



SUMMERTOWN STARS · AFC

NEWSLETTER – February 2009

Welcome

Welcome to the first occasional Summertown Stars AFC club newsletter. It is deigned to give our players and parents an insight to various club matters, and hopefully to make you realize that there is lots going on in front of and behind the scenes! We welcome feedback and comments, so please forward any you have to your team manager or our Secretary, Nick King (nickking2000@hotmail.com) . (Contact details of all club officials are also on the club's website at www.summertownstars.org.uk)

Chairman's Message

You may not realize it as you watch your son or daughter play football every weekend that you and they are part of the largest sports club in Oxfordshire. And we are growing at a speed which makes the Zimbabwean dollar look a bit of a laggard. The ethos of the club is that every child should be encouraged to enjoy the game of football, regardless of whether they will grow up to be the next Robbie Keane or just be very keen. That aim is sustained by a fantastic, dedicated and entirely voluntary group of parents who act as coaches, mentors and helpers. None of them are in it for the glory (just as well, given some of the results). They turn out, week in week out to help develop the next generation's interest in the finest game in the world. Let's doff our caps to their efforts. And if any of you would like to join the happy throng then...

Your Club Needs You!

This is your club, and the Committee requires new blood to help at all levels. We currently have vacancies for a new Treasurer, a Kit and Equipment monitor, and also we need members for our new events committee. Please contact Jim White (jimwhite@tackley.demon.co.uk) if you can help. Your club needs you!

Summertown Stars Win Top Award From The Oxfordshire Football Association

Summertown Stars AFC was named as the Charter Standard Development Club of the year in Oxfordshire for the second time at a recent awards ceremony. Highlighting the outstanding contribution by the club to the development of children's football in the county, the Oxfordshire Football Association named Summertown as the "star" club.



Club Deputy Chairman Jonathan Finnerty (right) receiving the award



Summertown Stars Santa Fun Run 2008

Amongst the mass of Santas at Oxford's recent Santa fun run held in December were a group of players from the Summertown Stars U14 girls team. Lead by their coach Jo Kalies, the team raised £280.73 for Helen & Douglas House which is a registered charity providing respite and end of life care for children and young adults with life-shortening conditions. A good time was had by all and Jo hopes that more parents and players at the club will take part next year.

Star Fundraisers

Summertown Stars AFC's achievements in raising over £2000 for the Oxford Children's Hospital (CHOX) were recently recognised in **Torch**, which is the Oxford Radcliffe Charitable Trust's magazine. The U14 girls team have CHOX emblazoned across their team shirts which further helps raise awareness of the excellent work that the hospital does.

www.summertownstars.org.uk

Did you know that the club has a web-site? If you want to find out more about the club, the teams, and the officials please visit the site! There are some news articles, links to other relevant organisations (eg The Oxford Mail Boys League in which most of our teams play), and all of our sponsors are listed. We aim to redevelop the site over the coming year, with a view to having a comprehensive membership database, more interactive features, and online registrations. If you are web-savvy and would like to offer help or support, please contact Jonathan Finnerty (jonathanf@intdm.com).

The Stars Host National Visually-Impaired Futsal Festival – With Peter Shilton!



On 1 February 2009, Summertown Stars, in conjunction with the Oxfordshire Football Association, hosted a Futsal Festival for visually-impaired players. Teams from London Lasers, who are in fact the VI team jointly trained by Arsenal and Tottenham Hotspur, attended the event at Blackbird Leys leisure centre. Peter Shilton, the legendary England goalkeeper was also in attendance (pictured above with some of the participants). It was a fantastic day for all involved. Peter, who is an ambassador for Redyset iGOALS, was superb with the children, taking time to answer questions, posing for photographs and signing numerous autographs. Alice Finch, who plays for the Summertown Stars girls U12 team acted as a sighted goalkeeper for the Stars VI team, who looked particularly smart in their new kit generously sponsored by Darbys Solicitors. Marisa Chamberlain, who plays for Oxford United Centre of Excellence acted as a sighted goalie for London Lasers. The players were enthusiastic and extremely energetic, and there were some great moments of skill in the games and some humorous goal celebrations! All of the parents commented on the well organized event and asked when the Stars planned to host another one. The event attracted a great deal of interest from the media, and British Blindsport was represented along with the Oxford Children's Hospital. Peter signed some copies of his autobiography and a goalkeeper's jersey, which will be sold to raise money for the Oxford Children's Hospital. It was a great day which will long be remembered for the sheer enthusiasm of the players and the joy it brought them and the organizers.

