

Upton Junior Football Club

End of Season Reports 2019/20

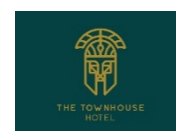


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Chair Person Report

Sean Whitfield



The 2019/20 was all going so well, despite one of the wettest winters on record where we missed a few weekends on grass pitches the great 3G facilities we have secured for winter programme ensured football was enjoyed by all most weeks. The club continues to grow from the strong roots in Junior Football with now over 35 teams and growing girls, Footy-4-Females, Vets and Masters sections, fulfilling our position as a community grassroots football club. All was set for it to be another memorable season only for it to all end abruptly on 16th March with a complete suspension of the season. One of the most important events every member of the Exec committee was clear about was that although we were not able to hold our usual Presentation Day, every player will still receive the recognition they achieved and deserve once each team is able to fully meet again, after all over ¾ of the season had been completed.

Despite these most unusual and unfortunate of circumstances, it has been a huge privilege to be involved with such a great club which is successfully delivering football for over 500 active members of the community 7 days a week. This would not be possible without the huge efforts of the Exec committee who do an extraordinary amount of work behind the scenes, backed up by over 90 coaches and assistants, all of which are volunteers and take time out not only to organise and coach the team but the time planning of sessions, attending coach courses and achieving the coaching qualifications which often goes unnoticed but is hugely appreciated by me and each and every one of us in delivering football for all ages and abilities in a fun and safe environment.

Now we must look forward to next season and prepare to resume football training and matches as soon as we are able to do so. We received the first piece of good news recently that training in small groups with social distancing in place can resume once the appropriate measures are in place to ensure these can be conducted safely. We have already conducted the Risk Assessments necessary to ensure we can achieve this in a controlled manner, along with some additional procedures for the club, coaches and parents to follow and the provision of some additional PPE. We also need the support of the training venues to make this happen safely and we await their return on the 4th July to put the final preparations in place. Initially at least, this will not be the full training plans we are all used to and we need to share the expectations, particularly with younger age groups to ensure everyone understands the format. Each team or age group will need to do this in advance of the sessions resuming. We expect that resumption back to usual full training and matches will happen in a phased way and we are in constant contact with the County FA and the leagues we play in to ensure we are ready for this and put in place any requirements necessary.

In the meantime, thank you to everyone for your support over the last season and we look forward to getting back to our usual football routines.....never again will we complain about the weather!

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Secretary's Report

Lindsay Carrington



Well another season over, but many have the feeling it never really got going !! In lots of respects it's as though we've been cheated out of football this season. With an A - Z of storms and then Covid -19, it really has been memorable for all the wrong reasons.

However football admin still took place..... Club Affiliation, League Applications, Player Registrations, Venue arrangements, Pitch Allocations, League meetings and so it goes on, but I have to say it all seemed to stop when Corona Virus hit the headlines and sent us into lockdown.....Until we found Zoom! The Club Exec have continued to work in the background preparing administration for season end, AGM, discussions with the local authority and building for the start of 2020-21 season.

I've been Club Secretary for many seasons now, juggling it with various other footballing volunteer roles and Lockdown has allowed me to look at the role and delegate tasks out and start the preparation for 2020-2021 being my last season as Club Secretary.

Upton JFC continues to be a fantastic Community Club with a wealth of generous volunteers who make the Club what it is and a loyal membership who support players and club officials alike.

I am sure we'll have no trouble in finding our next Club Secretary amongst you all!

Please get in touch if you'd like to discuss the role.

Please feel free to drop me an email: secretary@uptonjfc.org

Lindsay Carrington, Upton JFC Secretary.

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Treasurer Report

Chris Disley



COMMENTARY ON INCOME/EXPENDITURE

Income from fees was £1k up on the prior year at £59k.

Pitch Hire has been a major cost to us this year with a rise of over £10k from the prior season. Some of the facilities we have used in the prior years such as the university are no longer available which has meant we have had to seek alternative venues for training in particular. We always try to balance quality, location and price but with all clubs competing over the scarce resource that is 3G surfaces we have seen an upturn in the price we are having to pay at certain venues. The particularly wet weather we saw over the winter months also added to our artificial pitch usage.

Kit & Equipment spend is forecast to be around £16k for the season, which is a drop of almost £12k on the prior season. As always, any sponsorship for any of our teams is always welcome and helps to balance some of this cost off. Thanks to all of those who have funded kits this year. It is not something we take for granted and we very much appreciate all your support. If you would like to sponsor a kit next year then please approach your age group manager who will help to facilitate this.

Funding - We have been successful in obtaining several grants during the year from various sources, the most significant of which was some MBNA funding. A lot of hard work goes on behind the scenes by Lindsay and Sue to make this happen. Thanks to all parents who have aided and suggested any funds we could apply for this season.

FORTHCOMING SEASON

Fees – I hope you have all had the time to have read the communication from Sean regarding the new fee structure that has been voted in for the current season. The past two seasons have been particularly challenging from a cost perspective and the expected continued rise in costs for pitch hire make the fee increase a necessary step to ensure the financial viability of the club. This is a very difficult message to convey with the current uncertainty of when we will be able to get back on the football pitch and the negative financial effect the Covid-19 crisis may have had on some of you. The Club Exec will continue to review the fees to ensure the club's future is safe as well as being fair to all our members.

We will again require everyone to use the online option for registration, although other arrangements will be possible in exceptional circumstances. If you are having any issues, please see your age group manager. This has been my first year in the role and although there have been challenges it has also been an excellent experience in seeing the amount of work that goes on behind the scenes by numerous volunteers. Thanks to all who have contributed to the running of Upton JFC and ensuring our community have a great football club that we can all be proud of.

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Under 5/6's

Matthew Edwards



On behalf of the under 5s and 6s coaches (James and Andy and myself), I'd like to thank all the boys and their parents/grandparents for showing such dedication throughout the season. We had great attendance every week, having well over 20 boys attending each Saturday.

Throughout the season, the coaches have been really impressed with the boys' perseverance and competitiveness. Unfortunately we didn't manage to get any matches in against other teams this season having been cut short by corona virus just 2 weeks prior to their first games. Although we didn't get the chance, the boys were itching to get their first game played and we were regularly bombarded with questions of when the first match would be!

The boys have been fantastic all season and shown real improvement throughout the year - we had lots of volunteers each week to showcase what skills and tricks they'd been learning at home, which was great to see. They've all picked up the new drills allowing them to practice their core skills each week.

We were particularly impressed with the dedication shown during one specific week this winter when the weather was horrific. The coaches were more than happy to pack up and head off home to dry off and warm up but plenty of the boys convinced us to carry on training!

Although the majority of the boys we coach are in the under 6s group, we've also had the pleasure of coaching the under 5s group. The younger boys did really well and joined in with the under 6s throughout the season, getting really stuck in - it was sometimes difficult to tell who was under 5s and who was under 6s!

Looking forward to next season, I know the boys will be desperate to get their first game played. It will be a great feeling for everyone to get back out on the pitch and continue to see the boys develop. We also can't wait to watch the boys get their first games and wins in!

Matthew, James & Andy let me know if you need anything else.

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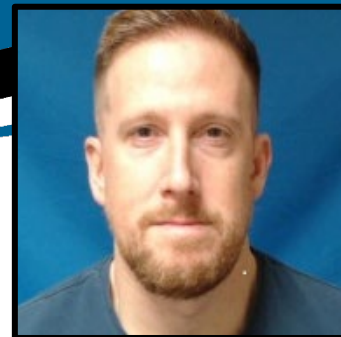
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Under 7 Jaguars

Andy Woolford



The last few months have been traumatic and affected us all, in many ways. To take a few positive things that have come from this, we know the boys have been practising at home with parents or siblings and working on their skills in the garden. The boys have shown resilience and great character on continuing practising their football skills in difficult circumstances. We are proud of all the boys, their effort and enthusiasm in matches and training last season has always been first class. A special thanks to Ryan HIRST, our coach, for all the hard work in devising new training drills and making training and match days fun. Ryan put lots of effort into coming up with new training ideas, and we can see the boys have benefitted from these, as they have all developed since last year, into better players.

We would like to give a special thanks to Richard Pace (Andrew PACE's dad), for the securing of a new kit for last season for the Jaguars. The boys now look the part.

