

# LEEDS CITY JUNIORS FC 2023/24 SEASON ROUNDUP





# Teams for 2023/24 season

## GIRLS

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**U9's Girls**

**U11's Girls**

**U12's Girls**

**U12's Falcons Girls**

**U14's Girls**

**U15's Girls**

**U17's Girls**

## BOYS

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**U8's Dual**

**U9's Dual**

**U9's Craven**

**U10's Blacks**

**U10's Blues**

**U11's Blues**

**U11's Colts**

**U11's Juniors**

**U12's Juniors**

**U12's Blues**

**U12's Colts**

**U13's Blues**

**U13's Colts**

**U14's**

**U15's GJFL**

**U15's HDJFL**

**U16's**

**U18's**

## This season has been a busy yet brilliant one for Leeds City Juniors.

As this season draws to a close Leeds City Juniors celebrate yet another fantastic year filled with success, achievement and plenty of personal progression that all members should be proud of.

This season we have seen many teams achieving finalist positions with some teams taking home the title of cup winners.

Once again, we would like to thank all of the club volunteers who continue to work incredibly hard throughout the season.

We would also like to thank club sponsors; we are always in need of further sponsorship and further volunteers to ensure that we can continue to progress and grow the club and facilities to their full potential. If you would like to support the club in any way please email: [leedscityjnrs@gmail.com](mailto:leedscityjnrs@gmail.com)

We look forward to next season and all that it has to bring. It is our pleasure to see the club grow and the children progress at grassroots level and beyond.

**By the Committee**



# Peter Hynes Memorial Trophy



## Noah Walsh

### Peter Hynes Memorial Award

In honour of Peter Hynes, Leeds City Juniors are proud to dedicate an Annual Award in his name. A valued member, volunteer and supporter who went over and above for our club and grassroots junior football. Last year we were proud and privileged to present our first annual recipient of the award

Noah currently plays for Leeds City Juniors U15's squad and has been part of our club for over 9 years since joining LCJ Kindergarten with 212 appearances and 97 goals to date.

As captain of the U15' this season he plays with passion, leads by example and gives his all in every training session and Match.

Over recent years Noah has assisted as a Junior Volunteer Coach across all age groups at LCJ including Kindergarten, Wildcats, Girls & Boys Teams & Holiday Camps.

He recently qualified as an FA Junior Referee.

Noah has also helped with continued fundraising for the club at numerous events over recent years involving Christmas Disco, Race Night and End of Season presentations.

Congratulations on an outstanding achievement.





Our maiden voyage, and what a success story it was!

At the start of the season we knew we had a talented set of boys but realistically didn't have too much to gauge ourselves against in terms of league placement, so we ended up in Division 3.

We certainly looked the part with brand new kits and training tops/rain jackets kindly sponsored and paid for by Chris Drake and Martin Dootson respectively.

Six games and 73 goals later it was evident we needed to move up, whilst it was fun for the kids to hammer our opposition, it wasn't great to send them home in tears.

So into Division 2 we went, suffering a narrow defeat to Farsley (who moved up the following week to Division 1) we then remained unbeatable and untouchable for the rest of the entire season. The only thing that could stop our flood of goals was flooded pitches.

Then we had the incredible cup run, dispatching a few Division 1 teams along the way, the joy on the boys' faces once they knew they'd made it all the way to the Cup Final is a memory I'll always cherish.

Sadly we didn't quite 'complete football' in our first season, losing the final to a very good Ossett side who hadn't lost all year in Division 1, but the whole journey made us all incredibly proud.

It's been fantastic to see all the boys develop, improve and mature, create new friendships and bond together as a team both on the pitch and socially.

Huge thank you to Joe Walker and Mike Jeynes for their coaching support this year, as well as all the parents who

have all been brilliant.

It's been quite a journey. Whilst no one knew who we were back in September 23; they most certainly know who we are now!

### Leeds 8s Coaching Team



Another very impressive season from the boys from the start to the finish. This was our first season as a 7 aside team with a squad of 21 players signed on for our dual team. Due to a strong showing last season we were placed in one of the stronger dual leagues in the Garforth League. Last season we had kept our teams very similar with the teams as they were built around friendship groups, but this season due to the boys all-knowing each other we mixed the teams up for many of the games.

The season started strongly with some great games' vs Drighlington, Morley and Wigton with the boys really showing how they had developed. We then had an epic month where we played Tingley 4 out of 5 weeks due to us being drawn against them in the cup. Our strong showing went right through to Christmas with us beating Morley (and their coach, enough said!!) and rounding the year with a strong win vs Northeast Leeds who had been our bogey team last season.

