

The Spartans Youth News - Winter 2019

Live Together Play Together Win Together



Chairman's Welcome

Les Atkinson

How quickly time flies from the start of the SERIFA 11aside 2019/20 season in August to now with the winter break upon us. We have 13 teams enjoying competitive football in the South East Region this season. Our 6 small sided squads are currently preparing for the start of their 2020 season and please don't miss the exciting announcement later in this newsletter from the girls academy.

This month we met with the parents of the latest squad to join the Youth Section, the 2013s. It's always great to meet new families about to start on their football journey and we welcome them.

I hope you enjoy reading our latest newsletter and see all that has been going in the Youth Section, it's busy as always. Our coaches and volunteers are what makes everything happen and we are immensely grateful to everyone who plays a part.

Merry Christmas All!



The Spartans Family's Kiltwalk Challenge

To celebrate their 10 year anniversary The Spartans Community Football Academy invited the wider Spartans Family to join them in taking part in the Edinburgh Kiltwalk.

On a chilly Sunday morning in September over 50 walkers from the Youth Section along with First Team players, men's and women's, and supporters of the SCFA set off on a 5 mile walk from Gypsy Brae by the Firth of Forth to Murrayfield Rugby Stadium.

We are hugely grateful to ESSDA & SERIFA league secretaries for leaving our teams free from matches so that our players were able to take part in the Kiltwalk.

To all the players, coaches and parents from our 2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2006 Youth and 2005 Locomotives squads who took part, we say a huge thank you. You can see from the smiles in the photos that it was a great day and everyone enjoyed chatting and walking away from the football pitch.

Our teams raised £4,700 and will use half the money to support team activities and half will be donated to the Community Academy.

The Spartans Community Academy Christmas Appeal

The Academy is supporting the local community by collecting on behalf of the Trussell Trust. Please help us help others by donating an item to our foodbank appeal. Items can be handed in to the main office or dropped off at the collection station near the lift on the 1st floor of the Academy building.

Needed Items include: Tinned Food (Meat/Fish/ Vegetables), Savoury cracker, Selection boxes, Boxes of chocolates, Snacks & Nibbles, Basic toiletries.

The appeal closes on Wednesday 18th December.



Here for good.



Player & Coach News

The Community Football Academy - Nic Sturrock

We've had another terrific year supported by players who have been involved with the various Spartans YS/Senior squads. As always they've been an integral part of our volunteer network.

A huge thank you to them all: Craig Taylor, Daniel Cooper, Fraser Moir, Joe Nicholson, Jonny Cain, Kathleen MacPherson, Ruaridh McLean, Logan Cameron Ronaigh Douglas, Kaela McDonald.



End of Year - First Team Visit

The 2010, 2011 and 2012 squads enjoyed a visit from some Spartans First team players at their last training session of the year.



SERYFA Regional U16s Squad

Sunday 1st December saw 4 Spartans Youth U16s players, Shaun Aszam, Adam Weir, Rui Black and Aaron Cameron selected to travel to Spain Park, Aberdeen to take on the North Region. Also in the squad were players from Hutchison Vale, Musselburgh Windsor and Tyncastle FC. It was a successful day trip with the SERYFA U16s winning 3-2. The SERYFA U16s took on Leith U17s with further Spartans taking part in that match, Josh Laing and Logan Ritchie. A very well done to all the players.



Playing Double - Aylei Pickup

My name is Aylei and I am 10 years old. I play for two Spartans Youth teams, the girls U11s and the boys 2009s.

Football is my absolute life. Playing for the girls is amazing and it is a completely different from playing with the boys. The girls team is more relaxed, calm and not as boisterous and even though I absolutely lovely playing for the girls, I feel so alive, strong and confident playing with the boys. I have made so many new friends from both teams.

When I first started with the boys I was petrified but that day in September 2018 I walked in and was accepted and involved from the start and this is why I feel so comfortable playing with the boys, it's an absolutely amazing opportunity to be able to join the boys and I will continue to play with the 2009s until I have to stop due to my age.



Rwanda 2020

In February 2020 Carey McEvoy and Keith McGowan, Spartans Youth coaches, will be joining coaches from Bonnyrigg Rose, Murieston Utd, Penicuik Athletic and Tranent Colts on a trip to Rwanda led by Hearts FC.

The group will learn about Rwanda's history, culture and challenges and will visit villages and towns to participate in workshops and various grassroots projects.