Also a big thanks, to Andy Sheard and Sammy Sheard. Andy Sheard has been helping with training and match days and played an important role within the Jaguars coaching team.

Sammy has been offered a role at TNS in the Welsh league, which is also closer to home. Sammy has been a great player for us, fast and skilful with a powerful shot and always gave his all for the team. Good luck Sammy at your new club. Andy, thanks for all your help and support. You will both be missed, greatly. Thanks to all our parents who have been supportive to the boys and ourselves and have helped us progress.

We are looking forward to seeing you all at training, hopefully in the summer.
Thanks



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Under 7 Pumas

Michael Cloherty



The 2019-20 season has been a brilliant one for the Upton U7 Pumas and all the coaches are immensely proud of the hard work, endeavour, team spirit and happiness that has been the bedrock of this team throughout the season.

Starting as a group of only 8 boys, we made the decision to not enter the team into the formal league after taking expert advice from more experienced coaches at the club. Many of the boys were new to club football and we wanted the focus for this season to be about having fun and developing technique without any pressure of competitive matches. This strategy really paid off for us! Throughout the season our team size swelled to 14 and we had to create a waiting list as the fun the boys were having was communicated to their friends and family who then wanted come and join the team!

We have seen every single player make huge progress throughout the season. Levels of confidence have gone through the roof, technique has improved immeasurably and the development of an effective team, always having fun, has been clear to see. It was a really hard job choosing only one player for the 'most improved' award this season as every player deserved this accolade.

A huge thanks must go to parents and carers who have really supported us in developing the fun and developmental culture that we were striving for as a team. Your dedication to the boys has been outstanding and we can't thank you enough. As the season progressed, we began to play friendly games against other teams. We enjoyed great friendly games with the U7 girls team and the U8 boys team and it was clear that the time spent on training was paying off when it came to matches.

For the summer term, we had then planned for a real increase in the number of competitive matches the Pumas would play, including entry into tournaments. It is such a shame that the current situation we all find ourselves in stopped these opportunities, but we realise that the health of everyone is a priority and we look forward to next season when we can prove what a brilliant, competitive team we are, once we enter the league proper.

So once again, from Paul, John and Mike, a huge thankyou to all the players and their friends and families for making our first season as a team such an amazing one. We are extremely proud of you and can't wait for next season!



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Under 8 Pumas Simon Moseley



2020...what a year, as I sit down to write this piece football seems a distant memory, even though the season was cut short this talented group of lads produced some remarkable achievements. I'm so proud of all the lads, their attitude and dedication are second to none. However what really brings a smile to my face is their ability to bounce back and dig in as a team when things are going against them. All great skills to have in life and on the pitch. The seasons highlight for me was a brilliant 13 game winning streak from November to March, which for a group of 7 & 8 years shows remarkable consistency and ability.

In this run a few moments stick in my mind, firstly the devastating performance against Tarvin in November when we won 9-3. Some of the goals we scored were of the very highest calibre with some brilliant first time passing on show. The next moment is seeing our defensive juggernaut Jack Murphy scoring his first ever goal with a thumping free kick...and the team celebrations that came after. The game before xmas was a match versus an exceptional Waverton team where the boys came out on top battling through mud and freezing temperatures without any subs. Great character! In a tight game against Christleton on a very windy day we passed it all over the pitch eventually laying it back to Evan Jones who hit an absolute thunderbolt from 25 yards into the top corner. Wow! Goosebumps! The magnificent victory against our rivals nomads where every player put in an amazing shift, some of the teamwork on show was incredible. Probably our most complete performance of the season. In what was to be our last game of the season we travelled to Shrewsbury and drew against their academy side. All fantastic memories which are even more important and relevant during these tough and exceptional times.

Special mention must go to Luke and George who spent most of the year playing for TNS Academy and we wish them all the best in their development in the future having been with Upton since the start. Also huge thanks to the parents, the lads are a credit to you and are developing into cracking young men. We hope to see you very soon! Take care!
Simon, Duncan & Pete



The Boys (described from top left to right).

Evan – The pitbull in the middle, magnificent engine.

Ethan – Ferocious left foot and natural finisher! Top Goalscorer!

Arkar – Our rock in goal, safe hands & superb shotstopper.

Jack – Our Maldini, so calm and collected bringing the ball out.

Toby – Great effort and athleticism. Superb tackler!

Monty – Added grit to his game this year – Speedy Gonzalez!

Freddie – A real team player bringing creativity and goals.

Cooper – The Evertonian Messi, wand of a left foot.

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Under 8 Panthers

Matt Hardacre



The panthers season was immense! Starting the season with a move up to from the green league, there was some trepidation of stepping up to that higher level. The boys though quickly adapted and really developed the strong team ethos alongside a strengthening of skills. Games were being won and goals were being scored!

Sitting pretty on top of the league, we were invited again to move up another league. Again, after a few games of getting used to the standard, the boys started to improve and we were clearly at the right level again.

After Christmas, we became very difficult to beat and secured some fantastic wins. Lockdown really came at the wrong time for the boys - they were flying!

All boys have been a real credit to themselves, their families and the club. A wonderful group of people who have come together to create a great team, full of friendship, fun and a few goals!

We really look forward to another great year next season.

Thanks also to panther parents - superb support throughout.

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Under 8 Jaguars

Andy Connally



Having time to reflect on the season we've had with the Jaguars, I look back at what the lads have achieved with great pride. Each and every player should be as proud too, as they've made it happen. Having formed last year as a development side, the individual progress of each player has been incredible.

Collectively, the improvement as a team has been just as impressive. From being a team opposition seemed happy to face, the Jaguars transformed themselves in to the team in the division no-one wanted to come up against.

The determination, perseverance and bravery shown from each player during this transformation is credit to them. It didn't go unnoticed with the league promoting us at the mid point of the season. A real achievement for the lads, and something they can all be very proud of. The new division proved to be a challenge for the lads, but a challenge they've taken on with the same bravery and determination shown before.

Just as the football improved and was something to be proud of, so did our football songs. We're without doubt the best in the league for our songs and we stand out from the rest in this area. Hearing the lads sing their songs together is brilliant, and brings the team together even more.

The early finish to the season came at an unfortunate time as the Jags were improving week by week with the new level they were playing at. Proving themselves against stronger opposition was something the lads were enjoying. So they should too... we're a team on the up.

We would like to thank the jaguars parents for their continued support both on the sidelines and preparing for training and matches.

Well done Upton Jaguars. All the best and keep safe.

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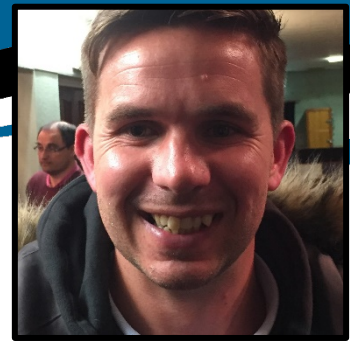
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Under 9 Pumas

Chris Melia



It has been a very interesting year for the u9s! However one that has been very enjoyable for me the coaches, players and parents. Covid 19 unfortunately brought things to a premature end but this was the first season we started with 3 teams across the age group which is great news and very positive for the future. I would like to thank all players across the 3 teams for their commitment and enthusiasm, they have all been a pleasure to coach.

In addition I would like to say a massive thanks to the coaches across the 3 teams who have been incredible and the commitment they give to me and the club is brilliant.

The Pumas have had a fantastic year. The boys had an incredible run in the group stage of the cup. We went unbeaten and only failed to win 2 games ending up topping the group by a considerable distance.

It was a real shame we were not able to have the chance to play at Chester's ground but hopefully that will come next season.

We added two new players to the team over last summer and they have settled into the group really well which has been great. We have also seen massive development in all of the boys this year and I can say on behalf myself, Gaz and Steve they have been a pleasure to coach. The team are now playing as unit really well and the individual ability we have seen this year really does bode well for the future.

Many thanks for everyone's continued support.

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Under 9 Panthers

Dave Carman



2019 has proven to be a frustrating year for the under 9's after being promoted into a higher standard than the year before.

Despite the significant increase in quality of opposition, the performances have been excellent and despite one or two games, I feel that we have at least matched all of our opponents if not actually being the better side.

