

REPORT OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ASSOCIATION

1st January – 31st December 2008

MEMBERSHIP

The number of Clubs affiliated is as follows:-

Open Age	1024
Junior	<u>371</u>
	<u>1395</u>

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

COUNCIL

At the beginning of the year, we welcomed messrs B Clegg, D Dalton and K Parkinson as new members of Council representing Bradford & District FA and Leeds & District FA respectively.

Following amendments to the Articles of the Association which were agreed at last year's Annual General Meeting, we were delighted to welcome several new divisional representatives – G Parkinson (Barkston Ash FA), M Sheriff (Castleford FA), D B Town (Craven FA), D R Hennessy (Goole & Thorne FA), K Hill (Harrogate FA), C J Spurr (Wakefield FA), D R Knaggs (Wharfedale FA). In addition, Mr Y Lunat was co-opted as a new member replacing Mr T Butt who had resigned due to other commitments.

Mr A Hayes was made a Life Vice-President of the Association for the service he had given to Council and to the work of the County FA.

Mr D Fuller, Mrs M M Ward and Mr M W Lord became Vice-Presidents during the year as a reward for their service to the County FA.

FA 50 year awards for service to football were made to various persons within the County FA including Mr A Dinsdale and Mr D Mayman of Craven FA.

The County FA also initiated its own awards for those who had contributed as volunteers in football for periods of 15, 30 and 40 years. Special presentation evenings were due to be held in the new year.

Three of our Associations celebrated their centenaries with Castleford, Keighley and Wharfedale all staging highly successful commemorative dinners and events.

We were saddened by the deaths of many persons involved in the game including Mr N Pleasants, a former secretary of Leeds United FC and Harrogate Town FC and a member of the Council of the Association as a representative of the former club, Mr L Stark from East End Park WMC FC and Mr E LeHurray, a founder member of Glen Juniors FC. We were also saddened at the news of the deaths of Mr J Worby, Mr A Worby and Mr G Rhodes who were playing members of Ravenscliffe FC who were killed in a motorway accident when returning from an England game at Wembley and of Mr L Wilby of Stanley United FC who lost his life in a car accident shortly afterwards.

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

ASSOCIATION CUP WINNERS

<u>Competition</u>	<u>Winners</u>	<u>Runners Up</u>
County Cup	Harrogate Town	Bradford Park Avenue
Challenge Cup	Bardsey	Barnoldswick Town
Challenge Trophy	East End Park WMC	Boston Spartans

Sunday Cup	Thornhill Lees	West Bowling
Sunday Trophy	Chapeltown Brazil	Mill Lane
Womens Cup	Leeds United Ladies	Howden Clough Ladies
Minor Cup	Bradford FA	Harrogate FA
Junior Cup	Ossett Town Juniors	Whitkirk Wanderers Juniors
Junior Trophy	Heckmondwike Town Jnrs	Pudsey Juniors
Junior Shield	Farsley Celtic Juniors	Silsden Juniors
Charity Shield	Bardsey	Thornhill Lees

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

Attendances for the various matches enabled the County Cup and Youth Committees to, once again, distribute part of the nett gate receipts to the clubs concerned.

The entries for season 2008/09 were again at an encouraging level showing the popularity of the county competitions.

We were indebted to the Skipton Building Society who continued their sponsorship of the Junior competitions.

The County FA introduced two new competitions for Girls Under 14 and Girls Under 16 teams, the winners of which would go forward to the regional finals with a possibility of further progress to the national and UK finals sponsored by Tesco.

We continued to invite participating clubs and leagues etc to attend at the County FA headquarters when the draws for the latter stages of the various competitions were made.

REPRESENTATIVE FOOTBALL

The Association continued to support four representative squads.

The Under 18s were looking to repeat their success of 2006/07 in the FA County Youth Cup but fell at the semi-final stage losing, by coincidence, to Suffolk CFA who they had beaten in the previous year's final. Their record in the Northern Counties Youth League was unblemished with five wins out of five giving the squad the championship for 2007/08. Unfortunately, they were unable to progress in the knock-out phase losing to Liverpool in the semi-final.

The Under 16s reached the final of the Midland Youth League Cup but for the second year running they were disappointed to lose out to Leicestershire & Rutland. The league form was disappointing as we finished in mid-table. The results in 2008/09 were more encouraging with progress to the semi-final of the cup competition and a 100% record in league games.

The Ladies squad relinquished their hold on the Ridings Ladies League losing out to a strong side from North Riding in 2007/08. Results in 2008/09 were again disappointing but credit goes to all the players who have represented the County FA.

Our representatives in the Northern Counties Senior Competition, Bardsey, had yet to make their bow in 2008/09 as their tie against Westmorland (Kendal County FC) had been postponed.

REFEREES

The number of referees registered at the end of the year stood at 991. Although a reduction of 3% on the previous year total, the encouraging signs are that those who have passed the new candidates course are those who are committed to refereeing in the future.

One of the major aims of the National Game Strategy is to increase the number of active referees by 8,000 over the 4 year period from 2008-2012 and to ensure that every game has a qualified and registered referee. As an Association we fully endorse that aim and will be doing all we can in future years to achieve the target.

Our congratulations go to those referees who were promoted to higher levels and to all those who received prestigious appointments at both County and National level.

DISCIPLINE

Members of the Disciplinary Committee continue to sit on Commissions to deal with matters referred by referees and others.

The FA Respect programme was launched in August 2008 at the FA Community Shield. Many of our leagues have signed up to the programme but it is a little too early to evaluate its impact on the behaviour of players and team officials etc.

The West Riding County Amateur League has been selected to take part in the match-based suspension system which is being extended to Step 7 Leagues from the commencement of season 2009/10.

DEVELOPMENT

We have extended the number of employees in the Development Department to facilitate the work involved in implementing the various aspects of the FA National Game Strategy. Our new Development Manager now heads an excellent team including a CFA Welfare Officer, Workforce Development Officer, Womens & Girls Development Officer and Skills Coach all of whom are supported by administration staff. Their continued enthusiasm is having a beneficial effect for our member clubs etc.

We again staged our annual Charter Standard Club Festival in August which was well attended by junior players and clubs. We were delighted to be the recipients of 3 of the national charter standard awards made to clubs and volunteers, all of whom received their awards at an England international at Wembley stadium.

THANKS

Our thanks go to all those who work with, and for, the County FA in the administration of the game at grass-roots level. The work of volunteers is vital to the running of the game and cannot be under-estimated although, at times, it can be overlooked by those who take part in the game.

We also extend our thanks to the press and media for their continued interest in our activities and we trust that we can rely on their coverage in the future, particularly on the positive side of our work.

CONCLUSION

We shall continue to govern and develop the game in the West Riding CFA area. Much of our efforts will again be devoted to the aims of the National Game Strategy which are designed to increase and improve participation in the nation's most popular game.

G R Carter JP
Chief Executive