Team News



Spartans 2010 - Paul Adam

The 2010 kids resumed from their Summer Break in August and took part in the Bathgate Thistle Festival. Despite some heavy playing conditions and perhaps the coldest August day I can remember, the kids performed excellently throughout the day and there were plenty of smiles and goals scored.

In September, the kids were mascots for the Scottish Cup first round tie between Spartans and Deveronvale. The kids were given an access all areas guide by Keith Boyes and loved the opportunity to look around the first team changing and treatment rooms, not too mention several handfuls of Haribos. I'm pleased to say that the kids rhythmic banging of a green wheelie bin lid created an excellent atmosphere, inspiring Spartans to a 1-1 draw and then prevail in the replay.



The kids have continued their strong performances in ESSDA and friendly fixtures and it has been very pleasing to see the quality of their football continue to improve week on week, which reflects the hard work put in by coaches and players at Training.

We finish the year with a well earned bounce at Gravity and our end of year presentations, before looking forward to a period for squad transition, we welcome some new faces into the squad and give our best wishes to others leaving for exciting opportunities with Pro Youth clubs.

Spartans Youth U19s - Douglas Shirlaw

The start to our season was spent looking to sign players from the existing U19s league, and with two teams at Spartans already at this level we thought we'd be able to pick up some quality players content to play another year at this level.

However, playing one of those teams in a friendly at the beginning of the season quickly showed that we needed to find more physical players if we were to have any chance at this level, and sadly we didn't do enough to attract players from within the Spartans family.

Since then we've added three player to the team, and the coaching staff have set about changing the way we train, mainly concentrating on fitness as the predominant change.



Since August we've quietly gone about our business and are unbeaten in 90 minutes in all competitions, (lost on penalties in the South Region Cup to our main rivals), and now in three cup semi-finals and in the 6th round of the Scottish Cup. This has all been down to the commitment of our players and the coaching staff, and the changes to training which means we have big numbers attending each week and the team is really picking itself which is highly encouraging.

We are all surprised by how far we've come as a team, year on year we are getting better and finally the players are now communicating amongst themselves on the pitch which has been lacking for many years.

Soon it won't be long before the U20s may come chapping at the managers door...

The players and coaching staff greatly appreciate the support of the teams sponsors - Spider Online and Welch's Fishmongers.

Team News



Spartans Youth 2006 - Nigel Miller

The 2006s 1st team have enjoyed a stronger start to the 2019/20 season and have benefited by having a couple of joiners back from pro-youth (Andrew and Rowan) and by moving players along the pathway between the 2nd and 1st teams.

Fortunately our striker's dad is a skilled photographer, (credit to Fred Palmer), so we lucky to now have dozens of photos from almost every match...we reckon every team should try to have a similar arrangement as sharing photos with our opponents has been a big positive in terms of breaking down barriers with other coaches and teams.

Spartans 2007 - Gordon Whittaker

We are enjoying our first season at 11 a side football with both teams, Youth and Whites, doing well in division 1 and 2 respectively. The boys are enjoying wearing our new away strip as well!

Our u13s were also represented by some of the squad at the Youth Football Scotland media night, held at Easter road stadium at the end of September. Archie, Joan, Oisin, Sean and Theo all having lots of fun and enjoying the experience of conducting interviews with the YFS staff. The video sees the boys joining some U15s being interviewed:

<https://twitter.com/yfst/status/1187626317593927680>



Spartans 2011s - Carey McEvoy

For the 2011s, December meant the end of Super Fives – 9 months of awesome football that has seen the whole squad improve hugely. We've also streamed the squad for the first time and everyone is excited about moving up to 7s in February.

The Autumn term also included a lot of off-the-pitch fun – from the Zombie party at Halloween to Hampden Park to watch Scotland “hammer” San Marino and Kazakhstan!

Spartans Colts 2005 - Ronnie Willets

Good to say that the Spartans Colts have been reborn this season and are climbing the league table. We are a multi cultural team with players coming from Italy, Spain, Syria, Venezuela and Scotland. A big thank you to the parents and coaches Ian, Robbie and Callum (administrator) for their hard work and support making the Colts a great success this season so far, the story continues.



Like the cosy Zaini Spartans bobble hat modelled above?
These 2011 fundraising hats are available to order for adults & children: proposition.typeform.com/to/CBaukl

Girls Academy News

Spartans Girls Celebration Day - Zsolt Jakri

Earlier in the year we hosted our first Girls Academy Celebration Day. We had a mini festival for the U9s, games for the U11s and U13s – and a lot of fun! The players enjoyed small sided games against the coaches (the coaches refuse to share the results!) and throwing water balloons at some of the adults. Considering the power of some of the shots, the coaches must have upset some players during the year... The younger players then closed the day by watching Spartans Women in the Premier League and by getting those fabulous signed posters. The girls have already asked for the event to become an annual celebration – watch out for the 2020 date!



