

REPORT OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ASSOCIATION

1st January – 31st December 2009

MEMBERSHIP

The number of Clubs affiliated is as follows:-

Open Age	1026
Junior	<u>368</u>
	<u>1394</u>

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

COUNCIL

During the course of the year, we welcomed three new members to Council – Mr M A Heap (Barkston Ash FA) and Mr R S Leedham (Halifax FA) together with Mr M A Riley who was co-opted following his outstanding service to the game as a referee.

Mr D J Rose (Harrogate FA) was elected as a Life Vice-President of the Association in recognition of his 21 years service to the County FA and Mr E Beedham (Barkston Ash FA) became a Vice-President.

A number of changes were made to the Committee Structure with a view to covering the different aspects of the modern game by introducing new committees for Women and Girls Football and Small-Sided Football along with a Membership Committee and one to deal with Commercial / Marketing. Members of Council were also re-allocated to Committees in order to streamline the workings and reduce the workload of individual members.

FA 50 year service to football awards were made to various persons within the County FA area including messrs R H Green, P Job and B Radcliffe of Leeds FA who received their mementoes at a ceremony at Leeds United FC following the Leeds & District FA Finals.

We hosted a special event at the beginning of the year when our own long service awards were presented to those who had served the game in various capacities for upwards of 15 years.

The Craven & District FA celebrated its centenary by staging a special dinner and organising an exhibition of the District FA history which was located in Settle.

The exhibition is due to move to Skipton in the new year which will give an opportunity for more people to see the mementoes, pictures and artefacts which have been collected over the years. Much of the credit for this goes to Mr Alan Cawood, a former Secretary and President of Craven FA.

It is always sad to report the passing of colleagues who have given so much to our game. This year we lost, amongst others, Mr Peter Linsell a former Secretary of the Leeds Junior League and member of Leeds & District FA, Mr Bill Firth also from Leeds & District FA and a former member of the Council of this Association and Mr David Woodhall, a referee from the Wharfedale & District FA.

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

ASSOCIATION CUP WINNERS

<u>Competition</u>	<u>Winners</u>	<u>Runners Up</u>
County Cup	Garforth Town	Bradford Park Avenue
Challenge Cup	Ovenden West Riding	Meltham Athletic
Challenge Trophy	Whitkirk Wanderers Res	Storthes Hall Res
Sunday Cup	HT Sports	Heywood Irish Centre
Sunday Trophy	East Leeds (Comb)	Town Boys
Womens Cup	Leeds Carnegie Ladies	Leeds City Vixens
Minor Cup	Leeds FA	Bradford FA
Junior Cup	Farsley Celtic Juniors	Rothwell Juniors
Junior Trophy	Garforth Rangers Jnrs	Kirkheaton Juniors
Junior Shield	Pannal Sports Juniors	Wigton Moor Juniors
Girls Junior Cup	Lepton Highlanders Girls	Goole Town Girls
Girls Junior Trophy	Batley Junior Girls	Silsden Girls

We offer our congratulations to all the above and to those clubs who reached the semi-finals of the various competitions. We hope they enjoyed the experience of playing at the County FA headquarters at Fleet Lane and look forward to seeing them again.

Attendances at the various matches enabled the respective Committees to once again distribute part of the nett gate receipts to the clubs concerned.

The entries for season 2009/10 were again encouraging showing the popularity of the county cup competitions.

Season 2008/09 saw the culmination of two new competitions – the Girls Junior Cup and Trophy. Although the initial entries were disappointing we are determined to continue with both in the hope of attracting more clubs to take part with the eventual winners receiving an invitation to take part in regional finals sponsored by Tesco.

We were delighted with the progress of clubs which entered the various FA Competitions with pride of place going to Fforde Grene Brazil FC who reached the semi-final of the FA Sunday Cup and were one step away from appearing in the Final at Anfield.

REPRESENTATIVE FOOTBALL

The Association continued to support four representative squads.

Our under 18 team had a disappointing end to the 2008/09 season losing in the 3rd round of the FA County Youth Cup and just managing to retain their position in Division 1 of the Northern Counties Competition.

The under 16 team finished as runners-up in the Midland Youth League but once again suffered defeat in the Final of the League Cup Competition.