This season we struggled with results. However the performances have given us reason to be excited for the future and we believe the team will be far more successful next season.



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Under 9 Jaguars

Dan Gray



We know the last few months have been tough for everyone in so many ways. And Saturday mornings just haven't been the same without football.

2019/20 was supposed to be our first full season together, so it was really disappointing that it ended so early. After a tough couple of results early in the season, the team was really beginning to gel – grabbing a few well-earned victories along the way. It was great to end on a high though – beating shield rivals, Saughall, to give the boys a real chance of reaching the next round. Who knows what might have been...

There is no doubt, though, that we can take that positivity into the new season and we can't wait to get the team back together.

Whilst this season might have been cut short, we can't let the season pass without saying a huge thank you to all of the boys for their efforts this season. Every week they played with a positive attitude and it was fantastic to see so many smiles at the final whistle – win, lose or draw.

Over the 18 matches we played this season, there were huge improvements across the team – so much so, it was very difficult to choose this year's individual awards. However, those who have received awards this year both really deserve them for the positive contributions they've consistently made to the team.

We also want to thank the parents who have shown commitment by coming along in all weathers. Without your support, we wouldn't have a team.

Every one of the boys should be very proud of how far they have come over the past few months. We certainly are, and we can't wait to get back together just as soon as we can!

Well done Jags!

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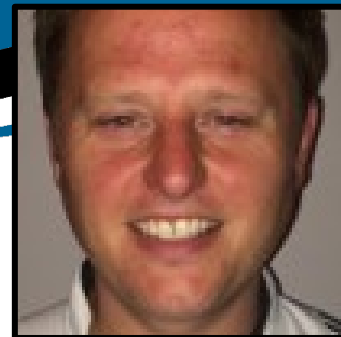
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Under 10 Pumas

Ian McIntock



The Pumas have continued to develop as a team with a style of play which has been great to watch. Their individual personalities bring fun to team huddles and their grasp of teamwork and supporting each other has become more evident during this season.

The excitement and nail-biting moments the team have been involved in and the positive attitudes they all demonstrate on the football field makes Saturday mornings just FANTASTIC.

There have been many highlights throughout the 2019/20 season, including...

- Toby's goal keeping heroics to keep a clean sheet in a 3-0 win at home to Nomads.
- Tyler's debut against Newton, we won 8-3, the lads gave him a great welcome and he won MOTM.
- Coming from 2-0 down to beat Waverton 3-2, no heads went down and a great team performance with goals from Joseph, Hugo & Jamie.
- Hugo's performance against Nomads. We won 6-1, he only scored once but had 3 assists all of which were shots that hit the woodwork leaving tap ins.
- 3-1 win away at Saughall, went 1-0 down but came back brilliantly with standout defensive performances by Gus and Joel.
- Jamie's hat-trick in a 6-3 victory over Tarvin Whites.

Next season as U11's we transition to 9 v 9 games. This means an increased pitch size and the off-side rule introduced. Any volunteers within the parent group willing to explain to the boys (and Referee Andy) the off-side rule would be greatly appreciated!!!

We are extremely grateful for the generous shirt sponsor TFM, who kindly provided new football kits for the three U10's squads this season. (If there was awards for best turned out teams, I am sure UJFC would win).

On a personal level. To Graeme, Kyle, Rob, Finn, Andy and Scott, your continued enthusiasm at both training and on matchdays is the reason the U10's squads have continued to develop their football skills, techniques, Team work and build strong social friendships outside of school. As always 'Thank You' to all the Parents, Grand Parents and close friends for supporting the boys throughout the season, it is very appreciated by the team and coaches.

Finally, it has been unimaginable the effects that the global pandemic has had on our everyday day lives and paused our daily and weekly routines since March 2020, which we all I am sure, used to take somewhat for granted. It unfortunately meant the season was cancelled at the business end of the campaign. We were very much looking forward to a Cup Quarter final with home advantage and the season finale of the annual penalty shootout competition. These opportunities will happen again and when they do, we must ALL enjoy them just that bit more...

Take care and keep well.

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Under 10 Panthers

Rob Lark



Another great season for the U10 Panthers team, winning six out of nine games. We were undefeated in the last six games played, including five wins, and this placed us third in the league before lockdown commenced.

One of the most memorable moments of the season has got to be when the Panthers beat the top team in the division 3-1, who were previously undefeated.

There were some standout individual performances, but the highlight for me as coach was the teamwork and effort shown by all eleven players. I am very proud of the boys who have improved greatly and shown endeavour during all their matches this season.

I would also like to thank the boys that took turns to play in goal each match, after our goalkeeper moved to another team.

It was such a shame that the season was cut short, as the team were in great form and we were looking forward to the knock-out stages of the competition.

When football can resume, we are hoping for another fantastic season!



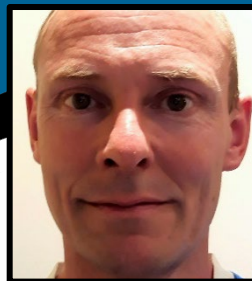
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Under 10 Jaguars Graeme Ainsworth & Kyle Whitley



Before even kicking a ball, we started off on a positive note with a new kit sponsor, Dan Dubell, father of our own Nemanja Vidic, George, whose company TFM Ltd bought kits for the whole Under 10's squad, a big thanks to him and the company.

With the wind in our sails we started off against our favourite team, Saughall Blacks, and came away with 5-2 defeat, but an encouraging start from our new look team, with Josh partnering George at the back, Conrad, full of running making an impact in midfield and Thomas showing his tricks and wizardry on the flanks. Ollie, started off well, with both goals and the MOTM award.

We settled into the red league with 6 wins and 2 losses. The losses were against Blacon, a last minute corner helped in by the 100mph wind and the game of the season so far against Vicars Cross, when at 5-0 down after the 1st quarter, Harry made his debut and the team fought back to 6-6, but then 2 late goals gave them the win. This was the first outing for our new kit, and it was christened in a mud bath. But this was the sort of spirit that was repeated throughout the season, with players rolling their sleeves up and getting stuck in, worthy of a mention is Fin K, whose tireless running makes others jobs easier.

The team was placed in the shield and much to our delight, Waverton, also made it. After the Vicars Cross game, we went on a 6 match winning streak, during which Noah got two clean sheets, and we scored 47 goals conceding just 7. Ollie was a fantasy football hero, with 6 goals and 5 assists during this period but the run was ended by Waverton, a heavy 6-3 defeat. Worthy of a mention is Noah's double save that even now we can't work out how he did it. He says it was down to the hard work Max and Ollie put in at training whilst carrying out their D of E.

Thereafter we had a couple more defeats and finished 2nd in Group A of the shield. Confidence was high for the knock out stages, however it was not to be, due to the global pandemic that affected us all. It was a shame as the team were confident of going far in the competition. Our attack has been led by Kyfin, whose bullish approach scared many defenders, but the support he has had from the midfield is worthy of a mention. Fletcher, Thomas, Fin K, Conrad, Harry, Evan and Ollie all had 7 assists or more, contributing 74 in total. It shows the team spirit, with unselfish play and at times great passing and movement. When these lads want to play, they can give anyone a game. The coaches would like to thank the parents for their positivity, on the sides and on social media.

A great group of parents, which after last seasons' issues is very welcoming. A mention to Fin, whose novel approach to refereeing has led to some amusing comments and offers to take him to Specsavers, which he has yet to take up. But, thanks Fin, you have been brilliant. The coaches would finally like to thank the players and parents for what has been a great season, it's a shame it had to end prematurely, and we look forward to the day when we can continue playing the game we all enjoy.



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Under 11 Pumas

Jim McArdle



This has been a tremendous season, and one that the coaching team have really enjoyed, and we hope the players have too. They have been amazing this season, adapting to the rules of 9 a side, and playing much longer games than in previous years.

We also welcomed an influx of new players into the squad (Adam, Joe, Isaac, Obby, with Mateusz joining late in the season) and they all fitted right into the squad, and the rest of the squad made them feel so welcome. It was great that we finally have a goalkeeper, and a great one at that in Adam, commanding his defenders. We usually played three at the back, rotating the defenders between Ciaran, Brandon, Obby, Isaac and Joe.

