

## REPORT OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ASSOCIATION

1<sup>st</sup> January – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007

### **MEMBERSHIP**

The number of Clubs affiliated is as follows:-

Open Age	1051
Junior	<u>381</u>
	<u>1432</u>

*Note: Figures quoted do not include small-sided clubs who are now dealt with through the 'slot' system agreed between The Football Association and the small-sided football providers.*

### **COUNCIL**

We were pleased to honour the service given to the Council of this Association by awarding Life Vice-Presidencies Mr R I Allwood (Wharfedale FA) and Mr A E Dent (Bradford FA), both of whom had served as Council members for 21 years. Mr K Hubbert (Halifax FA) and Mr J McAulay (Leeds FA) were both elected as Vice-Presidents. We were sorry to lose the services of Mr I S Kerrison (Bradford FA) and Mr P Palfreyman (Leeds FA) but welcomed nominations of Mr B Clegg and Mr K Parkinson as replacements whilst Leeds FA also nominated Mr D Dalton to take up the vacancy caused by Mr McAulay's elevation to a Vice-President.

The Council received two presentations from the Chairman, Chief Executive and Company Secretary of the Football Association regarding the FAs re-structuring and fully supported proposals which were passed at the FA Annual General Meeting in May.

The Board of Directors discussed a re-structuring of the County FA and placed proposals before Council in November regarding divisional representation, age limit for newly elected members etc. The proposals were passed at the November meeting and were to be presented at the County FA Annual General Meeting in May 2008.

FA 50 year service to football awards were made during the year to Mr W Gallop (Halifax FA), Mr T Cunningham (St Nicholas FC), Mr P Hodgson (Heavy Woollen FA) and Mr J Mills (Wakefield FA).

We were saddened by the deaths of Mr G Pawson and Mr D Hodgson who were both Life Vice-Presidents of the Association. Gerry Pawson had given great service to the County FA serving as Chairman and Finance Director together with an unprecedented stint as Chairman of the Youth Committee for 23 years. He had also given sterling service to Leeds FA as had David Hodgson who had acted as Chairman of the County FA Cup Committee for many years.

A former member of Council, Cyril Craven, also passed away during the year. Cyril had also been secretary of both the Wakefield FA and the Wakefield & District Football League.

We were saddened to hear of the passing away of Mr A Morton, a former secretary of Harrogate FA, and Mr A Tennant, a player of Spa Athletic FC, who died whilst taking part in a local match.

Our condolences go to all their families and friends and to those who have also lost dear ones during the year.

## **ASSOCIATION CUP WINNERS**

<u>Competition</u>	<u>Winners</u>	<u>Runners Up</u>
County Cup	Goole AFC	Guiseley
Challenge Cup	Campion	Golcar United
Challenge Trophy	Otley Town Res	Beeston St Anthony's Res
Sunday Cup	Elland	Silsden (Sunday)
Sunday Trophy	AC Victoria	Chapeltown Brazil
Womens Cup	Leeds City Vixens	Leeds United Ladies
Minor Cup	Leeds FA	Huddersfield FA
Junior Cup	Leeds Lions	Stanningley Albion
Junior Trophy	Harrogate Railway	Pannal Sports
Junior Shield	Pannal Ash	Battleyford SC
Charity Shield	Campion	Elland

We congratulate those who reached the semi-finals and finals of the various competitions and trust they enjoyed the experience of playing at the County FA headquarters.

Attendances for the various matches played at the conclusion of the 2006/07 season were such that the County Cup and Youth Committees were, once again, able to distribute part of the nett gate receipts to the competing clubs.

The entries for season 2007/08 again showed an increase on the previous year which was encouraging and gave a positive indication as to the popularity of the County FA competitions.

We were delighted to welcome Group Response Security as sponsors of the County Cup and appreciated Skipton Building Society's continued involvement with the Junior competitions.

The two Committees continued their policy of inviting clubs and leagues etc to attend at the County FA headquarters when the draws for the latter stages of the various competitions were made.

## **CONGRATULATIONS**

Our congratulations go to all those clubs who were successful during the year by winning various championships and cup competitions organised by leagues and districts associations.

Pride of place went to Farsley Celtic who were promoted to the Blue Square Conference for season 2007/08 and to Harrogate Railway Athletic who again showed an affinity with the FA Cup by progressing to the 3<sup>rd</sup> round.

On the negative side it was disappointing to see Leeds United and Bradford City relegated to Divisions 1 and 2 respectively of the Football League.

## **REPRESENTATIVE FOOTBALL**

The 2006/07 season was without precedent as far as our representative squads were concerned.