After Christmas due to these performances, we were moved into the strongest division in the Garforth League vs teams such as Chapeltown, Yorkshire Amateurs and Hunslet. We have always followed the club's structure by offering football to all abilities at this young age so would class ourselves as a mixed ability team. Unfortunately, as we found out very quickly this was not the case for these teams in this league, from the New Year onwards we had some very tough games but as a lot of coaches say, you learn far more from a defeat.

We set a target of making sure we improved our performance in our second games against these teams and this target was reached with us putting in some very strong performances vs Chapeltown on a bog of a pitch, Wigton at Goals and Hunslet in our final game on bedquilts when the

pitches were at their best having been under water for most of the season due to the wet winter.

Thanks goes to Liam, Paul, and Tom for stepping up and refereeing for us in both home and some away games, thanks to the parents for your commitment to both training and games. Your support on the touchline has dragged us through some wet Sunday mornings and thanks to the boys, you are a privilege to coach, always well behaved, eager to learn and supporting your team when you are off the pitch.

### Coaches – Anthony, Paul & Pete





Leeds City Juniors U9s Girls Football Team, in their debut season, have made remarkable progress and displayed excellent teamwork. Despite being a newly formed team, their development has been impressive; more importantly they are a group who have shown the importance of friendship in a team. At the beginning of the season a lot of the girls, who came from seven different schools, did not know each other. Now they are a tight-knit team, celebrating their successes together and supporting each other in tougher moments. Friendship, fun and camaraderie have been a driving force behind their progress. The girls' ability to work together, support each other, and celebrate achievements as a unit indicates the strong bond that has been fostered within the squad.

Throughout the season, the girls have displayed a remarkable level of improvement, both individually and collectively. Their commitment and enthusiasm in training has paid off on the field where they have, consistently, demonstrated how much they have learned in a short space of time. They have seen their fair share of adversity, particularly with the weather. Games in driving rain and freezing temperatures have tested their resilience. Despite this, the girls always turn up with smiles on their faces eager to play.

The coaching team are also grateful to have a wonderful group of parents and other fans who have been supportive throughout the season. They are enthusiastic and encouraging in equal measure, which only motivates the girls even more.

As we continue into the new season, we are sure that the team will continue to thrive through teamwork, determination, and a love for the game. With each match, they demonstrate that success is not only measured by wins and losses but also by the progress made and the memories created along the way.

### Leeds Under 9s Coaching Team



As we moved up to seven a side we welcomed Theo and Aiden into the team, they were immediately made to feel very welcome, slotted in seamlessly and proved to be very useful acquisitions from the very start.

We took the momentum we had built up towards the end of last season into the new season as we started very strongly. We went on a ten game winning streak in the run up to Christmas, scoring 40 goals in the process. This form led to what is probably the fastest double promotion in history! Our first promotion saw us moved up following October half term, putting us in a more competitive league. The boys adapted really well to playing games against better opposition, taking it all in their stride as we continued our winning streak, albeit with much closer games. We won most of our games in this division by a single goal and last minute winners became a regular occurrence showing the desire and hard work the team put in, testing the nerves of the spectators and coaches though!

On reflection despite winning the majority of our games in the higher division, the tight nature of each and the fact that each could have gone either way felt like we were in the correct league, the suits in the Craven League however had other ideas, promoting us again. We again adapted well after Christmas, winning our first game. What followed was, let's say character building, as we struggled against some very good sides and the stop start nature due to the weather felt like we lost our rhythm. It was however really good to be challenged and we continued to play good football and certainly were not out of place in most matches. The cup gave us welcome respite from the league and we had a really good run to the quarter finals and were unlucky not to go further.

There are several really pleasing elements to take away

from the season aside from the results. Firstly, I've lost count of the number of times opposition coaches have complemented us on our passing football. Secondly, the effort and commitment showed, forged from a strong sense of teamwork they have built and finally, what a great set of boys, they have been a pleasure to coach this season and I am really proud of how they approach the game and the spirit in which they play their football.

### Leeds under 9s Coaching Team





In our 3rd season, we made the decision to move away from a Dual team and create 2 Sole Teams. The Blacks entered the Navy League, which was effectively the top division of 11 in our age group and gave the boys a really strong challenge throughout the season.

In total, we played 22 League and Cup games in what was one of the most weather affected seasons, I think most of us have ever encountered.

We recorded 12 wins and 10 losses. In total, we scored 94 goals, averaging 4 goals a game and conceded 70 to give us a goal difference of +24.

Throughout the season, we saw the boys improve massively. In particular, the way they moved the ball up the pitch as a team and understanding how and where they needed to be, to support their team mates. For the most part their attitude and commitment to each other was exceptional and they are fast becoming a strong unit, which balances the desire to win, whilst also approaching the game in the right way.