Summertown Stars Facts

Did you know that Summertown Stars has well over 400 registered players that play regular football every week? You might also be surprised to hear that Summertown players represent more than 10% of the entire Oxford Mail Boys Football League!

Did you know that the club has over 50 registered girls playing football? Did you know that girls football is the fastest growing team sport in the world today and the Summertown Stars is the fastest growing girls club in the county?

U17 Mid Term Report

It is one of the oddities of the youth football system locally that Under-17 is the one age group that does not officially exist. Presumably the thinking is that by 17, every young man is too distracted by the possibilities of a life of slovenliness to play football, preferring to hide in their hoodie. Thus, Summertown's under 17s are this year competing in the OFA Invitation League under-18 section, against grown men with beards who turn up at matches with their wives and kids driving their own cars. Surprisingly the boys appear to be thriving as they pitch their wits against their elders. So far, they have reached the semi final of the league cup and sit in second place in the league, just two points behind the leaders with two games in hand. And in the county cup, in the previous round they beat the best team in Oxfordshire, a game which was decided by a penalty shoot out competition so lengthy it was finally concluded by moonlight.

Unbeaten since September, the team's principal asset is an irrepressible spirit, plus a striker in Jack Hayhurst who has so far notched up 24 goals in eleven matches, including five hat tricks.

Crucially to maintaining the spirit, ten of the 19 man squad have been Summertown Stars since they were eight. They are great friends. And, although they attend a total of five different schools, two colleges and one stage school, the boys socialise together every weekend (which, admittedly, can be a problem when matches are scheduled for Sunday mornings).

There is many a slip between now and the end of the season. But right now, the u-17s look determined to win something for the first time in their collective nine-year playing career.

Jim White, Manager

A New Generation of Stars...

The new under 7's team is a thriving mix of overly enthusiastic boys and girls (and parents), who have been pitching up every Saturday at 5 Mile Drive since September. Under the guidance of Jim White the team is progressing well and looking forward to the taste of competition in February when they will start to play some friendly matches. Jim, with help from Tim Pears, has done a grand job at encouraging the parents to participate in the training sessions. Jim's tactic of arriving, leaving the footballs, cones and bibs and then departing 2 minutes later, soon got the dads off the sidelines on to the pitch! The team of coaches are Gunnar and Arjan (both Dutch, but not quite Guus Hiddink lookalikes yet), Justin (an American basketball coach whose techniques turn out to do wonders for footballers as well), Ed and Adam. They are doing a great job and the team is going well with 35 plus children turning out most Saturdays for football and fun. Not to be outdone by the dads, Jo Coleman, one of the mums is helping out as secretary. The biggest test of the season so far has been a training session in torrential rain a week before Christmas when a handful of diehards still made the session and guaranteed their place in the first friendly match.

U10 'United' Mid Term Report

After winning their division last time, in this their last season of 7-a-side our boys are having a rollercoaster ride. We've lost the majority of our matches, most by a single goal, with the coaches and parents asking each other, 'How did we lose that?' and the boys asking, 'Where's the snack bar?' Many of the boys are playing even better than last season, and we've welcomed three new players who have settled in impressively. We're getting great coaching support from three Oxford & Cherwell Valley College lads, and are proud to wear the logo, paid for by an anonymous donor company, of Diabetes UK on our shirts (pictured right). We can't wait to play 11-a-side.