Full Player Pathway at the Spartans Girls Academy for 2020

We are delighted to announce that the Girls Academy will provide a full player pathway from 2020, we will have teams at every age group, U9s, U11s, U13s, U15s, U17s up to U19 National Performance League and then the SWPL Senior team. We are busy filling up some roles in the coaching team and recruit the last few players. The aim is to have 160-180 girls and women playing for the club next season across the age groups.

Performance Squad Success for Young Spartans

November saw us nominating players for the regional youth performance squad trials. After two trials we were delighted to hear that two U13 players, Freya Brien and Dora Jakri have been successful in securing places at the U12 Regional Performance Squad for the 2020 season. Dora and Freya (picture bottom left) have now been through their first full day with the SFA National Development Coaches listened to presentations from Women's National Team Head Coach Shelley Kerr and U19 National Team Head Coach Pauline Hammill (the U19 National Team Captain is Spartans' very own Michaela Mcaloney) and played against the best young players from other Scottish regions. We are looking forward to watching their progress and seeing more players at the trials in 2020!



U13s Harrison's - Aaron Hunter

The girls team played in the pilot 9v9 league for the 2nd half of the year. Had a great run in the league cup getting to the semi finals and got to the 2nd round of the Scottish cup which was a great achievement when half the team are 2007.

Here are the girls enjoying some end of season paintballing.



Under 15s

Thanks to Clare Tracey who has been involved in the girls coaching over the past ten years and whose efforts are greatly appreciated.

The current Girls U15s move to U17s in the 2020 season and will be coached by Daniel Blyth.



Club News



It's Not All Football

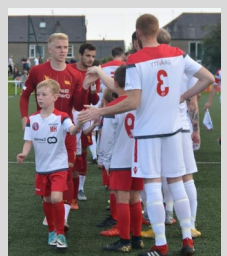
The Youth Section organised the first ever Spartans Youth Christmas Bounce. We had 220 boys and girls from our younger teams come along to Gravity for some fun with their friends. Parents enjoyed a coffee and catch up somewhere nearly warm for a change.

We also had the Annual Spartans trip to the Kings Theatre Panto. 83 children enjoyed "Goldilocks and the Three Bears". Many thanks to Jeanette Veitch for once again organising this popular event.



Match Day Mascots

Players from the Youth Section have enjoyed being mascots at first team matches again this season. A behind the scenes tour, meeting the players and half time mini matches add to the great experience. The Liverpool vs Spartans FC match was a highlight.



Small Sided Paper

Stuart Gray, our Coach Development Officer has completed and published the "Coaching & Playing The Spartans Way". This paper provides our small sided coaches with guidance and tools for coaching the Spartans Way—with the aim to produce technically outstanding, innovative football players who are proud to play for Spartans.

For more information on this please contact:
stuart.gray@spartansfcyouth.com



Sponsors Hospitality Evening

We invited our valued team sponsors to a fab VIP night hosted by The Spartans FC at their Bonnyrigg Rose Lowland League clash. Thanks to Spartans FC Director Keith Boyes for making the evening a great success and the football exciting, we hope to make this an annual event.

To all our sponsors a huge "Thank You" for your continuous support: Alba Science, Beachwood Joiners & Building, Chiene & Tait, Connect Chiro, Cornerstone Mortgages, Hawes Garage, JB Contracts, JM Financial, Scran and Scallie, Spider On Line, State Street, and Welch Fishmonger.



First Aid Training

We had 30 young people learning First Aid skills with the Red Cross in October.



Helping Hands - Free Football

During the summer holidays once again The Spartans Community Academy supported the Helping Hands free football in North Edinburgh. One of our coaches, Ronnie Willets, gave up his time for a second year to help with the coaching.

The best bit for Ronnie was seeing all the children and young people with smiles on their faces enjoying the coaching. It is great to be able to light up children's lives with the love of football and bring their energy to the community.

Irvine Welch thinks so too, Ronnie pictured coaching below.



Irvine Welsh
@IrvineWelsh

Great buzz to be back in the old hood of #Muirhouse with my comrades at @callum_kane @JimSlaven and @jackhibs12 at #HelpingHands. Nice one to the amazing coaches at @spartansfc who are excellent with the local kids.

