, Mrs June Thorpe, widow of Mr Edgar Thorpe who had been a divisional representative for Halifax District FA and of Mrs Elsie Copley, wife of Mr Howard Copley who had represented Leeds & District FA on the Council of this Association. We also joined in the sadness felt by the loss of John Charles, ex Leeds United, Juventus and Wales who was known as the 'gentle giant' and whose career and manner in which he played the game set a standard which all should seek to achieve but which few rarely manage.

Our condolences and commiserations go to their families and to all those who have lost a loved one who had been involved with football in our area.

During the year, UEFA celebrated its 50th birthday and to mark the occasion distributed a number of special certificates to those who had served the game. Only eight were made available to the Football Association and we were delighted that Mr G Pawson was a recipient. At the County FA Christmas Dinner in December, the President of the Association Mr A C Taylor presented the award to Mr Pawson for his work with the County FA and with Leeds & District FA.

Football Association 50 years service to football awards were also made during the year. One of those chosen to receive a special medal and badge was Mr C Coates of Oxenhope FC who was congratulated on the achievement by the President at the annual Charity Shield game at Keighley Cougars RLFC.

ASSOCIATION CUP WINNERS

<u>Competition</u>	<u>Winners</u>	<u>Runners Up</u>
Senior Cup	No Competition	
County Cup	Halifax Town	Farsley Celtic
Challenge Cup	Silsden	Bay Athletic
Challenge Trophy	Beeston St Anthonys Res	Moldgreen Conservatives
Sunday Cup	Stanley Road	Redoubt
Sunday Trophy	Rawdon	Park Rangers
Womens Cup	Leeds United Ladies	Huddersfield Town Ladies
Minor Cup	Harrogate FA	Barkston Ash FA
Junior Cup	Farsley Celtic Juniors	Thorne Rovers
Junior Trophy	Pudsey Juniors	Ossett Town Juniors
Charity Shield	Stanley Road	Silsden

It was disappointing that the Senior Cup did not take place during the year and that discussions had to take place which eventually led to a decision that the competition would be discontinued.

We congratulate those who reached the various finals and trust they enjoyed the experience of playing at the County FA headquarters. Special mention must be made of the achievement of Silsden FC who won the Challenge Cup for the third successive season. A special commemorative certificate was presented to the club prior to the Charity Shield with a similar presentation being made to Storthes Hall FC for their achievement in the 90s. Once again, our special thanks go to W.T. Knowles & Co. of Elland who sponsored the Junior Shield (U12) competition and to the Royal Air Force who are involved with the Womens Cup.

The entries again showed an increase on those for the previous season as did the attendances at the semi-final and final matches enabling the County Cup and Youth Committees to make a greater distribution of the nett gate receipts to the competing teams.

The above Committees continued their policy of inviting clubs and leagues to attend the draws for the latter stages of the various competitions and were encouraged by the response. Our thanks go to BBC Radio Leeds for taking an interest and for broadcasting the draws live and to all those who attended.

CONGRATULATIONS

Our congratulations go to all those who won the various county cup competitions at County, District or League level and to those who won championships or who were promoted to a higher division.

Special mention must be made of the promotion of Huddersfield Town FC, who bounced back from the previous year's disappointment of being relegated, to become members of the newly-named League One of the Football League.

We were also delighted with the progress of Liversedge FC who reached the final qualifying round of the FA Cup and with the achievement of Craig Midgley of Halifax Town FC who was chosen as the player of the round in the same competition. A former member of the County FA representative squad, Craig was presented with a special commemorative salver by Mr P Marsden, the Chairman of the Association.

Our commiserations go to Leeds United FC and Bradford City FC who suffered relegation from the Premiership and Division One (Championship) of the Football League.

The same thoughts go to all other clubs that suffered a similar fate.

Sixteen youngsters from various parts of the County FA area travelled to Cardiff to act as ball boys / girls at the FA Cup Final between Manchester United and Millwall. The County FA provided a coach for those selected and their friends / relations to take them to the Millennium Stadium for a day they will remember for a long time.

REPRESENTATIVE FOOTBALL

Pride of place during the year went to the under 16 and Womens squads which won the Midland Counties Competition and the Ridings Ladies League respectively at the first attempt. The achievement was marked by a special presentation ceremony held at the County FA headquarters. The under 18 squad managed a victory away to Cumberland at the end of the 2003/2004 season which, unfortunately, did not prevent us from finishing at the bottom of the group. Performances at the start of the next season were more encouraging with a victory against Liverpool and a draw away to Manchester giving hope in the Northern Counties competition although this was tempered by defeat against Lincolnshire in the FA County Youth Cup.

