

REPORT OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ASSOCIATION

1st January – 31st December 2005

MEMBERSHIP

The number of Clubs affiliated is as follows:-

Open Age	1066
Junior	<u>380</u>
	<u>1446</u>

Note: Figures quoted in previous reports included small-sided clubs who are now dealt with through the 'slot' system devised by the Football Association and used by small-sided football providers.

COUNCIL

There were a number of changes to the Council during the year, the principal of which saw the resignation of Mr A C Taylor as President of the Association and as Representative to the Football Association, these coming about in accordance with the retirement age as stated in the Articles of the West Riding County FA Ltd.

Mr Taylor was first elected to both positions in 1988 and his contribution and commitment to the County FA in the following 17 years is immeasurable. During that time, as President, he was largely instrumental in, initially, overseeing the move from premises in Great George Street in the centre of Leeds to temporary accommodation in Wortley before being the leading light in ensuring that we obtained the ground and headquarters when we moved to our present base in Woodlesford in 1995. These were the envy of many of our friends in other County FAs who have, subsequently, decided to follow our lead and re-locate to new premises many of which have included a suitable pitch on which to play their various games.

In the following year, he was Chairman of the Committee which helped celebrate the centenary of our Association culminating in a magnificent dinner at the Queens Hotel in Leeds.

Mr Taylor also ensured that the incorporation of the County FA as a limited company progressed smoothly in 1999 which has made us a more professional and streamlined organisation.

His tenure as the Association's representative to the Football Association resulted in him being appointed as vice-chairman of the FA Disciplinary Committee and chairman of the Referees Committee, positions which reflected the esteem in which he was held by both the Committees concerned and the FA Council. He also served on other Committees where his contribution was always highly valued.

We will miss his leadership and guidance but are pleased to see that he has remained as a Life Vice-President of the Association and trust that he will continue to take an interest in our affairs.

A special presentation was made to Mr Taylor at the annual Christmas Dinner in appreciation of his services. Mrs Taylor also received a memento for her support.

Our former Chairman, Mr P Marsden, was unanimously elected as the new President of the Association with Mr R G Secker taking over the position of Chairman. The Secretary of the County FA became the new representative to the Football Association.

We welcomed Mr P Palfreyman (Leeds & District FA) as a new divisional representative in succession to Mr G P Howden who was not re-elected by the District Association. Mr Howden also resigned as a Director of the Company where he had acted as Finance Director. The Board sought to address that situation by seeking the services of Mr M A Riley as Financial Advisor.

Mr S A Harvey was also welcomed as the new representative from Leeds United AFC which followed the resignation of Mr I Silvester.

During the course of the year we were saddened by the death of Mr P Eastwood who was a Life Vice-President of the Association having been first elected to the County FA as a divisional representative for Huddersfield & District FA in 1981. During that time, Mr Eastwood had served on various Committees and had been elected as Chairman of the League Sanctions and Rules Revision Committee as well as becoming a Director of the Company. He was a vital member of the County FA and is sadly missed.

We also lost the services of Mr R D Faley who had become Head of Referee Development, a position which he took great pride in filling and through which many new initiatives were developed. We will always be grateful for Mr Faley's enthusiasm and commitment to the referees' cause which he championed so earnestly.

We were also saddened by the deaths of Mr M Rawding from our East Riding CFA neighbours who was also their representative to the Football Association for many years, Mr C Coates of Oxenhope Recreation (who had received the FA 50 year award for services to football in 2004), Mr D Greenwood of Eccleshill United and Mr J Fothergill, a player of Swillington Welfare who collapsed during a County FA Sunday Trophy game in November.

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

Three new Directors were appointed during the year, Mr G L Platt, Mr D Fuller and Mr D Hargreaves who were elected to fill the vacancies left by Mr G Howden and Mr P Eastwood referred to above, and the election of Mr R G Secker as Chairman.

Football Association 50 years service to football awards were presented to Mr G Saunders (Craven FA) and Mr G Fairbourn (Leeds FA)

ASSOCIATION CUP WINNERS

<u>Competition</u>	<u>Winners</u>	<u>Runners Up</u>
County Cup	Guiseley	Halifax Town
Challenge Cup	Meltham Athletic	Golcar United
Challenge Trophy	Sherburn White Rose	Carlton Athletic Reserves
Sunday Cup	Redoubt	Bolton Woods
Sunday Trophy	Littletown (Sunday)	Wharfedale Pirates
Womens Cup	Leeds United Ladies	Leeds Metro University
Minor Cup	Leeds FA	Craven FA
Junior Cup	Silsden Jnrs	Knaresborough Celtic
Junior Trophy	Wyke Wanderers Jnrs	Pannal Sports Jnrs
Junior Shield	Brighouse Jnrs	Normanton Jnrs
Charity Shield	Redoubt	Meltham Athletic

We congratulate those who reached the finals of the above competitions and trust that they, and the losing semi-finalists, enjoyed the experience of playing at the County FA headquarters.

The entries for season 2005/2006 again showed an increase on previous seasons as did the attendances at the semi-finals / finals for the completion of the 2004/2005 competitions which enabled the County Cup and Youth Committees to continue to make a distribution of nett gate receipts to the competing teams.

The two Committees continued their policy of inviting participating clubs and their leagues to take part in making the draws for the latter stages of the various competitions and they were encouraged by the response.

CONGRATULATIONS

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

We were delighted with the progress of Halifax Town and Harrogate Town both of whom reached the First Round Proper of the FA Cup in season 2005/06 before losing in replayed games.

