



PLAYER DEVELOPMENT CENTRE NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 12

MAY 2023



A Very Special Welcome...



Well, where do I start.....If anyone had told me two years ago that we will win the league in only our second year since the formation of the Academy I would have questioned their sanity!

Well, we have indeed won the league with a game to spare and the players deserve immense credit, not just on the pitch but also off it where they conduct themselves in an exemplary fashion. We have had an amazing season starting with the tour of Holland back in July and on Monday 8th May Ben Tweed from Knaresborough will lift the EFL Youth Alliance North East Trophy.

In order for the lads to perform at the highest level they have a tremendous amount of support from Josh Law who has coached them superbly. They are supported physically by Laura Rhys-Williams (physio) and Will McGregor (sports science) and Stu Thompson on analysis. Rich Jones and Dee have educated the boys and created a fantastic learning environment which is just as important as the football and will undoubtedly set the boys in whatever pathway they take in later life.

The Gaffer has also offered five of our second years a professional contract, which speaks volumes of the support he and Paul Thirlwell have given us since the formation of the Academy.

Thanks to all the support from everyone associated with the club and Academy.

Paul Paul Stansfield

The Victorious Town Squad

Back Row (Left to Right): Lewis Smalley, Bobby Attree, Brad Williams, Alfie Lee,

Mason Wilson, Alex Mooney, Josh Brodella, Jack Bray, Paul Stansfield

Front Row (Left to Right): Laura Rhys-Williams, Josh Law, Ben Tweed, Ollie Nicholson,

James Birmingham, Manny Ilesanmi, Cadarn Taylor, James Moorby, Harvey Giles,

Elijah Samuels, Alisclair Kerr, Finn O'Boyle, Will McGregor



Our Child Welfare Officers

Dave Riley (PDC)

e. daveriley
@harrogatetownafc.com

t. 07712 787505



Becky Wilson (Girls)

e. beckywilson
@harrogatetownafc.com



PDC NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 12 // MAY 2023

ACADEMY BOYS CLINCH TITLE DESPITE LOSS

EFL YOUTH ALLIANCE - NORTH EAST

28.04.23

 BURTON ALBION Scott (27', 81' pen)	2
 HARROGATE TOWN Birmingham (29')	1

Town's Academy side were confirmed as Champions of the EFL Youth Alliance North East division last Friday with one game to spare in only their second full season at the level.

As both sides looked to find an early advantage it would be Burton Albion who would have the best of the chances in the opening exchanges and they thought they had the lead on four minutes. A dangerous ball towards the back post was flicked back across the face of goal for the attacker to head home, however, the referee judged the ball to have gone out in the build-up and ruled the goal out.

With little over 12 minutes on the clock, the home side again went close to taking the lead. A loose ball at the left hand side of the Town box fell to the on rushing attacker but he dragged his shot wide of the target.

This early advantage is one which Burton would make count on 27 minutes. A long ball over the top found Scott who got the better of Williams on the Town right hand side. After which, he slotted the ball below Giles to give his side a deserved advantage.

However, less than two minutes later Town found an instant response. Clever play by Josh Brodella in the Burton penalty area as he laid off Birmingham who took full advantage and fired the ball into the bottom corner. It was a goal which sparked Town into life as they began to ask questions in possession. However, the Burton defence stayed resolute for the remainder of the first half.

Chances proved few and far between in the opening exchanges of the second 45. Burton's Joe Nyahwema with the only two chances of the first 15.

One of which was fired well over and the other was gathered by Giles at the second attempt.

The first clear chance of the half came on 74 minutes when a dangerous ball into the Town box was met by a Burton attacker but his header was off target.

However, the attack was a sign of things to come as the home side were awarded a penalty ten minutes from time. Second half sub Lewis Smalley was judged to have handled the ball in the area. This gave Scott a chance to add his second of the game. He slotted the ball home and gave the home side the lead.

With time running out, Town pushed forward in search of an equaliser as Ben Tweed drove into the Burton penalty area. However, it wasn't to be.