They all played superbly, encouraging each other, and working hard to keep their defensive lines. The midfield four was picked from some great Pumas stalwarts in Danny, Rufus, and Logan. The midfield tackled hard, showed great skill, and always looked to play it out to the wings to Aidan and Cameron, both of whom were wizards of the wing.

Finally, the team was led by Max up front who scored more than 30 goals in one season. We needed Mateusz to come in and help with the goalscoring, and he scored after 5 minutes on his debut.

We played some great football at times, with some stand out games this year. The opening game of the season was played away at Tarvin in the glorious sunshine, with the boys winning and Max Godley leading the charge with 7 goals in one game. He definitely took the match ball home that day. The other key game was against Hope Farm, a team who hadn't lost or drawn a game all season. The boys rose to the challenge and should have won, but the game finished a thrilling 3-3.

The Pumas were heading for the quarterfinals of the shield, before the season finished, but I know we will be back next year, eager to play again and get back to winning ways. Finally, thanks to all the parents and grandparents for your continued support from the side, and thanks to the players themselves, each and everyone.

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Under 11 Panthers

Ric Bengree & Iain Steene



The momentum that the Panthers built up at the tail end of last year carried them into this season with great confidence on the back of three straight pre-season friendly victories. When the real business began, however, the Panthers were undone in their first competitive game by a classy Hope Farm Rangers team which they then followed up with a 4-4 thriller at home to Tarvin Whites. It wasn't the victorious start we'd hoped for but the lads were soon back to winning ways with back-to-back wins against Saughall Stripes and Newton Hawks – two teams we'd found tricky to beat in seasons past.

One more loss was followed up by a run of four outstanding performances, including victories against the league's two top teams – Nomads Colts and Waverton Arrows! Already the season was looking messy due to the ridiculous amount of rain causing endless pitch issues but the Panthers had the wind in their sails and by the time we had reached the end of February, they were riding high in the league having beaten every other team on at least one occasion. That this group of players has come so far in the last couple of years is really testament to their fantastic approach to the game and their 'never say die' spirit.

Alas, by the time the season was brought to an abrupt end, the lads had been on the wrong side of a couple of results but had continued to play wonderful football and give their die-hard fans some spectacular football to watch.

The season can not pass without mention of the three epic games against Nomads Colts, the Panthers taking the first, losing the second and then the teams being honours even in the third. Those games alone provide some wonderful memories of a season that promised so much and delivered in spades.

It's clear that the Panthers were going to push for the quarter finals of the cup this year and it is, of course, such a great shame that the season had to end prematurely. But it was a fabulous season, full of energy, spark and fun, punctuated by the thrill of some truly massive victories. We've missed football like mad over the last few weeks but we know that when we can get back together, we'll pick up where we left off and the fun of being together will be all the better for having spent so much time apart.

We always say it but it's true – we are very lucky to have such a dedicated and noisy bunch of fans who, come rain or shine offer such brilliant support and encouragement to the team – thank you. But most of all, to the lads themselves – a better bunch we couldn't hope to have in our team. Come on the mighty Panthers!

Joe, Oscar, Teddy, Eamonn, Elijah, Harley, Hamish, Jake, Charlie, Ewan, Ryan, Alex, Marley and Bryn – take a bow the lot of you...



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Under 11 Jaguars

Matt Parsons & Owen Mason



A successful season for the Jags and it was disappointing that the season was curtailed. We played the first half of season in the Red division. We had a few personnel changes over the summer (players leaving and new faces joining us) and also transitioned onto larger pitches; adjusting to the 9 aside format. The coaching group all agreed they wanted to create an opportunity for the development of this side.

From the outset of the season, the Jaguars exceeded our targets and were soon recording successive wins. The boys developed some really strong playing connections between the new boys and the Jag old guard. In particular, our attacking play was thrilling and a joy to watch. Our strong attacking line up allowed us to tinker with playing formations and patterns. The boys worked hard with the coaches in training and matches to develop this style. Our defensive and goal keeping opportunities were limited during this early phase of the season as we rarely needed to defend close to our goal, however, it gave our defenders a great opportunity of getting forward lots and lots and supporting the attacking play.



We were rewarded at the mid-season break with a thrilling promotion to join the Cup group A fixtures. This allowed us to play the second phase of the season with very much an increased focus on us honing our defensive formations, improving our ability to keep and distribute the ball whilst learning from being exposed to the consequences of losing possession or not making the most of our opportunities. This provided a contrast to our first phase of the season but it enabled our team and all our players to be challenged at every moment during the matches. As the season progressed we grew stronger and we are proud how our players responded showing their commitment, effort, concentration, resilience and raising their skill levels to compete at the highest level.

A Particular match that remains in memory was being on the wrong side of 3-1 to the Newton Doves. During this match we gained parity with their amazing players by working hard individually. As a team, our boys did not give an inch all game, we stopped them in their tracks time after time and when we did have the ball we played with confidence, skill and composure. We were so close to forcing a draw against the runaway leaders of the division but, as this sport goes, we surrendered the ball in the final attack of game and conceded at the other end. Well done though boys that was my match of the season!!!!

We have shown this season that we are a robust team who can take a promotion and then have the character to adjust to playing at the highest level. We are very much looking forward to next season and hope that parents, players and our Upton following will join us in celebrating our season and getting ready to prepare for U12's !!

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Under 12 Age Group Report

In the grand scheme of all we have been through as a society recently the curtailing of the football season was a small price to pay to ensuring the safety of our family and friends. It will though leave a tinge of regret that we never got to finish our final season of Pumas, Panthers and Jaguars. Next season we will merge into 2 teams as we make the exciting transition to 11 a side football.

At a time of reflection, I am sure all players, family and coaches will look back on our journey so far with great pride and pleasure and look forward to our next chapter with great anticipation. The continued support of our parents, generous team sponsors - PME and 'The Mayflower' Chinese take away, the clubs hard working executive committee and our fantastic group of coaches all help provide the platform for the boys to enjoy the beautiful game, bring on next season!



The view before a Panthers match in January, little did we know how prominent the rainbow symbol would become!

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Under 12 Pumas Graham Davies & Dave Booth



When the Pumas walked off the pitch at the beginning of March after being beaten 4-1 by a Tarvin team from the division below us, it was hard to see how we were going to move forward and get anything out of this season apart from a bit of pride. The last thing that anyone expected was that we would not see each other as a team for another 6 months, and competitive football around the world would come to an abrupt halt!

However, in retrospect, there were a lot of fond memories from last season, and pulling these back to the surface fills me with hope for the future when we can get back out on the pitch again. The Under 12's league was incredibly tight this season, but we managed notable victories over Newton, Nomads and Christleton, the latter being a remarkable 6-1 victory when we had to cope with losing a couple of our players on the morning of the game.

This may well have been the performance of the season, although the 3-2 victory over Newton a couple of weeks later runs it close. A mention surely also has to be given to the cup quarter final against Christleton, when only a goalkeeper's fingertip saw us defeated in a penalty shoot-out after a fantastic 2-2 draw.

We were top of the league for the first few months of the season and at the season's close there wasn't much between the top 4. It's going to be interesting to see which team adapts best to going from 9 a-side to 11 a-side. A couple of seasons ago it was us that expanded from 7 a-side to become the best U11 team in the Chester area, and we have the talent within the club to be a major force next season. It will be good to see the team together again soon, and I'm looking forward to renewing rivalries next season.

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Under 12 Panthers

Andy Murphy



The boys have as ever worked hard this season in both training and matches and always behaved in a manner befitting of the club.

The early part of the season saw us start with some excellent performances and positive results, with our best all round team performance coming against Groves in a 3-3 thriller. As well as dealing with the atrocious weather we were also massively affected by our leagues restructuring. We struggled against teams moved down from Division 1 and whilst we could compete with teams with our pass and move style of play, we quite simply did not convert enough of our possession into goals and conceded far too many at the other end.

Our Shield run kept the season alive and we were hot favourites in the semi-final that was due to be played the weekend football was halted. It was a real shame the boys never got the opportunity to potentially reach the Shield final for the third season running and attempt to retain the trophy.

I would wholeheartedly like to thank our parents, younger brothers and sisters who, whatever the weather or result are 100% positive and have created a wonderful atmosphere for the boys to play in. Our coaching team have thoroughly enjoyed the season and I would like to thank James, Dan, Patrick, Luke and Luke for all their hard work. Big thanks and well done to the boys who as always have been an absolute pleasure coach.