We welcomed 2 new additions to the squad in Brook Sellars and Luca Desaraju. Both left footed, they made brilliant additions to the squad and grew in confidence as the season went on. We also, saw Zach Goldthorpe decide to take on the position of goalkeeper. His strong technical ability as an outfield footballer, helped us build attacks from the back but his improvement in goal was also noticed throughout the season as well.

There were many highlights that I could mention but the 3 games that stick in my memory due to the performance of the boys was the 1-0 victory against Leeds Juniors Ajax, the 2-1 win against Wakefield AFC and the 3-2 victory against Shadwell United. This is where we saw the boys work best

as a team and produced close wins against arguably the 3 strongest teams in our league.

Well done boys on a fantastic season and thank you for your efforts. Thank you as always to the parents that commit so much time to bringing the boys to training and matches and for the amazing support you have given throughout the season. It is really appreciated.

### Leeds Under 10s Coaching Team



A fantastic first season as the U10's Blues has seen us come together as a team, have loads of fun and good success on the pitch. The season started quickly, we played well, our defence was strong and were scoring goals for fun - there was a time that we were going for promotion into the next division. Exactly why we formed as a team, all the players were really enjoying it and getting lots more time on the ball.

In training our aim was to develop a play out from the back style to our game and use this to control the play and move up the pitch well. Every player has developed this year and some of them have found their strength is in a position that they didn't consider before. At this age players are welcome to try any position and we continue to listen to what each player wants to develop in and rotate them around in games unless someone has had a strong view about where they want to play. Almost every opposition manager has commented on how impressive our style of play is and have asked how we've achieved it at such a young age... that would be giving away our secrets. This has come from dedication and making training fun, and it's great to see all the players happy and keen to be there every week whatever the weather.

Then came the rain! This impacted our form a bit as games were inconsistent, but it certainly built our character and what we enjoy hearing most from the parents is how we have developed a win together, lose together attitude to our games. There is a strong bond between the team. We have played some tough matches, especially towards the end of the season, and in them held our own and played to win. This is my proudest moment as a coach of the Blues - the comradery that's been built and each time I see this in action at training or in our matches I think what a great team we have.

A special thank you to every player for all your commitment, energy and fun. Next season will be great!

### Leeds under 10s Coaching Team





This season has been another fantastic year for our U11 Blues. We transitioned into 9v9 very well and the boys soon got to grips with the offside rule and started to implement it to our favour.

We were positioned in division two of the Garforth league which I think suited us well and we had a lot of close games where both teams battled yet we managed to clinch victory on many occasions.

In December we played Pudsey Juniors in the Cup and for me this was our game of the season. Having lost to Pudsey earlier in the season the boys were nervous going into the game. I said to them all I ask is for effort and they did not disappoint. Every single player played out of their skin and we managed to take the game to penalties. In the end it wasn't to be but as a coach that game was my proudest moment all season.

Amazingly we have had 14 different goal scorers this season with Finn Whitehurst taking the golden boot with 29 goals. A fantastic achievement, well done Finn!

This year we have welcomed Davinder Bhogal to the coaching team. Dav has been a great asset both in training and on matchdays and has built a great rapport with the team. We also welcomed Harjovan Lota to the squad who has had a great first season and been a real asset scoring 16 goals.

A special mention goes to Jackson Riggon-Singleton for taking on the role of goalkeeper. Jackson was previously an outfield player but offered to give goalkeeper a try this season. He has attended extra training sessions with Alan, our goalkeeper coach and has improved week by week producing some brilliant performances on matchdays.

All In all, a fantastic season and the boys should be proud of themselves. As a coach it is an honour to be part of this team, the boys have built a great relationship since starting at U8 and I look forward to watching them progress next season both as a team and as individuals.

### Leeds Under 11s Coaching Team



Another really good season for the U11 Colts. We got off to an unlucky start with a narrow loss up on the hill at LS27 FC in a game we were close to winning, before then getting back to winning ways for our next couple of games.

The start of the season was mostly about getting the boys used to the new positions and new team shapes needed for 9-a-side football.

At times we came unstuck against quality opposition while everyone was learning their new roles, such as a big loss against Ebor Gardens in October where their academy players were able to exploit gaps between our midfield and defence. We learnt some important lessons from those games as a team, and as the season has progressed, we've improved our shape and become stronger defensively.

