

## RAF Football Association - E-Bulletin

### RAF SRT Training Camp 2-5 Dec 19

The RAF SRT took part in a 4-day training camp from 2 – 5 Dec 19, further preparing for the upcoming Inter-Services 2020. The training camp compiled of 2 training days with 2 matches against the Prison Service and the Fire Service.

This was a very new look RAF Side, with 9 SRT players away on UKAF duties, this gave the opportunity for other players to step up after being called upon and showcase their ability. The week prior was the annual Station Football OiC Conference held at Carterton FC, this then led into the annual White Cup event where players get to show their potential and fight for a place in the MDS or SRT. A multitude of players were lucky enough to be called upon, this gave them the great opportunity of a trial week with the SRT players and staff, gaining valuable experience from start to finish.

**Day 1** consisted of the already established SRT players and the newly drafted in players getting to know each other, as well as staff introduction. This was a physically demanding day consisting of fitness work and technical work, this gave all players an insight as to how tough the week was going to be. There was a positive vibe around the camp, whilst daunting for some of the new players coming in and seeing the high work rate required at this level, everyone put in 100% effort and trained for their place in the team.



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**Day 2** was game day, this was always going to be a tough against a well-seasoned and physically strong UK Prison Service. This is an annual fixture for the RAF and one that always prepares them well for the Inter Services due to the physical style of play from the Prison Service. It took a while for the RAF to get into the game; this was the first time the majority of the RAF players had played in the same team as each other, so it was all about getting to know each other's style of play. This showed when the Prison Service were 2 nil up by half time, not helped by defensive errors from the RAF. The half time team talk was crucial, substitutions were made to overcome certain areas that required improvement and the RAF started the second half much better. On to the field came Cpl Robbie Priddle, who made a positive impact causing

the Prison Service defence some problems. This hard work resulted in a goal for Priddle early on in the second half. The RAF team continued to work hard through the second half, an excellent one handed save from SAC Dan Gorman kept the score line at 1.2, some excellent switching of play by Cpl Tom Claisse in the middle and hard work down the right by SAC Mikey Branif enabled the ball to be put into the middle for Priddle to again cause a nuisance in the box, resulting in an eventual own goal gained through his hard work. The game was hard fought and finished 2.2, with the RAF being unlucky not to snatch a winner late on from an on-target Claisse free kick.

**Day 3** saw one of the most important aspects of football, recovery and reflection. The morning started with the players taking advantage Sgt Phil Morris and his expertise in post-match recovery working on mobility and stretching, vitally important during a high intensity training camp. A reflection session then took place in the afternoon, very important for the players to be able to self-identify. This led to some excellent discussion, the discussion then progressed further into a training session outside working on certain drills. With a different line up in mind, SRT Manager FS Kev Barry introduced new players into different positions to see how they worked with the rest of the players. The penultimate day drew to an end and the team were stood down to rest ready for the final day of the camp.



**Day 4** was the final day of the camp, and a tough match looming against the UK Fire Service. The players returned all rested and ready for action, a couple of changes made to the starting line up enabled a different approach to the game. Again this was an annual fixture for the RAF, and one that the new look RAF team would have to work very hard for in order to get a result. The Fire Service turned up in good numbers and appeared physically robust. The play was much better from the RAF; some nice switching of play from both Claisse and SAC Tarren Moxon in the DM roles enabled the quick pace of the left Winger in SAC George Barber to cause their full back some issues. After the UK Fire Service took the early lead through a RAF defensive error, the RAF adopted the training ground drill from the day before to perfection, which resulted in a lovely headed finish for SAC Johnny Wiles. The teams went in at half time 1.1, a fair result at this point. A motivational team talk from Barry again led to a good start by the RAF, the game slowly getting more physical as it went on. The Fire Service pressed the RAF defence and again and caused a defensive mistake, this led to another Fire Service goal and put them in the lead at 1.2. The RAF made some substitutions mid-way through the half, Cpl Ash Rowley was introduced and caused problems from the off, his determination and hard work deservedly got him on the score sheet. The game finished at 2.2.

Overall this was a very successful week for the SRT with 2 positive results against two very strong teams. All the White Cup and MDS personnel who stepped up did themselves proud and took their opportunity well on this trial week for the SRT. One of the most positive points to take away is that during both games the RAF were behind, however, they fought hard and stayed as a team and managed to claw the result back to a positive one. The next fixture will now take place on Tue 21 Jan 20 against AFC Wulfrunians.

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