Thank you to all of you for a great 4 years of the Panthers in this form, as the team will now split as we move to 11 aside ...

Good luck and thanks to all.



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Under 12 Jaguars

Gary Woods



Jaguars enjoyed another really impressive 19/20 season sitting in 3rd position when the season was cut short with every chance of finishing higher with games to play which was a nice position to be in. Who knows how it would have ended. Unfortunately, we'll never know but saying we were in with a chance is enough for all of us to feel proud of. What was most impressive was only losing 2 of our 11 league games which turned us into a team which I'm sure the opposition had that 'Oh no, we're playing the Jaguars this week' feeling which shows how far we've come.

We lost both our Cup matches against higher opposition but the boys showed great determination and worked hard and didn't appear intimidated at all by the step up in class which showed the confidence they had in their ability as a team.

It became harder as the season went on to pick the starting 9 as all 15 players were challenging for positions which was a great problem to have.

I look forward to the start of the new season moving to 11-a-side and I'm sure the boys will relish the challenge.

Many thanks to Andy, Lee and all the support from the parents over the season. I'm so proud of what these boys have achieved and can't wait till we get started again.

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Under 13 Panthers

Dan Riley



This was to be a season of progress and building. With new players and to swell the ranks and last season's Plate final win fresh in the mind, Panthers were keen on repeating their success in the main cup competition. The first game of the season set the tone with an 11-4 win. New players Ruben, Gez, Harvey and Fletcher quickly settled in to the team getting used to different playing roles and team mates alike: all four boys have been great additions to Panthers. It was also great to see the return of Ben Barraclough who slotted in to the defensive unit perfectly. Further wins against rivals and plenty of goals pushed Panthers to the summit of the league and advanced them in the cup.

Consistent performances and a solid defence became the hallmark of the side. Thomas Taggart in goal was solid and commanding all year behind, Ben W, Dylan, Ben B and Rob. All four are quick, good tacklers and they can pass the ball with confidence. They all contributed goals...usually at key moments. The central midfield area saw Archie, Henry, Ryan and Ruben share the duties. All four have improved as the season has progressed and they scored goals! Lewis dominated the left hand side and became a real handful for all opposition defenders with his pace and direct play. Ellis, Michael and Gez played wide too and made real progress in both their attacking play and defensive duties. Harvey and Fletcher played mainly up-front and both proved to be great finishers competing against each other for top scorer bragging rights.

The season didn't always go to plan and two games stand out, both cup games. The first was arch-rivals Saughall at home on the 4G, ten men to start with including an injured Archie playing in goal and Thomas up front. We won a tough game 3:2 and Thomas scored twice. The second game was against Blacon on the biggest 11 a-side pitch possible. We had nine players this time with Michael suffering from illness but still playing. The spirit the boys showed was excellent and they won in the end comfortably but left the field shattered and Michael managed a great goal!

Of all seasons to be stopped in full flow, this would be the one! Top of the league with games in hand and a semi-final against Newton who we'd beaten 7 nil in the last game. Plenty to be proud of and much to look forward to as we move up to U14s.

Dan Riley, Sean Whitfield, Martin Taggart



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Under 13 Pumas – Pete Barnes, Simon Barraclough & Jon Saunby

This season commenced on a warm September Sunday at Westminster Park and straight in to the transition from 9v9 to full 11v11. Despite being down to a bare 11 the team adapted well and retained their gritty spirit and never give up attitude from previous seasons and despite the opening game loss, the Pumas were out of the blocks and it was always going to be a testing change.

Three new players were welcomed at the beginning of the season and Harry settled well into defence, with Harvey bringing some midfield creativity and Billy starting his first Junior Football season settled in well and played in a number of positions. Will Brimson also returned after a season off and hadn't lost any of his deft ability to chase loose balls down, especially if they were in the vicinity of the goal.

The defensive unit was often a combination of Charlie, Jayden and Sam, ever improving and always showing 110% commitment along with Alexander who often played in the defensive midfield role providing a bite in the tackle. Fin was developing into a fine goalkeeper and built on his shot-stopping strength with a commanding organisation of his goal area.

Speed down the wings came from Mikey and Tom who always proved a threat to any opposition and could also find the net too. Luca either playing down the wings or as centre forward proved effective and was the main source of goals.

The Pumas were fortunate to have a number of utility players who were able to adapt to a number of positions with James and Will Leeson playing both defensive and attacking duties.

Three new players joined just before Christmas with Jake adding strength in midfield and Ashton proving to be a great reader of the game in defence, although able to break forward with pace too. Issac also joined but didn't make his match debut due to many frequent weather affected fixtures and ultimately the early curtailment of the season due to the Covid 19 outbreak.

Highlight of the Season will go to the away match v Tarvin Whites which were always closely fought and despite going behind early on, the Pumas dug in, never gave up and remained in touch although always chasing the game, however, that determination payed off as they secured the equaliser late into the game and a share of the points. The spirit of the Pumas – well done all.

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Under 14

Paul Ireland



Lewis Fuller, Nathan Broomfield, Luke Gomez, Scott Hesketh, Fergal Hickey, Alex Lea, Ted Williams, Connor Ireland, Ben McGlashan, Dan Brocklehurst, Orson O'Rorke, Tom Whieldon, Mongi Abderrazak, Jack Barrett, Jack Robinson, Tom Gwyther, Eddie Frempong, Lucas Talbot.

This season we kept the same group of players from 2018/19 and welcomed an additional player, Lucas, to the squad. Moving on from last seasons' promising performances and results, we were hoping that this season would bring more of the same and going by the 1st game of the season this certainly looked to be the case.

In fact, the first half of the first match of the season, against Chester Nomads, was probably the best football display we have seen from the team- free flowing football and a ruthlessness in front of the goal (6 nil up at half time and easy opening day win).

Unfortunately, from then on the weather turned for the worst and this had an impact on some of our league results. Not through lack of effort from the players, but due to stop-start games –playing one week and off the next – plus injuries to some of our squad, this affected the rhythm of play.

We were however very grateful to Upton JFC, who ensured that even with all the inclement weather we were still able to play all of our home fixtures due to use of the 3G pitches.

We were looking forward to a Cup semi-final fixture before the lockdown intervened and the boys were desperate to get into the final again this year and put the disappointment of last year's cup final defeat behind them. The last few weeks before the lockdown, everything had fallen into place and we were full of confidence that this would be the year that we would take home the Cup.

I really do hope the boys join us again next year and that training can resume as soon as it is possible and safe to do so. A big thankyou to all involved – the club committee, parents, coaches (John, Ricardo and Will) but most of all the players, for the effort and commitment you have shown this season.

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Under 15 Martin Lally



We welcomed 4 new players into the team this year Jack Bamber, Ethan Ramsden, Tom Leaney and Rubin Bunting and we went through a long and successful preseason to help the team gel. Having decided to compete in Division 2, confidence was high as we faced Great Sutton Panthers for our first game. However, any thoughts that we would cruise through the campaign were quickly dispelled as we were caught cold and beaten decisively by an aggressive, competitive team on a pitch that had more in common with a farmer's field than Wembley.

We had to put that behind us quickly, as we faced another good team straight after, in Groves who gave us a great game, but we battled from behind to win 4:2 and get a much-needed first win under our belt. We then went on a 5-game winning run and whilst the other teams in the division were taking points off each other, we went top of the table, a place we would hold for most of the season.

We had some tough Cup draws, pulling Division 1 opposition in both the cup and the shield, but early exits helped us to concentrate on the league and we continued our winning run. The club's provision of Astro turf facilities meant we completed all of our scheduled games and contributed to the team developing a slick fast passing game, which made us very difficult to overcome at home. The away games, when not washed out, proved a greater challenge, as we sometimes struggled to get our game flowing on boggy and undulating away pitches and this is something we will need to work on next season.

When COVID-19 intervened, although we had slipped off the top, we were still very confident of taking the league title, as our games ahead were against opposition we were confident we could beat. So, a very frustrating end to the season denying the boys a championship medal their hard work and dedication thoroughly deserved. We are all looking forward to next season, although we will be very sad to say farewell to Freddie Hughes and Charlie Bird, who have decided to concentrate their athletic efforts on American Football and Rugby respectively.