The Under 18s won the FA County Youth Cup for only the second time in the competition's history beating Suffolk CFA on penalties at Valley Parade. The squad were also champions of Division Two of the Northern Counties Competition, sadly losing in the semi-final of the play-offs. The 2007/08 squad has made an excellent start to the season with a 100% record in the league and progress to the latter stages again of the FA County Youth Cup.

The Under 16s almost completed a double, winning the Midland Youth Championship for the second time before losing in the final of the league cup, away to Leicestershire & Rutland CFA.

Whilst results in the league for the 2007/08 team are not as solid as the previous season, progress has again been made in the cup competition.

Our womens squad retained the Ridings Ladies League title for the fourth consecutive season, throughout which the squad has remained unbeaten.

The County FA celebrated the achievements of all the squads by holding a special presentation evening at the conclusion of the season.

Our representatives in the Northern Counties Senior Competition, Challenge Cup holders Campion FC, were eliminated by Cumberland CFA in the first round. Although disappointed by the result, the club is to be congratulated on the manner in which it approached the competition and with the conduct of the players.

## **REFEREES**

The number of referees registered at the end of the year stood at 1,023, a reduction of almost 10% on the previous year. This is a great concern to the County FA and reflects the problems being encountered throughout the country. We are determined to do everything we can to increase the numbers and to improve the standards. To this end, we took the decision to appoint our first Referee Development Officer, whose major roles will be the recruitment and retention of referees together with the organisation of in-service training courses.

Many of those who have not renewed their registrations are citing the requirement to carry out CRB checks etc or the abuse received from players, officials and spectators. We will continue to carry out the FAs instructions regarding the former and will deal severely with those who conduct themselves in an inappropriate manner during the course of a game.

Many referees received promotions to the higher levels of the game at the beginning of the 2007/08 season.

We offer our best wishes to them all on their achievements and congratulate, in particular, Mr J Moss who was appointed as Fourth Official to the FA Trophy Final and Mr R Madley who acted as Assistant Referee on the England U16 v Spain U16 international – the first game to be played at the new Wembley Stadium.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Members of the Disciplinary Committee continued to deal with the misconduct committed by players and others. A streamlining of the Commission structure has led to an improvement in the way that cases are being dealt with as members now attend on a more regular basis.

The County FA encompassed the new match-based sanctions for clubs at Step 5 & 6 and awaits the expansion of the system which is being instigated by the Football Association.

The County FA awaits the results of the FAs RESPECT campaign which is due to commence in a few County FA areas early in 2008. It is hoped that this will bring about an improvement in behaviour throughout the game from the professionals at the higher levels to the grass-roots.

Commissions will continue to use whatever powers are given to them to deal with cases and will not shirk from making tough decisions in relation to clubs and their members.

## **DEVELOPMENT**

Our Development section continues to promote the various initiatives of the Football Association, working closely with clubs, coaches, local authorities etc to ensure that the better standards are brought into, and maintained, in all aspects of the game.

It has been a particularly difficult year for the section with various members of staff leaving for other employment but those who remained have worked manfully to ensure that we maintain our place as one of the leading Counties in respect of the future of the game.

We were disappointed at the lack of nominations from leagues and districts for clubs to be considered for the FA Fair Play Award for season 2006/07. The sparsity of recommendations for the award which includes an FA medal for each player and a grant of £200 towards the clubs funds, meant that the award has not been made this year.

## **GROUND AND HEADQUARTERS**

Our newly-extended headquarters continue to improve our standing as a County FA which can stage meetings, functions etc in the Colin Taylor Suite and the new dressing rooms are admired by all those who make use of them.

The Grounds Committee continues to meet and ensures that the facilities remain at the highest level.

## **THANKS**

Our thanks go to all those who work with the County FA or who are involved with the administration of the game. The work carried out by volunteers can never be underestimated although it is sometimes overlooked by those who take part in the game. The dedication of volunteers ensures that football continues to thrive at all levels.

We also extend our thanks to the press and media who cover our activities and we trust we can rely on their continued interest in the future.

## **CONCLUSION**

The work of the County FA continues to expand as we develop the game further. Much of our efforts in future will be concerned with the new National Game Strategy which is designed to increase and improve participation in the game and to use monies, which will become available to County FAs through revenue from FA TV deals and sponsorship etc, in the most appropriate way.

We believe that we can maintain our position as one of the leading Associations within The FA and that, with the co-operation of all participants, we will be able to ensure the continued growth of the number one sport in this country.

G R Carter JP  
Chief Executive