

CAFC CHAIRMANS REPORT 2008/09

Dear All,

I believe everyone connected with Cadbury Athletic Juniors Football Club would agree that this season got off to a somewhat slow start due to the extreme weather conditions around the winter months period. This resulted in many games being postponed, creating a backlog of fixtures which consequently led to many of our teams playing 'double headers' in order to complete their league programmes in time. Although, not the ideal scenario in which to compete in the season's campaign, once games got underway and our teams got into their stride they were actively in pursuit of silverware in their respective league and cup competitions. This seems to get harder each year as the standard of football in the central Warwickshire league continues to grow.

I would like to congratulate those teams who managed cup and league success this season and will leave it to their respective managers to announce their achievements on presentation night. This year we have had both glory and heartbreak in cup finals and credit goes to all those that represented the club in a professional manner both in triumph and defeat. This demonstrates the culture of our club and how we aim to promote fair play and development of footballers both on and off the pitch. At Cadbury Athletic FC the emphasis is not just about winning trophies, but more **importantly** about providing children from the local community with a game of football and being able to play the game in the correct spirit as set out in the clubs constitution. Therefore, if we have achieved this it has been another successful year for the club.

Most of you will be aware there has been as great deal of media coverage recently concerning parent's behaviour at football matches and the 'respect the ref' campaign. Like almost every other junior football club we occasionally experience problems at Cadbury Athletic F.C. However, I must emphasize this is only a small minority but it is a problem that we are continually striving to eradicate.

On average, 7,000 referees quit football every year because of the abuse they receive from players and the sidelines. Lots of children also end up turning their back on the game because of the attitude and actions of over-enthusiastic and pushy parents. Managers and Coaches must be responsible for maintaining peace on the sidelines, if they are to succeed in this they need to be aware that their own behaviour - good or bad - is contagious. A wild Manager or coach incites wild behaviour by both players and parents. Usually a well-behaved manager and coach are supported by well-behaved parents. Inappropriate behaviour by parents at football matches undermines the effort of the most well-intentioned coach, who in teaching sportsmanship and fair play is sending a powerful message to young players that such behaviour is unacceptable.

In an effort to combat some of these problems, as of next season Cadbury Athletic juniors will be introducing some practical steps to ensure football is played in a more respectful and positive environment. One of the measures will be the introduction of 'Touchline Respect Zone Barriers' for all of our pitches, this will be in the form of a portable barrier tape system,

The FA recommends all clubs introduce a demarcated area along the touchlines within which spectators must stay. The idea behind this is to encourage parents and spectators to take a step back from the pitch and support the teams in a more responsible manner without encroaching onto the field of play. These barriers also give spectators a clearly defined area to offer support and to enjoy their experience of the game too. It's a positive step and ensures that players can play and referees can referee unhindered by outside influences.

This season was quite significant in one sense! It was 10 years ago that the Football

Association introduced small sided football for players between the ages of 7 and 10. Games were to be played on smaller pitches, using smaller goals, and involving teams of 7 players. I first became involved with the club at that time as my own son began playing for the newly formed Cadbury Athletic under 7's. That particular age group has just finished their journey through the age groups at Cadbury Athletic Juniors and has become one of our first teams to complete the transition from under 7's through to under 16's.

During this period I am proud to say that they have been a credit to the club both on and off the field with **four** of the original players who actually started at under 7's playing right through to under 16's. The team accomplished endless success in the Central Warwickshire league which included:- **five times** Premier division champions , **three times** Open cup winners and twice runners up, **twice** league cup winners and three times runners up. These achievements make them our most successful Cadbury Athletic team to date in terms of winning trophies. The reputation and impressive achievements of the team over the seasons resulted in them becoming one of the most respected yet feared in the league. The success of the team would not have materialised without the dedication and enthusiasm of Mark Stewart who was the manager and coach for the majority of the team's duration. All the players who have been involved with this age group over the last ten seasons owe a great deal of gratitude to Mark for the time and effort he has given into expanding their individual football development. On behalf of the club I would like to thank him for his commitment and professionalism during that period.

A charity football match was played on Sunday 28th September 2008 between Birmingham City all stars and Cadbury Athletic old stars. The game was is in memory of Aaron Craig a young lad who sadly passed away in January of this year after a lengthy illness. Aaron suffered with a condition called Samfilippo syndrome, which is an inherited metabolic disorder associated with an early normal development in childhood, but leads to subsequent deterioration and the condition becomes life limiting.

It was Michelle and Aide's (Aaron's parents) request that all the proceeds from the event went to Acorns Children's Hospice which is where Aaron spent the remaining few weeks of his precious life. The Football match and other attractions staged on the day would not have happened without the help and dedication of all involved, which proved to be a great success raising **£3000** for the hospice. A special thank you to all those who participated in and supported this event.

In order to continue with the development of the club we will soon be recruiting players for next seasons under 7's. All those interested should check the club website at www.cadburyathleticfc.com which will be updated accordingly. Finally I would like to thank all the managers, coaches, assistants and officers of the club for their efforts and commitment throughout the season. In these trying times it is gratifying to see so many people who are still willing to give up so much of their time to assist with the running our great club. I would also like to encourage those who are interested to make themselves available for the committee in the 2009 / 2010 season, It would be nice to see some new faces and fresh ideas. Please feel free to contact me prior to the AGM if you wish to stand, or attend the AGM on Tuesday 9th June 2009 at 7.30pm in the pavilion on Bournville Lane and advice of your intentions.

Andy Clarke
Chairman
Cadbury Athletic Juniors F.C