Many thanks to our dedicated team of coaches, Steve Robinson, Mark Read and Neal Darracot, who juggled busy work schedules to ensure we never missed a training slot all season. Thanks also to Michelle Lally, who supports the team with match arrangements and team communications. Also I am so grateful to our fantastic group of Parents and Grand parents who make match day such a pleasant experience for coaches and players with their encouragement and support – honestly one of the nicest and supportive side-lines I have been a part of through many years of coaching and watching grassroots football.

Goal scorers Joe 9, Rubin 8, Ben Ryan 6, John 5, Jack B 3, George S 3 Charlie 1, Ben Darracot 1, Olly 1, DJ 1

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Under 17s

Lindsay Carrington



"Season 2019/20 started positively for the U17s. The last age banding of U17/18s in junior football and the start of what we hope to be a two season campaign to see us right through the ages of C&DJFL.

The lads once again showed their commitment with lots of pre-season training and friendlies and even allowed themselves a break to mark the end of exams, proms and GCSE results!

Summer holidays out of the way, new starts with education, apprenticeships, jobs and most importantly football back on the agenda we said farewell to a few faces and welcomed one or two more for the season ahead.

Lots of change with many teams for the new season meant some games were unpredictable and to be honest we found ourselves scratching our heads at times wondering how we could have so much possession but not convert it to goals ! Our supporters thought the same too!!

But with a bit of patience, tinkering with positions, players bearing with us, having faith in our decisions and contributing themselves to the team things eventually started to click and the lads started to play the way we've become accustomed to.

However weather then became an issue, wind , rain, wind , rainbut nothing prepared us for Covid-19! And the world grounding to a halt!

So we we've been left reflecting on what was and being thankful for 10 league games completed with 1 loss, 1 draw, 8 wins, lots of memories and not forgetting the superb attitude of each and every one of our lads - they are a credit to their families and Upton JFC.

So now we look forward... we've had a super response for the lads wanting to continue next season and that for now is where we are at.

Thank you to the lads for their commitment to Upton JFC and to our wonderful supporters. I look forward to season 2020-21 !

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Under 17 Panthers

John Assinder



Coaches: Dave Jones, Simon Lea, Dave Stockley

For the 2019/20 season, we were pleased to be able to continue to field a team in the U17/8 league and with only one division for the first time, the competition was tough. After a futile search of the fixture list for 3-point bankers, we turned our attention to strengthening our style for the upcoming challenges. A promising pre-season friendly where the boys scored 5 gave us optimism that we would be competitive in the league.

We started the league proper with a courageous performance against Winsford Over, narrowly losing in a close fought match. However, the positives seen in that opening match ultimately didn't translate into success in later fixtures. For the first time in the Panthers we were badly affected by long term injuries to Luke, Sam and Herbie, some of our key players. This tested the depth of our squad and despite hard work and willingness to play out of position, we found ourselves overwhelmed and heads began to drop.

A good win mid-season against Westminster Park lifted spirits but this optimism turned out to be short lived and we slipped further down the table. All of the boys can be proud of their efforts over the season, and our favourite memories of each of the boys for the season include Herbie's grit in midfield and defence, Nathaneal man-marking and running from deep, Luke returning from injury to resume spectacular goalkeeping and Thomas showing guile and new-found teeth in midfield. Ben ran tirelessly from midfield and in several positions at once while Ethan showed courage and a never-say-die attitude in defence. Lawro provided great goalkeeping skill and outfield menace, Sam was immense in defence before an injury sustained in training cut short his season and Jack delivered unbelievable long corners and was indefatigable in defence.

In the other full back position Lewis quietly went about snuffing out attacks and in front of him Matthew provided threat and speed on the flank. Tom Bell brought skills and elegance to the front line, with Mike hugging the opposite touchline at high speed with the occasional Ronaldo chop. Joe rose like a salmon to score a cracking header and adapted nicely in the No 10 role while Archie showed composure on the ball and talked the team through the game. Marcus always saw and made the right pass, often setting free Will who scored some terrific goals despite our struggles and Anil returned to add strength and power to defence.

It's been a lovely journey with the boys, some of whom have been with us from U8s. We have many happy memories and it has always been a privilege to coach the Panthers who over the 9 seasons must have one of the best disciplinary and fair play records in the league. The boys can be proud of their team spirit and determination and opposition coaches and refs often commented on the fine conduct of the players and parents. We are very sad to say goodbye and it is a real shame that we were unable to finish the season and enjoy more success. We would like to wish the boys success with their footballing futures and hope that many of them continue to play and train in the Upton JFC family. Of course, all of this is only possible with the support of the coaching team. Once again, I would like to thank Dave, Dave and Simon for their commitment, great ideas and enthusiasm! Finally, we would like to thank all the parents for their support – we have always had the best fans in the League!

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Under 17 Panthers



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U6 & U7 Girls



Coaches – Jim McArdle, Chris Disley, Adam Kelly, Julia Roberts-Page, Ruel Briscoe

Team – Lily Otton, Evie Kelly, Freya Hirst, Emelia Cooper, Alice Roberts-Page, Gracie Hewlett, Florence Eckersley, Libby Roberts, Anwen Hughes, Varshini Vijey, Flora Taylor, Elizabeth Rose, Elodie Toy, Lilia Hughes, Abigail McArdle, Poppy McKenna, Evie Disley, Isla Rogers, Charlotte Stockdale.

It has been another wonderful year for the progression of girls football within the club, and there have been so many fabulous highlights this year. At the start of the season, we had the U5&U6 and U7 squads training separately, this enabled the younger girls to learn new skills and drills, many thanks to Andrew Godley for stepping in to take this group and thanks to the club for providing indoor facilities to enable the players to enjoy warm and dry training, for the 5 year olds this made a real difference. After Christmas we made the decision to combine the two squads which allowed us to share facilities, resources, and coaching ideas. The U5 and U6 girls relished playing with their peers, and the U7s were welcoming and led by example. This led to really fun filled Saturday morning sessions which everyone enjoyed, players and coaches alike.

We also saw the U7's start to play friendly games, and we had some fantastic games against the Upton U7 Juniors, Frodsham, and Mynydd Isa. The girls relished these games, played some amazing football, and were a real credit to the club.

We also played our first futsal tournament which was a great learning experience as the players quickly adapted to the futsal rules and enjoyed games against Crewe Alexandra and Waverton.

We now look ahead to next season, the U7's will be moving up to U8's and will be playing regular matches at Moss Farm as part of the Cheshire Girls League, plus commencing mid-week training. The U5/6's will be stepping up to U6/7's and will continue to train on Saturday mornings. As a coaching team, we would like to thank all of the players and their families for the continued commitment this year. We hope that they have enjoyed playing football as much as we have enjoyed leading the coaching sessions. Finally, we should thank the club for the provision of the amazing facilities at Blacon High, and we must thank Sue, who has been an amazing driving force behind the rise of girls football within the club.



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U8 Girls



Coaches – Mike Roberts, Shaun Layland, Steve Taylor, Tom Ashley

Team – Freda Ward, Liana Ashley, Nell Hutchinson, Amélie-Rose Godley, Olivia Zarac, Cora Layland, Connie Parry, Teresa Acerra, Lois Roberts, Elsie Taylor, Phoebe Ireland, Carmen Carballada Wiggin.

This was the Wildcats first season in the Mid-Cheshire U9 Girls League and they all did brilliantly. As an U8 team they were usually playing teams a year older however they more than held their own, playing with fun and determination and with a great team spirit. The record was 6 wins, 2 draws and 7 losses, which were mostly tight games, however the highlights were definitely the 6-3 win vs Sandbach, with a hattrick for Connie, and the 5-0 win against Waverton. A special shout out to Nell, who always gave her all even when playing for opposition teams when they were short of players - she loves the competition!

Off the pitch the girls enjoyed being mascots for the Liverpool vs Everton Women's match held at the Chester ground in February, the girls behaved immaculately and were very proud to represent the club, it was a really exciting event for all concerned. Each of the girls has really improved this year, building in confidence and skills, bringing this to the matches. Training is always fun and even in the wet, winter sessions they never lost their smiles and enthusiasm.