The Ladies squad performed well in the Ridings Ladies League but were unable to regain the title which went to East Riding CFA.

Bardsey FC, who represented the Association in the Northern Counties Senior Competition, reached the semi-final before losing to a strong side from Cheshire CFA.

Our three representative squads all had new management teams for 2009/10.

The under 18's had encouraging results in both the Northern Counties Competition and the FA County Youth Cup at the beginning of the new season whilst the under 16s suffered defeat in their first game but followed this with victory in the second.

The ladies squad also had a mixed start to the new campaign with a defeat and a draw for their first two games.

Our representatives in the Northern Counties Senior Competition, Challenge Cup holders Ovenden West Riding FC, were still waiting to make their debut at the year end.

REFEREES

The number of referees registered with the Association at the end of the year was 1,045 which was an encouraging increase of 5% on the previous year.

The positive increase in numbers was in line with the aims of the National Game Strategy which seeks an additional 8,000 referees nationally by 2012.

We continued to concentrate our recruiting on those who wished to be active referees in the long term but we were encouraged by those District Associations who also helped to bolster the numbers by organising local courses.

We also took strides to encourage more experienced referees to re-register for the new season and to seek their assistance in becoming mentors and assessors.

Congratulations go to those referees who were promoted to higher levels and to those who received prestigious appointments at both County and National level. Of note amongst those were the selection of Martin Atkinson and Mike Riley to referee the two FA Cup Semi-Finals at Wembley (believed to be a unique situation with two referees from the same County FA) and the appointments of David Richardson and Martin Atkinson as assistant referee and fourth official respectively for the Final.

DISCIPLINE

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

The total number of misconduct charges and cautions for the year has shown a small reduction which may, or may not, be due to the FA RESPECT programme.

We are unable to make this judgement at this stage as the programme is still in its infancy and there are many factors to take into account before a proper conclusion can be reached.

We are, however, encouraged by the number of leagues which have expressed an interest in adopting the RESPECT programme and we will continue to support them.

The West Riding County Amateur League became one of the chosen pilot leagues where match-based suspensions were imposed on players as opposed to time-based which applies in all other leagues. Following early teething problems, the system appeared to be working well which is encouraging for wider applications in the near future.

On a more positive note, the FA Fair Play Awards for season 2008/09 were presented to Horsforth St Margarets Juniors FC (male youth) and Barnoldswick Barons Girls FC (female youth) who each received commemorative medals and a cheque for £200 from the FA together with trophies from this Association.

DEVELOPMENT

The volume of work required of, and carried out, by the Development Dept to achieve the aims of the National Game Strategy resulted in a further increase in staff numbers with the appointment during the year of part-time Referee Development Officer and County Welfare Officer together with an additional full time Administrator and a Disability Officer.

We are encouraged by the strides being made to develop the game at all levels and we feel that our 'customers' are beginning to appreciate what is being done on their behalf.

Whatever work we do will not provide an 'overnight fix' but we feel that the benefits will be there for all to see in the future years.

Many clubs have already been recipients of grants which have enabled them to improve their facilities and we were delighted to attend a ceremony to see the opening of the improved clubhouse and dressing rooms at Silsden FC by the Sports Minister, Mr G Sutcliffe.

We will continue to work in all other areas of the game to improve and increase participation.

We were delighted to become the first County FA in the North of England to achieve the UK Equality Standard. Our Development Manager and Senior Development Officer were due to receive the award at a special ceremony at Wembley Stadium early in the new year.

We have also worked closely with Leeds City Council in supporting their bid to be a host city should the FA be successful in securing the World Cup in either 2018 or 2022.

THANKS

Our thanks go to all those who work tirelessly in ensuring that the game continues to flourish. Most of these are volunteers without whom there would be no game of football in this country. Their work is vital and cannot be under-estimated although, at times, it may appear to be over-looked by those who take part in the game.

We offer our thanks to the press and media who continue to show an interest in our affairs and we trust we can rely on their coverage in the future, particularly in relation to the more positive aspects of our role.

CONCLUSION

The role of the County FA is to govern and develop the game in the West Riding area. We will continue to do that and will concentrate our efforts on the aims of the National Game Strategy which is designed to increase and improve participation in the nation's most popular game.

G R Carter JP
Chief Executive