Bay Athletic FC from Huddersfield were chosen to represent the Association in the Northern Counties Senior Competition and an early victory against Stokesley SC from North Riding augured well for the future.

REFEREES

The number of referees registered at the end of the year stood at 1,079. In spite of the endeavours of the County and Districts FAs to recruit and retain match officials, there is still great cause for concern at the lack of referees which is continuing to affect the ability of those involved to staff games at all levels.

The work we do with those officials who remain in the game by way of training and development continues and our thanks go to those instructors, examiners and assessors who freely give up their time to assist. We were delighted to welcome on board Mr Stephen Rhodes who took over the role of Head of Referee Development following the resignation of Mr Robert Faley and he has set in place a team of qualified personnel who will seek to maintain and improve the standards previously set. Our previous concerns regarding the introduction of a fee for recruits attending basis courses and its effect on the number of candidates appeared to be premature as the numbers of newly qualified referees remained at the static level, However, more referees were leaving the game due to the abuse received from players and team officials which is an area of continuing concern.

Those referees who remained and who were appointed to various cup finals or promoted to a higher level are to be congratulated on their achievements.

DISCIPLINE

The work of the various Disciplinary Commissions continues with members dealing with approximately 3,000 sending off and misconduct cases. In addition almost 11,500 cautions were processed. The introduction of the FAs County Administration System (CAS) prior to the 2004/2005 season has had a marked effect on the manner in which discipline is dealt with from both the County FA and club perspective. Advice was given to all in a new booklet produced and distributed by the County Office which also contained information on

the introduction of the new FA multi-caution report form to be submitted by referees. Penalties imposed by the Commissions continued to adhere to a policy which will attempt to remind those being reported that misconduct will be dealt with in the severest manner.

DEVELOPMENT

The County FA continues to support the initiatives of the Football Association in creating a better environment for those playing the game.

We were pleased to be used as a pilot area for work on Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks for all volunteers in junior football following our decision to introduce the scheme in succession to the previous self-certification system which commenced in 1999. The steps taken by our Association following the attendance of over 200 junior clubs at seminars in July were highlighted at a special conference on child protection held in Derby. To date, over 2,000 junior club officials have submitted CRB application forms and, whilst this is a tremendous achievement, we are disappointed that there are still many more who have not taken the opportunity to be issued with the special cards being distributed. We take this opportunity to express our appreciation to Pendle Sports of Ilkley who have sponsored the new cards.

The Development staff continued to work on the Charter Standard Schemes for clubs and schools, coach education, women and girls football, equity etc with the latter being mentioned at a Football for All Conference held at Bradford City's Valley Parade ground.

We again support the FA Fair Play Award scheme with nominations being accepted for the 2003/ 2004 season for Ripon City Panthers FC (male youth) and Clifton Rangers Youth Girls FC (female youth) who were due to receive their commemorative medals and cheque for club funds at a presentation ceremony in the new year.

The valuable work of the Local Football Partnership continued with representatives of local authorities, sports organisations etc joining with the County FA in monitoring bids made to the Football Foundation.

GROUND AND HEADQUARTERS

Our facilities continue to attract interest from the Football Association and others who see our headquarters as an ideal location for courses, training etc.

This year saw us stage our first international match when the womens under 19 squads from Bulgaria and Romania played a game in October in the UEFA Womens U19 competition. We have also had visits from the England U20's and the U19's squads prior to games against Holland and France at Huddersfield Town FC and Barnsley FC in September and November respectively.

THANKS

Our thanks go to the members of Council who give of their time to ensure that the work of the county FA is carried out in a professional manner. We are also indebted to other organisations who are involved with us. We offer our appreciation to the members of the District Association and Leagues who continue to support the County FA and maintain the administration which is vital to our game.

The interest shown by the media and the press is also appreciated.

CONCLUSION

The work of the County FA continues to expand as we progress the initiatives and procedures of the Football Association. We are one of the foremost innovators in the development of the game and will continue to be at the forefront to ensure that standards are met, and improved, to ensure that the game of football is enjoyed by all those who take part.

G R Carter JP
Co. Secretary