Tim Pears, Manager



The U10 United squad in their Diabetes UK kit



Rogues Gallery 1 U13 Manager Liam Carroll in the flush of youth

Rogues Gallery 2 The U14s test a rigorous new fitness and training regime in Bognor



U9 'A' Mid Term Report

The Summertown Stars U9s 'A' team is playing in the top OMBL "Red" league with some very talented teams. We started the season very strongly against Kidlington with our first win but have struggled since then to come up to true form. We have had some outstanding performances against some of the best teams in the league losing recently 4-3 to Horspath and 9-7 to Cumnor Minors in the 2nd round of the cup matches. Our captains are Felix Byam-Shaw and Joss King and we have regular training sessions on Monday evenings with lots of help from Sam and George, the FA sponsored Oxford-Cherwell student coaches. This season we have added FA level 1 qualifications for Alex Sternberg, one of the coaches. The players' enthusiasm and dedication has been steady throughout the season and we look forward to developing the squad and winning a few more matches when we face some of our opponents for the second time around as the season progresses.

Tony Monaco, Manager

Coaching and Development

In line with such organizations as Give Us Back Our Game and the Manchester United academy, we believe that small-sided games give players more touches of the ball, better skills development and more fun than 11 or even 7 a side matches. Accordingly, at Under 7 level we are offering opposition teams in friendlies a format of four rotating, 4 v 4 games, each with slightly different rules, which keeps players in continuous action and puts less pressure on winning/losing. We are also proposing that the OMBL offer this option in one of its divisions for the younger age groups in future.

Summertown Stars 5-a-Side Tournament – Hold The Dates!

The club's 2009 5-a-side tournament promises to be the busiest yet – with 13 competitions running over the weekend of 20th and 21st June. This will be a 50% increase on 2008. It's a vital fundraiser for the club, so please give it your full support. There will be 3 girls tournaments – U10, U12 and U14 and 10 for boys: U7 up to U16. As before, teams will be invited from all over Oxfordshire (last year teams came from as far away as south London and Kent) and it promises to be another entertaining weekend. The tournament is a great occasion in the club's calendar and a wonderful opportunity to bring players and parents together from all age groups. Viv Addy is handling the team registrations as before – it would be great if all managers could promote the tournament to other clubs. Details will soon be on the club's website. A tournament on this scale is only feasible with a vast volunteer effort – all are encouraged to get involved. Paul Harvey is coordinating the volunteers; please do get in touch with him (paul@clicktocall.com), as any time you can spare in helping out to ensure the tournament's smooth running and success would be greatly appreciated.

U15s – A Summertown Stars Odyssey

While the years have seen players come and players go, the core of the current U15's has been together since 2000/2001 and in those years they've seen a lot of action. Winners of the OMBL C league in 04/05 and winners of the OMBL B league the following season 05/06 and here we are again engaged in a close fight to stay at the top of the OMBL B league until the end of 80/09. The boys are working hard to win and preserve every point and it's great to see such commitment, determination and team spirit. There is a real belief that the league is winnable and there is a clear understanding that it won't be easy. So far, so good.

Towards the end of last year we were joined by Nick Forrester who came to us from Oxford Brookes. His objective was to gain some practical experience in sports coaching to help him with his sports coaching and science degree. Having completed his 20 hours and got to know the team and the parents, Nick asked if he could stay with us on a voluntary basis. He was obviously enjoying his time with us as much as we were appreciating him. I snapped up his offer, as never before in the field of sport has a coach been more grateful for the unwavering support of an assistant. Nick quickly became a Summertown Star in the truest sense gaining the respect of the boys and the parents and the sincere gratitude of a coach who needed to bring some new life and ideas to the team. The boys recently had the pleasure of presenting Nick with an initialed Summertown Stars Tracksuit top, so he's stuck with us for some time to come!

Every team has its stars and I could start listing them, only to find I will have very quickly named nearly an entire squad. If there is a star for me so far this season, it's a lad called Harvey Tayman. Harvey is not the most skilful player nor the top goal scorer or even the strongest defender. Harvey has been much more than that. One of the greatest joys for me as a coach, is to see those players who have never been the strongest or the most naturally gifted, remain committed, loyal, always turning up and worked hard, patiently waiting for it to come together for them. And then, when it all finally slots into place, a star is born. Harvey Tayman has been with the team from the start, and although in my team "everyone gets a game" Harvey's spent many long hours on the bench waiting for his half a game (or less). This season Harvey has truly and finally found his feet. His patience, courage and commitment have always been an example to the entire team and now he's playing the best football of his life, and everyone's enjoying being a witness to it.