REPRESENTATIVE FOOTBALL

Our Womens squad successfully defended their Ridings Ladies League crown by winning the title following a victory away to East Riding at the conclusion of the 2004/05 season. The squad showed that they were determined to complete the hat-trick by winning their first two games in the new season before the end of the year.

Meltham Athletic represented us in the Northern Counties Senior Competition but were unable to progress past the first round losing away to North Riding's representatives.

The under 18s reached the semi-final of the 2004/05 Northern Counties competition following an excellent away victory against Lancashire but were unable to make the final losing to Durham in the semi-final. The 2005/06 season started brightly with a fine win away to North Riding but successive defeats against Cheshire and Durham left the squad with much to do. We were disappointed to lose to Birmingham in the first round of the FA County Youth Cup.

The under 16s had reached the semi-final of the Midland Youth Competition but lost to Staffordshire and finished in a mid-table position in the league for season 2004/05. The new season opened brightly with a fine win away to Herefordshire in the cup but a defeat away to Huntingdonshire and a draw against Derbyshire left the squad in a similar position to the under 18s.

REFEREES

The number of referees registered at the end of the year stood at 1,081. It came as a pleasant surprise to see the numbers at that level as it was generally felt that the introduction of fees for candidates on new referees courses would have had a detrimental effect but this did not appear to have been the case. There is, however, no room for complacency as many games are still played without the services of a qualified and registered referee.

Our training and development of match officials at all levels continues under the guidance of our Head of Referee Development, Mr S C Rhodes, and his team of instructors, assessors, examiners etc. We appreciate the amount of time and effort given by those involved which has enabled registered officials to progress in the game and achieve the standard to which they have aspired.

A small number of eligible referees were included on the new enhanced promotion scheme which could see them advance from Level 7 to Level 5 with a possibility of being nominated to a Level 4 referee in 12 months providing they showed the aptitude and

commitment. The County FA Referees Committee will consider their position at the meeting in March 2006.

A tremendous amount of time and effort has been expended by the County FA in trying to ensure that the FAs instructions relating to all referees having had CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) checks and having carried out Child Protection Training. It is of great concern that, in spite of all our endeavours, a number of referees have still not, for whatever reason, carried out the checks, Our thanks go to all concerned, particularly those who have trained and acted as verifiers.

We were delighted to hear of the promotion of Martin Atkinson to FIFA's List of Referees, where he joins Michael Riley, and congratulate him on his fine achievement. We are tremendously proud of the fact that we are the only County FA with two such appointments.

We offer our best wishes to all those officials who have been selected to referee cup finals and other important matches and congratulate those who have been promoted.

DISCIPLINE

Members of Council have continued to be called upon to carry out duties on Disciplinary Commissions. The number of cases being dealt with shows little improvement in the behaviour of players, team officials, spectators etc which is of great concern to all administrators in the game whether that be at County, District or League level.

At the County FA, Commissions will continue to use whatever measures are required to rid the game of miscreants and improve football for others who wish to enjoy our wonderful game.

DEVELOPMENT

Our development team has undergone many changes in personnel during the year. Miss J Chipchase took over the role of Development Manager in March following the resignation of Mr D Philpott. Miss Chipchase subsequently left our employment in November to take up one of the new Regional Coaching Managers' positions introduced by the Football Association. Mr D Grice was appointed as Miss Chipchase's replacement and he is due to commence early in the new year.

We also welcomed Miss N Copley and Miss N Copeland who took up new positions within the team whilst Miss J Grundy and Mr A Shuttleworth became Football Development Offices following their work on the administration side of the department.

These changes will only enhance the work we are continuing to carry out on behalf of clubs, coaches etc with our Association being recognised as one of the leading Associations in developing the game at all levels.

We are delighted that clubs are maintaining their efforts to achieve Charter Standard status and that the expertise of the County FA staff remains an essential part of their applications.

We also congratulate those clubs which have improved their facilities through successful applications to the Football Foundation.

We again supported the FA Fair Play Award scheme with nominations for the 2004/05 season being submitted for Castleford Town Juniors (Male Youth) and Norristhorpe Girls (Female Youth). The Clubs were due to receive their commemorative medals and cheque for club funds from the Football Association at a presentation ceremony in the new year.

The value of the Local Football Partnership was again to the fore with representatives of local authorities, sport organisations etc joining with the County FA in monitoring bids being made to the Football Foundation.

GROUND AND HEADQUARTERS

Our facilities continue to be used by the Football Association and others who see our headquarters as an ideal location for courses, training etc.

We have had visits from the England under 21 squad as well as other age-groups as they prepare for international matches.

The under 21 manager, Peter Taylor, took time out from a busy schedule to be present at our special presentation evening for County Cup Final officials in March and all present were delighted with his presence.

The Board of Directors and Grounds Committee has decided that improvements need to be made to the headquarters to provide better changing rooms, a larger function and more office space. Discussions have been taking place on a £½ m scheme and it was hoped that work would start early in the new year.

THANKS

Our thanks go to all those who are involved in the administration of the game – members of Council, District Associations, Leagues etc who all give freely of their time with no reward sought except that the game continues to flourish in the West Riding area. We also appreciate the contribution of other organisations who are involved with us.

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

CONCLUSION

The work of the County FA continues to grow as we implement the initiatives and procedures of the Football Association.

There are now many facets to this game of ours which could not have been envisaged some years ago but we believe we have the expertise and support from others to meet the various challenges as they develop.

We believe that we are at the forefront in maintaining standards and developing football in order that it can be enjoyed by all those who take part.

G R Carter JP
Co. Secretary