We welcomed two new players this season, with Fred and Sophie joining the squad and we look forward to their first full season with the Wildcats.

The coaches would like to thank the parents for their support in bringing the girls to training and match days and we look forward to getting back to football for the new season. Also, a huge thanks to Sue for everything she does for the club and, especially, the girls teams.

Finally, thanks to all the Wildcats being such fun and working so hard!



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U9 Girls - Phil Rowlands & Richard Mills



Team – Phoebe Curwen, Julia Kwiatkowska, Lyra Riley, Darcy Jackson, Hollie Smith, Cayla Hackett, Eleni Ireland, Poppy Thompson, Sophie Rowlands, Seren Watt, Nesta Wilson, Ava Laing.

This has been a great year for the U9 girls, enjoying what would've been their first full season in the Mid-Cheshire Girls League. The girls have made great improvement to every aspect of their game and have enjoyed playing structured league matches once a fortnight.

They are a great bunch of girls and have been a pleasure to coach and it's been great to watch the girls find their own preferred playing positions on the pitch.

We were sad to see Phoebe leave when she returned to Australia at Christmas but we have welcomed Ava and Nesta who are great additions to the squad as we go into the 7 a side format next season.

Personal highlights for me include a last-minute equaliser scored by Cayla in a match early on in the season and also, Sophie scoring a hat-trick in the first game of the season. As always, a massive thanks to all the parents and supporters who bring players to training and matches. Special thanks for Jemima Whitfield and Richard Mills for their invaluable assistance on the pitch.



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U10 Girls - Laura Byrne & Jas Panesar



Team – Niamh Lofthouse, Hannah Rogers, Dia Panesar, Rachel Joseph, Edie Byrne, Elsa Stockley, Ruby Billington, Nicole Hackett, Astrid Gruber, Keira Ting, Emily Leader, Megan Ellis, Isla Hope.

This season the girls have continued to work hard and make improvements, they have responded really well to playing 7 a side, up from 5 a side last season. The team won 4 out of 5 games at the beginning of the season taking them into the Osprey Division. Although this was a tough test for the girls they rose to the challenge and continued to play with passion and determination.

The girls played 9 games in the Osprey Division, winning 4, drawing 2 and losing 3 very close, competitive games. Again, the girls fought hard and never gave up whilst encouraging each other to keep working hard, which is amazing to see and be part of.

We would like to thank all the girls and parents for their ongoing commitment to the team. It is an absolute pleasure to watch the girls grow in confidence and skill and be able to apply this in a match situation. They have also been great team players throughout the season and often played in positions they may not be used to in order to help the whole team. We are very proud of each and every one of them. We look forward to whatever challenges next season brings and will continue to support the girls in building confidence and skill whilst more importantly having fun and enjoying playing as part of a team. A massive well done girls, you are all amazing!



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U11 Girls

Paul Mickelburgh & George Gorse



Team – Hannah McGlashan, Angel Mulvey, Arabella Andrews, Eve Hunter, Sarah Mickelburgh, Grace Henderson, Grace Law, Katy Rockall, Beth Borman, Katie McAllister

This has been an excellent season for the U11 girls team, which finished with them topping the Mid Cheshire U11 Sycamore Division. This was a great achievement with all of the girls continuing to play their football with great spirit and enthusiasm.

The team's excellent results were matched by their excellent attitude and behaviour, and they have been an absolute pleasure to train (as usual). Clearly all of their hard work and commitment has paid off. The season started slowly with league qualifiers, but once the girls were assigned a league they really gelled and worked well as a unit.

The girls achieved 13 wins and 1 draw out of 14 games, scoring 64 goals and only conceding 5. They failed to score on only one occasion throughout the whole campaign.

In terms of games to remember, two come to mind. The first was the resounding win against Waverton, with most of the girls managing to score (including our goalkeeper/ striker, Angel). The second was the win against Barnton; the strongest opposition team in our league. The girls went 1-0 down but continued to battle on and showed determination, until finally pulling a goal back just before half time. In the second half the team played some of the best football I have seen them play to date, resulting in the 5-1 victory.

Unfortunately, the season has been cut short, which has meant that the Cup competition was cancelled, but it was great that the league matches were all completed for the team. A big thanks to Janette and Charlotte who have helped out with first aid and match day duties, as well as George who has brought new life to training sessions. I hope to see you all next season, enjoy your summer.



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U13 Girls

Rich Cartwright & Gill Smith



Team – Georgia Bowden, Isabelle Brown, Holly Cartwright, Annabelle Dunn, Grace Dunn, Emmy Graham, Mia Hunter, Olivia Jodba, Evie Legerton, Grace Meenan, Grace Morton, Holly Owen, Tallula Palmer, Elin Richardson, Lil Younis.

Played 12 - Won 4, Lost 4, Drew 4 (14 goals)

This season has been a real rollercoaster and totally unpredictable both on and off the pitch!

We welcomed 5 new players to the squad and our competitive season started on 7 September 2019 when we got off to a great start beating Holmes Chapel 2-1 with a new look team. In the League we then had some really good performances, most notably a 4-3 victory against Blacon which included a Grace Morton hat-trick, as a local derby these matches are always very tense, and this was probably our most entertaining match of the season. Top scorer for the season was Grace Morton with 9 goals in her debut season, Mia scored twice including a memorable goal against Middlewich when she took the ball past three players and slotted it in the corner, whilst Tallula, Holly Cartwright and Olivia all registered one each.

The defence was consistently solid with three 0-0 draws and it was no surprise that defenders took the player of the match awards in a number of games. It's fair to say in all those 0-0 games we were the dominant team but just couldn't get that winner!

Our last game of the season back on 1 February was a 1-0 win against Holmes Chapel, the team we started the season against! During this game we scored our best team goal with a three-pass move starting in our own half.

The girls were a credit to the club and whilst it ended abruptly the games we played were enjoyable and the girls bonded well as a team. This should put us in good stead for next season. A big thank you as always to Gill for her commitment throughout the season from running coaching sessions in torrential downpours to setting up goals in the freezing cold in January. In addition, a big thank you to Sue for ensuring we had all the kit and support to run the team and finally to all the parents for bringing the girls to Northwich each week to play the games



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U15 Girls

Chris Avery



Coaches – Chris Avery, Dave Jones, John Assinder, Dave Stockley

Team – Emma Stockley, Sophie Parry, Hannah Daunt, Ruby Wilbraham, Millie Dewhurst, Rosie McAlavey, Abi Avery, Eva McGarrell, Vienna Doherty, Kimberley Moulton, Isla Cormack, Cassie Burgess, Jess Jones, Kate O'Hea, Abby Cooper, Emma Assinder.

The girls have gone from strength to strength this season, with significant improvements in all of our players. Vienna, "Safest hands in Soccer" has been fabulous in goal, drawing envious glances from opposing coaches. Defensively, Little Eva shows all the power of a locomotive, whilst new recruit, Kim, has added leadership and steel. Jess has shown tireless chasing and is developing into an excellent footballer which I like to think is in the genes (her Mum's pretty good at footy too!) and Abby C, with her infectious energy and enthusiasm, has been immense in defence. It has been great to see Cassie and Emma Stockley return to action this season, terrorising defences with their speed, agility and quick thinking. Emma Assinder's uncompromising style has been the perfect shield to the defence, whilst Abi A has shown her superb technical ability, a result of her hours of practice.

Kate has had a roving role in midfield, making tackles and scoring a sublime 20 yard goal as well; she is an excellent team player, who is always prepared to fill a role the team needs. Rosie, one of our best players last season, has made a return from a horrible knee injury and another new recruit, 'Ruby, Ruby, Ruby', has covered every blade of grass and scored goals for fun.

Millie, the fastest girl in the world, has also been banging in the goals. Isla has been stopping them at one end and scoring them at the other, whilst Sophie continues to be a nuisance to opposing defences – buzzing around them like an angry wasp. Hannah's first match appearance was much appreciated and we hope there will be more to come. The girls have been a joy to work with. We've won a few, lost a few but laughed a lot. A big thank you for the support of our parents. The confusion on the faces of the opposition when our parents wildly celebrated an 8-1 defeat (such had been the improvement on the previous encounter with the league's top team) will live long in the memory.

Roll over Covid and roll on next season!