Town: Giles (Mooney, 75'), Williams, Birmingham (Bray, 66'), Wilson, Attree, Taylor (Smalley, 61'), Bordella (Kerr, 66'), Tweed, Ilesanmi, Nicholson (Samuels, 55'), Lee

Sub not used: Moorby



FIXTURES & RESULTS 2022/23

DATE	OPPOSITION	RES	SCORER/S
August			
Thu 18	Bradford City	YC	0-3
Sat 27	Hartlepool United	YA	0-0
September			
Sat 17	Grimsby Town	YA	1-2
Sat 24	Mansfield Town	YA	2-0 O'Boyle, Ilesanmi
October			
Sat 1	Doncaster Rovers	YA	5-2 O'Boyle (2), Williams (2), Ilesanmi
Sat 15	Rotherham United	YC	1-1 Brodella
Sat 22	Burton Albion	YA	2-1 O'Boyle, Williams
Sat 29	Huddersfield Town	YA	2-1 Taylor, O'Boyle
November			
Tue 1	Stockport County	FAY	1-2 O'Boyle
Fri 4	Morecambe	YC	3-3 Brodella, O'Boyle (2)
December			
Sat 3	Huddersfield Town	YA	1-2 O'Boyle
January			
Sat 7	Mansfield Town	YA	1-0 Nicholson
Tue 10	Carlisle United	YC	4-1 Samuels, Ilesanmi, Brodella, Williams
Fri 13	Bradford City	YA	1-0 Brodella
Sat 21	Doncaster Rovers	YA	2-2 Brodella, O'Boyle
February			
Tue 7	Burton Albion	YA	3-1 Brodella, Ilesanmi, Taylor
Sat 11	Scunthorpe United	YA	3-0 Tweed, O'Boyle, Smalley
Tue 14	Rotherham United	YA	2-0 Ilesanmi, Wilson
Sat 18	Bradford City	YA	1-2 Nicholson
Sat 25	Grimsby Town	YA	2-0 Moorby, Wilson
Tue 28	Scunthorpe United	YA	1-1 Brodella
March			
Sat 4	Hartlepool United	YA	3-0 Brodella (2), Nicholson
Tue 14	Rotherham United	YA	4-2 Ilesanmi, Brodella, Birmingham, Nicholson
Sat 18	Lincoln City	YA	3-0 Ilesanmi (2), Nicholson
Sat 25	Lincoln City	YA	1-0 Brodella
April - Second Phase / Championship Group			
Sat 1	Lincoln City	YA	1-1 Brodella
Thu 6	Bradford City	YA	1-1 Williams
Sat 22	Grimsby Town	YA	2-1 Brodella
Fri 28	Burton Albion	YA	1-2 Birmingham
May			
Fri 5	Doncaster Rovers	YA	

EFL YOUTH ALLIANCE
■ Championship Group ■ Lower Table Group

EFL YOUTH ALLIANCE NORTH EAST

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
1 Harrogate Town	24	15	5	4	45	21	24	50
2 Bradford City	24	14	4	6	62	31	31	46
3 Burton Albion	24	13	2	9	51	36	15	41
4 Doncaster Rovers	24	12	5	7	45	45	0	41
5 Grimsby Town	23	11	4	8	43	40	3	37
6 Lincoln City	23	9	6	8	61	56	4	33
7 Scunthorpe United	23	9	6	8	40	32	8	33
8 Mansfield Town	24	9	5	10	48	53	-5	32
9 Huddersfield Town	24	8	1	15	40	61	-21	25
10 Hartlepool United	23	4	3	16	21	57	-36	15
11 Rotherham United	22	2	5	15	30	54	-24	11



Josh Law & Paul Stansfield react to our Academy side being crowned Champions



END OF SEASON UPDATE FROM RICHARD JONES

Head of Academy Education and Player Welfare



**Manny
Ilesanmi**



Manny shortlisted for Apprentice of the Year at EFL Awards

Academy striker Emmanuel Ilesanmi has had a fantastic season and attended the EFL Awards night in London as he was shortlisted for the Apprentice of the Year award from the League Football Education (LFE). Although he unfortunately missed out on the award, he has done extremely well in all elements of the apprenticeship – achieving a Distinction in his Sporting Excellence Professional Apprenticeship and is on for D*D* for his Level 3 BTEC Diploma.

Second Year Scholars complete Apprenticeships

All ten second year Academy Players have completed their Apprenticeship – eight of which achieving the maximum grade of Distinction and one pass. We are just awaiting one final grade.

First Years work towards UEFA C Qualifications

Our First Year Apprentices have been working towards their UEFA C qualification – coaching a number of Rossett High School kids. This is nearly completed and will be concluded in Summer.

Ofsted 'Outstanding' for LFE

The League Football Education (LFE) were recently audited by Ofsted and achieved the highest possible grading with "Outstanding in all areas". This is a great achievement and a great reflection of the provision that is offered in our Academy.