The lesson for me and hopefully for the boys too, is to never assume we know what a player will be tomorrow. To be careful throwing players away because today they are among the weaker ones and there's a stronger player who wants to take their place because your team happens to be winning at the moment. Tomorrow, when that weaker lad or girl finds their feet and the confidence to match, they shock us all. Harvey wears the Red and White Stripes of Summertown with pride and as a coach I'm extremely proud to have him on my team. He is proof, as I suspect some of yours will be, that the best stars can be some time in the making.

Paul Harvey, Manager



Tony Monaco, Alex Sternberg and some of the U9 squad celebrate winning the Cholsey 6-a-side tournament last Summer



Rogues Gallery 3 Julian Dark, Liam Carroll and friends hear the cost estimates for improving the drainage and the pavilion at Cutteslowe Park

Q&A with a few of our Team Managers...

	Liam Carroll (U13)	David Rundle (U14)	Martin Fiennes (U8 Ultras)
<i>What was the pinnacle of your own footballing career?</i>	Playing at White Hart Lane for Oxford United Youth v Spurs, trying to mark Vinny Samways with Robbie Mustoe (ex-Middlesbrough) - we couldn't get near him!	Playing centre back at Marlow Town football ground in a cup final	Playing in the semi-final of Singapore's equivalent of the FA Cup
<i>What has been the best, worst, or funniest moment of your season so far?</i>	Funniest is watching our parents take part in our boys & parents Champions League competition before Crimbo!	Best has been our goalie pulling off a wonder save with two minutes to go against St Edmunds away giving us our first victory	Best - played 33, lost 29, drawn 4 - but they are all still smiling!
<i>Who is your captain, and what are his/her best qualities on the pitch?</i>	Joe Thomas - best qualities are leadership, positional play & his passing / distribution of the ball	Ray MaWhinney - the Bobby Moore of our team	We don't have a captain but 'superstar' awards so far to Hamish Macleod and Andrew Munford, plus 'stars' to Jamie Volak, Zack Rudaz, Thomas Miller, Ben Stephenson, Tom Mills, Danni Mohideen, Edgar van Es, can I go on?
<i>What professional football team do you support? What about most of your players?</i>	I support Liverpool, the greatest team ever to walk the planet. Remarkably, all of our players in the squad also support Liverpool!	Wycome Wanderers! And for the players a triumphant mix of Man U, Chelsea and Arsenal	Oxford United since I first saw them in Div II in 1969 losing at home to Burnley
<i>Who is the best role model for an up-and-coming Summertown Star, and why?</i>	Liam Carroll, Andrew Thomas & Peter Wilks (who else!?, Ed.) as we are passionate football men who conduct themselves correctly in boys football	Their Dad or Mum - a taxi driver, mentor and cheerleader all in one	Stephen Gerrard, never gives up, tackles and shoots like I'd like to
<i>Who is the unsung hero behind your team?</i>	Peter Wilks & Andrew Thomas	Kit Ward always helps put up the nets as he is the tallest!	Tony Monaco without whose admin skills the Ultras wouldn't exist
<i>Who is first to the biscuit container after a match?</i>	Andrew Thomas	The captain's duty is to have the first Jaffa cake	Biscuits? What biscuits?
<i>Who is your keepy-uppy king?</i>	Me or Liam Carroll jnr	One of the refs - a Claire Marsh who plays for Arsenal Ladies	Erm...
<i>What's your league prediction for the end of the season?</i>	Possibly 3rd, but I would prefer to win the OFA Under 13s Cup	Above the bottom two	Next year - champions
<i>And a plug for your sponsor?</i>	DCG Group (Data Management) are a fantastic sponsor & excellent company to work with! Please contact Peter Wilks, etc...	Savills Summertown sponsored our shirts in a market slump - good loyalty	Keltbray - whose motto "from demolition to construction" could apply to our season



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