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Adults Football



This year has seen the progression of more adult teams in the Upton JFC set up. With successful Open Age Blues (adults that can include +16 years and above) continuing to get more players year on year. This year saw the progression of a new Youth Open Age Team to facilitate those younger players moving from Sunday to Saturday adult football. Vets for over 30s grows again this year with players continuing to contact us to join in the numbers for training nights and match days, including internal games and social tournaments that have become regular feature and enjoyment throughout the season.

We continue to progress the adult and youth set up year on year as more and more players want to continue to play for Upton JFC. Part way through the year also saw some of the senior Vets evolve into a new Masters team for over 45s that is also grown in numbers weekly.

Overall, the appetite for playing adult football continues for all with over 100 players across the teams and a great season was certainly unfolding for both our Open Age and Vets teams this year. We all can't wait to get back to playing and managing competitive football again soon and get in contact with us if you want to join.

**DAVE ROCKALL – Adult Development Officer (07768 121937) and
DANNY EVANS – Youth Development Officer (07949 872042)**

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Open Age Blues Dale Williams & Niall Hickey



The Adult Open Age Blues team is now in their fourth season, but myself and Niall's first season in charge. We'd both like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that has made it so easy for us to feel part of this growing team.

The blues, after a slow start to the season, really started to impose themselves on the league beating 2nd places finishers twice and only getting beat to runaway league winners by the odd goal in a very tight game.

The cups were looking a very strong possibility of the team winning silverware again this season that was cut short leaving us in the semi-final of the league cup and quarters of the Tom Gerraghty Trophy.

As the season was evolving we saw several of the youth team pushing their way into contention for the blues and a couple earning regular places in the squad and starting 11. The new season can't come quick enough for us all with more talent coming through from the youth team and also now the current under 18 team.

The future looks bright for everyone involved with the open age adult set up and we very much all look forward to it again next season lads.



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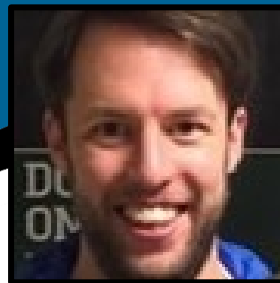
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Open Age Youth

Dave Kamperman & Dave Rockall



The Youth team was a new addition to Upton JFC for the 2019/ 20 season. An opportunity for the growing blues squad and under 17/ 18 players to continue their football experience with Upton JFC in the Chester and Wirral Football League.

The players' and team's development has been strong and aggressive with the team competing and beating more established sides. The Youth Team demonstrated this in a short period of time with 7 wins from 9, one of those loses being a narrow cup defeat to CWFL Premiership winners, Sutton Athletic. However, an unbeaten Wigan side were one for the many teams that fell victim to a mature performance from the Youth side, in the Northern Cup. The Northern Cup was becoming a good chance for silverware, as the Youth Team also comfortably played a league leading Liverpool side, away from home. This game even drew comments from the opposing side saying that 'they haven't been played of the park like this in years.'

The Youth were also going strong in the Cayzer Shield, another trophy that looked on the cards, replicating what the Blues did in their first season. The team had made a push in the league and a string of good results saw the Youth Team finish 2nd on the points per game system, when the season was called to a halt.

The Players, some as young as 16, have made such an impact in the team and continue to develop at frightening pace as they move into adult football. They have been outstanding in representing the club.

On behalf of the team, we would like to thank the Executive Committee, volunteers that continue to ensure that Upton JFC stay at the forefront of Grassroots Football.

Also credit all the younger age group managers who are creating brilliant footballers and preparing them so well for adult football. We hope you are all keeping fit and healthy, we look forward to welcoming all the players back as soon as we can.



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Vets (Over 35s)

Ben Walley



Vets are made up of coaches and parents from Upton JFC and have been running for years. After last season's promotion, the Vets we placed into the CWFL Tarvin Precision Division 1 completing in around 20 competitive games. Due to the Pandemic we only finished 9 of the league games and 4 of the cup games.

Our team again has grown and with an unlimited squad size it has been great for those wanting to join and play even on a part time basis. Having been part of such a fantastic season in 18/19 with the majority of our games being wins, we knew this year would be tough as the calibre of teams in the Division 1 was far superior. Within the league we won 2 games, drew 2 games and lost 5 games, however we did make it to the Semi Final of the Doug Johnson Shield which we were due to Play Tarvin Vets and had the big possibility of getting to the final as we had not lost to Tarvin for 3 seasons.

Within the 13 competitive games, we scored 33 goals in total.

A big well done to all players this season who have contributed in so many ways as there are too many to mention.

Particular mention to Stuart Cousins this year who sponsored our new kit, then scored 9 goals and was one of couple vowing for this year's Golden Boot.

Andy Murphy for assisting in training most weeks, James Edgell and Richie Evans who between them won over 50% of the Man of the Match awards with important contributions in every game. Much fun was had again this season as we have played some great football. Next season will hopefully be much of the same.

Anyone wanting to get their boots on, come and join. Anyone welcome, just give send a message or mention to your age group manager.



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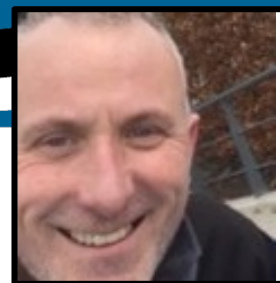
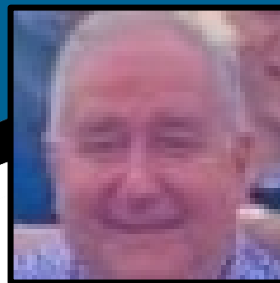
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Masters (over 45s)

Chris Leavy & Gary Thomas



The Masters evolved this year from our Vets set up, enabling players both past and present, to continue training in a safe environment, play against other like-minded senior vets teams who have similar set ups, and look to further extend the playing platform of Adult football from youth to seniors.

Following a few phone calls a small group of us, 6-8 players at most, found ourselves starting our 1st training session on a cold Monday night on the Chester 4G Rugby club pitches, unaware of what we had started!

From that 1st session we have seen the interest in this level of football grow dramatically, regularly seeing 20+ players (incl. some vets) attend our Monday night sessions and now has >28 players who we hope will continue next season.

The goal of this group was to encourage players who may not be as fit as used to be, a way to stretch the legs and lungs safely, and as vets did a few years ago, encourage other clubs to do same, and work with them to arrange regular friendly games during the season.

Prior to early close of season, we played 4 games, winning 2, losing a close game to our Vets team (albeit they took it easy on us!!) and losing to a strong Vets team in a charity match raising money for Alzheimers society.

Special mention must go to Ritchie Roberts who netted more goals than rest of us combined, to Chris Leavy for building the start of something we hope will become much bigger, and to all those players who dusted down their kits and boots out and came along, making these sessions as enjoyable as they have been.

The goal for next season is to maintain the regular training sessions, whilst pushing on with plan to develop a small network of +45s with local clubs and hopefully leading towards a Masters league, and all whilst we work within community of the club to help fund raise.

If you are +45, fancy getting your boots on and having a safe kick about please contact myself or Chris



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Footy 4 Females

The women's football section of Upton JFC goes from strength to strength, continuing to offer recreational football to everyone from beginners to more experienced players. This season has seen the Blues move from 6-a-side to a more competitive 9-a-side format, which has allowed some of the Blacks to play alongside the Blues, gaining experience and confidence. Sadly, the curtailment of the season meant we barely got into our stride this year, but we enjoyed several matches at Moss Farm and an epic friendly against Mynydd Isa at Chester Rugby Club. The Blues once again demonstrated their skills and consistency in the matches played and could well have gone on to win their league if the final few fixtures had gone ahead.

We said goodbye to a few great players this year as they went off to join other teams. We waved a particularly fond farewell to Eline, the best Dutch import since Heineken, as she made her way safely back to the Netherlands. It has been a delight to watch her grow in confidence over the last two seasons and we wish her the best of luck for whatever the future holds. We welcomed new arrivals too this season in Natty, Rachel, Tanisha and Meg and welcomed back the ever-lively Kate and Theresa. The final match we were able to play showed what an asset these players will be. Thanks as ever to Niall for giving up so much time and effort to coach us on a Monday night. Here's to another great year ahead!



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