FROM PDC TO ACADEMY

PATHWAY SUCCESS STORIES

Everyone at the PDC was delighted with the news that Robbie Wilson and Oli Robinson from our PDC have both accepted offers of scholarships to become part of Town's Academy squad from next season.



Robbie Wilson

Robbie Wilson from our PDC has recently accepted a scholarship to become part of Town's Academy set-up for the 2023/24 season.

Speaking with Robbie's Dad Glen, he insists the belief which Town coaches placed in Robbie over the years has helped him to improve not only as a player but as a person too.

"I am really proud of the fact Robbie has been able to get the scholarship. He has put in a lot of hard work to get to this stage and we are looking forward to the next stage of his journey with the club. From a young age we could see Robbie form bonds with all his coaches and particularly Josh Walsh who got to know Robbie at the same time."

"You could see Walshy believed in Robbie as a footballer and that is something which is important to me as a parent. Robbie respected Josh and he listened to everything which he said. That helped him to understand what it took for him to improve and he became a better player for that. I also liked the idea that the respect he had for his coaches also helped him to become a better person on the field, as well as within himself."

Having spent time with other clubs in the local area, Wilson believes the hands-on approach of the Town staff helps the club to stand out.

"There is lots of different options for kids looking to play football. Robbie started off at York, he has also spent some time with Leeds, Bradford and now Harrogate. The coaching style here is different, but what we love about Town is that the club has never lost its personal touch. At Leeds and Bradford, you may not speak to a coach until it's time for their 12 week review, however here, the coaches are approachable and they will always give you time. As a parent now, if my child was going into the PDC, I know that the coaching staff are approachable and that personal touch is with the families not just with the children who go along." Having already featured for the club's U18s Academy side, Robbie admits the experience has left him hungry for more.

"I have been on the bench a few times, I have managed to get some minutes under my belt at that level too and just having that experience makes me look forward to next season and being a part of that regularly. Whenever I go up, Josh Law and Paul Stansfield are so positive. They are always reminding you that you are there for a reason, they are always showing you the belief they have and that you belong there. Obviously, I have worked closely with Josh Walsh for a while now, he knows the level which I will be going up to and he has been giving me a lot of advice to try and prepare me to make that step up."

Oli Robinson

Oli Robinson has this month accepted the offer of a scholarship to join the club's Academy side having spent some time in our PDC over the last 18 months.

Following spells with club's including Leeds United and Barnsley, Oli's dad James Robinson, admits the positivity around the club has been key in Oli's development during his time with the club.

He said: "Choosing the right environment for your child can be so important because you want to see them improve and develop on the pitch and off it. Not every child is going to get a perfect outcome but as long as you can see development and change then you know that it's a good fit. That is something which I can see here at this club. The coaches are enthusiastic and you trust that everything they are doing is for a purpose. This club is such a positive place to be around and that positivity is what draws us here."

James also praised the work of the coaches in developing Oli's character away from the pitch.

"As a parent, seeing Oli go into the PDC at that time felt perfect. He had just been released from another club and his confidence had been knocked. Straight away guys like Josh and Tom coached him to improve, but also rebuilt that confidence in his own ability."

Robinson believes the secret to the success of the club's PDC is the organisation which it has compared to alternative options.

"We have seen how unorganised and unapproachable other clubs can be at Academy level. However, Harrogate Town has been a breath of fresh air - the communication is good, the coaches are always there to have conversations and everything is organised. You can see the benefits of that through what the club have produced over the last two years with the scholarship programme. You can see the side playing with a purpose and intensity but also how they have gelled as a group."

Ahead of undertaking the scholarship, Oli believes his close bond with the club's coaches has been key in rebuilding his confidence on the pitch.

"Being released knocks you back both mentally and physically but working with coaches who want the best for you is just massive in helping me to overcome that. Josh Walsh has been great with me, he has given me so much coaching time and feedback and I think he has been able to get the best out of me. I started working with the U15s then with the U16s which was a massive challenge but I think that helped me to improve and develop quickly."



Walshy's Overview...

Josh Walsh



April saw the return of our PDC holiday games programme, where all players from our PDC had the chance to participate in games representing Harrogate Town against some good opposition. The week saw over 100 kids from U8's through to U16's playing in matches. We also had the opportunity to invite our Frickley site over to St John Fishers for an Inter-Development Centre game, a first for the club and the PDC since starting back in 2016.

The APDC have had some great fixtures throughout April with the U9's -U12's playing Bradford City and Rotherham United. The U13-U15's have played Wakefield Schoolboys, Wallsend boys and Chester Le Street. All matches were competitive with some great football on show.

The U16's have had a busy month of fixtures with games vs Chesterfield, Hull City and Leeds United plus we also got invited over to Liverpool to play their U16's - a fantastic experience for all involved and narrowly losing the game 2-1. The boys were brilliant and arguably could have drawn or even won the game. For Harrogate to play one of the best academies in the country and to play the brand of football we coach from the U8's all the way up, was a really proud moment and shows just how far we have come.

A big congratulations needs to go to Lucas Brown from our Frickley site who has been invited to train with the U15/16 APDC. Lucas has impressed in training and in the Inter-Development games played in the easter holidays.

Walshy



Phil Priestley visits PDC...

First Team Goalkeeping Coach Phil Priestley attended the PDC during April and had this to say about his visit...



It was great to attend the PDC goalkeeping session to help out and contribute to the great work that Ian, Jordan and Josh are doing to develop the young keepers at the club. The content and information that the coaches have delivered over the season can be seen by the quality of goalkeeping on display not only with handling skills, footwork and movement across the goal but also the knowledge of goalkeeping and why the keeper needs to be in the position he/she is to help the team but also keep the ball out of the goal. Hope everyone has a good finish to their season, enjoy the summer and remember not all heroes wear capes, some wear gloves.



Coaches Roundups

Under 15/16s Tom Hullock

During April, the u15/16s have continued to progress well. We have been working on counter pressing which is all about the group regaining possession as quickly as possible when they lose the ball. Both the u15/16s PDC and the u15s APDC have had the chance to show what they have learnt this month in games with the PDC beating York convincingly and the APDC getting a last minute winner to beat Wallsend Boys 2-1 in a game where both teams put in strong performances.

Under 13/14s APDC Josh Walsh

The U13/14's APDC have both been making great improvements. One of the topics they have been looking at is play through or around where we have been teaching the groups to look after the ball effectively and not to rush attacks and counter pressing where we have been looking pressing and looking to regain the ball back as soon as we have lost it. On the games side, the APDC played a very strong Wakefield side which was a really good physical test for the boys

Under 13/14s PDC Ryan Smith

April saw the boys continue to challenge themselves across several topic areas. In-possession, we have covered 'playing through, around and behind' and 'controlled possession and patience', whilst out-of-possession we have focused on 'defending transitions' 'defending from a mid-block' and 'counter-pressing'. Over Easter, the boys also had games against York City and Town's Frickley PDC and the matches provided a tough challenge for both groups. A number of the boys within the group had the opportunity to join the APDC to train this month. Myself and Joel continue to be impressed by the attitude of the group and their desire to improve.

Under 11/12s Tom Hullock

In April, we've had a number of games for both the PDC and APDC. Over Easter, the PDC got the opportunity to play against Town's Frickley PDC. These got divided into four small games where all the players got the opportunity to represent Harrogate Town. The APDC on the other hand tested themselves against two CAT-3 academies in Bradford City and Rotherham United - the standout result being the U12s 8-5 win at Rotherham whilst controlling large parts of the game. The other games got a mixture of results but they all were extremely competitive and the boys should be proud of their performances.

Tom Hullock



Becky Wilson



Ryan Smith



Ian Watson



Under 9/10s Becky Wilson

The PDC players worked hard on keeping possession and playing out in the wide areas leading up to the fixtures over the Easter holidays in which we played against Bradford City development teams. It was great to see over 40 U9/10's take part in the games. It was a very exciting month for the U9/10 APDC with U9 fixtures against a very good Rotherham side and also Bradford City, where an excellent all-round performance saw Town run out 12-4 winners. The U10's played in a tournament hosted by Rotherham United, drawing against the hosts and Peterborough before losses to Rochdale and Sheffield United. They also travelled to Bradford City in what was an end to end closely contested game. Well done to all the boys who played.

Under 8s Paul Clothier

The U8s had a tough match against a very talented, local grassroots team this month. We managed to organise 15 players into two teams, sharing minutes equally. Both teams found the speed and aggression of the opponents difficult initially, but all the boys stuck to the task, and grew into the games, showing their qualities, and grabbing a couple of goals in response - Well done boys! In our sessions we have looked at Individual pressing, shielding the ball, 1v1 scenarios, and have begun developing quicker reactions as a team when losing or winning possession.

Keepers Ian Watson

April began with the PDC games programme in which we saw some great saves and, really pleasingly, there were plenty of examples of keepers playing an active role in the build-up, which was one of the main themes prior to Easter. Having spent a lot of time on being the first line of attack, in the last few weeks, we've been going back over the fundamentals of being the last line of defence, focusing hard on set positions, movement around the goal, handling and receiving. We've seen some really strong performances from the APDC keepers over the last month too. The quality in their training sessions has been very high and that's been reproduced with fine displays in some really competitive games against strong academy sides.



FRICKLEY PDC

Jason Barker



April was an amazing month for the Frickley centre - our games programme for the current two age groups on site saw both teams unbeaten in their two games.

The U12/13s won both their games, one against Hemsworth Town and the other an in-house PDC game against the Harrogate centre.

U14/15 drew with York City and won their second game against the Harrogate based PDC centre in an in-house game.

Following on from last months story where Lucas Brown had been invited to train with the APDC squad at Harrogate, I am pleased to announce that Lucas was successful and has been selected to move into the APDC squad at Harrogate and with that becomes the second player from the Frickley site to do so since our launch in January. Lucas displayed all the attributes of a midfielder and backed it up with all his hard work at training and his displays in the games programme. A massive congratulations Lucas.

These results and the development of Lucas show the hard work in training is paying off as the centre continues its growth from strength to strength.

We are now preparing to launch all age groups for both boys and girls at the centre in preparation for the new season in August.



WOMEN AND GIRLS...

This month we invited three girls from our Harrogate PDC to train with the ladies first team as we prepare to introduce these young players to adult based football for the first time. The success of this has now led to our oldest PDC group all being invited to train during June with the Women's first team. This shows that the club are fully behind creating a successful pathway for girls in our PDC programme.

Preparation is now underway to launch the Girls PDC at the Frickley site to promote more training opportunities in the Wakefield area and offer another direct pathway for girls into adult football at Harrogate Town AFC.

This June will see open trails take place for the Women's first and reserve teams. All relevant information will be released on the website and social media in the coming days.

We will also be hosting open sessions for our girls PDC during June to give girls in the Harrogate area the opportunity to see what our PDC has to offer. The information relating to this will also be available on the website and social media.

Finally our Women's team attended the men's game vs Walsall this past month in support of the first team's successful survival in League Two. They will be making another appearance in the season ending game vs Rochdale.

Lucas



Town U16s v Liverpool



Town's Under 16s were invited to Liverpool to play their U16s at their superb facility in Kirkby on Tuesday 18th April. A fantastic experience for all involved, the boys did the club very proud and were extremely unfortunate to come away with a 2-1 defeat. In truth, on the balance of play, the Reds could have had few complaints had Town left with a draw or even a win. Here are some pics from the match, plus check out the fantastic goal we scored, a masterclass in building from the back and worthy of gracing any Premier League fixture!

Town Starting XI: Frankie Shepard, Alex Charlesworth, Marcus Etherington, Lewis Smalley, Adam Pow, Oli Robinson, Robbie Wilson, Lucas Barnes, Murray Brierley, Elijah Samuels, Jack Bray

Used Subs: Toby Sharkey, Harry Hindle, Ollie Saltmarsh, Will Suttle, Charley Parker, Freddie Senior



Check out our goal - it's a cracker!!!





Soccer Camp Dates 2023

Providing boys and girls aged 6-14 with high quality coaching through a variety of different activities in a fun and safe environment.

All attendees receive a medal for their participation.

May Half Term

Mon 29th May - Thu 1st June

Summer

Mon 31st July - Thu 3rd August

Mon 14th - Thu 17th August

Mon 28th - Thu 31st August

October Half Term

Mon 30th October - Thu 2nd November

St John Fisher High School

3G Pitch HG2 8PT

**£28
PER DAY**





Official Club Store

***As well as being available to buy online at
www.harrogatetownafc.com/online-store
all PDC Kit is available to buy at our Official Club Store
at 32 Commercial Street, Harrogate, HG1 1TY***

Store Opening Times

***Monday: 10am-4pm / Tuesday: 10am-4pm / Wednesday: Closed
Thursday: 10am-4pm / Friday: 10am-4pm
Saturday: 10am-4pm* / Sunday: Closed***

****Please note that the Club Store may be closed on home matchdays.
Please check online for the latest information and opening times.***