I've always believed that the job of a coach at this age is not to create a team that are amazing at under 11, but to develop the players and give them the foundational skills now, so they can be fantastic players as teenagers and older. One of the ways we've been doing that in the last couple of seasons is rotating the positions around. That can sometimes be frustrating for the players, but the skills they learn by playing in every position across the season will make them better in the long term. We've started to see as we progressed through the season that they're naturally settling on certain positions while still having the skills to fill in and provide cover across the park.

The other area that took time to bed in, was to play it out from the back and avoid long balls up field. It takes time, and we saw some errors costing us goals early in the season, but the players are now developing more confidence on the ball in those areas and will be better players because of it.

We finished the season with some fantastic goalscoring,

including long range thunderbolts, well placed free kicks, finishes from tight angles, 1-on-1s, tap-ins and even direct from a corner, taking our goal difference to +22.

From 27 matches played, we finished with 13 wins, 12 losses and 2 draws, ready to keep on developing and improving in a new season from September. Go Colts!

### Leeds Under 11s Coaching Team





After an initial summer of sessions to increase female participation through football, a small core group of girls from LCJ All-Stars slowly grew in numbers. With a mixed group of Year 5 & 6 girls we were able to form our New U11's Girls Squad.

With new faces turning up each week at training the girls grew in confidence and ability in a short space of time, and looked forward to playing their matches.

Our first two matches in the WRGFL were against incredibly tough oppositions who had already played football together for 2-3 years. Despite the results, the girls threw themselves into the challenge and focused on the positives of team sport and new found friendships.

Touchline support was excellent throughout, and after struggling to score a goal our 3rd fixture brought a superb performance away at Clifton. With only 9 players available the girls worked tirelessly to produce a dominant performance, and 11 goals to kickstart our scoring ability.

Training sessions went from strength to strength and our matches became evenly balanced leading up to Christmas. Winter pitch conditions meant a few fixture postponements however the girls were always keen to turn up and play despite the weather, which is crucial to their development. Players throughout the squad grew in confidence and became open to rotating and trying new positions, taking on responsibility as captains and leaders in various situations.

Following a Leeds City Juniors Disco, a division reshuffle, and a well-earned break over Christmas for both the girls and parents, everyone returned in the New Year keen as ever. Training and Matchday numbers continued to increase due to the welcoming and fun atmosphere the girls created.

Fixtures over the following months saw the girls soar in their development, they continued to improve, impress, play freely and dominate matches for long periods week after week.

Goals were shared throughout the squad which is really pleasing and quite rare, as players developed their game knowledge, some started to excel in certain positions. The squad have benefited greatly from two regular, impressive and confident goalkeepers.

Overall, this season has been hugely successful, enjoyable and certainly a year to remember.

Some stand out highlights were a Squad visit to Elland Road, Hatrick Hero's, endless 1st's, growing friendships and individuals regularly overcoming adversity.

Thanks to all involved, particularly our young Coaches Victor (U15's), Anna (U14's) and Junior Referee Max (U15's)

We are looking forward to new challenges and developing further together. Well done Superstars.

**Em, Martin & Mike**



LCJ U11's Juniors have enjoyed a highly successful season, marked by impressive performances, substantial growth, and a mid-season promotion that highlights their hard work and dedication. The team's journey has been a testament to their talent, teamwork, and unwavering spirit.

Our Key Strengths this season have been our solid defence with the team's defensive organization and discipline being of particular note, and our attacking prowess which has been full of creativity, precision, speed, and effectiveness in front of goal.

I think it's fair to say we have all thoroughly enjoyed the season win or lose, rain or shine, we have been there as a team. That includes our in-match commentary for those of us sometimes unable to be at the game.

Gareth's comments:

"This season has been truly outstanding, and I couldn't be prouder of the boys. Their commitment, hard work, and willingness to learn have been key to our success. The mid-season promotion was a challenging yet rewarding experience that the team embraced with courage and determination. The camaraderie and sportsmanship displayed by the players are commendable. I want to thank the players, parents, and supporters for their incredible support throughout the season. Special mention must go to my accomplices in this mission Steve and Zaheer as without them none of this would have been possible".

**Leeds Under 11s Coaching Team**





A very long, enjoyable and successful season that started in Rothwell with a Gala win in September 2023, ended in Rothwell with a last league game win in May 2024.

A very good start to the season with a solid win vs. Yorkshire Amateurs followed by two narrow back-to-back defeats to our immediate league rivals Bingley and Horsforth in late September. This was new territory for our team having not lost two games in a row since U9s. The team bounced back stronger than ever. Working hard in training and taking one game at a time. All players showed character, resilience and desire to follow up the two losses with a running streak of 18 games in all competitions, mainly in all four cups entered.

The league was not resumed until April 2024. Being the only team with 4 league games played meant we had to play 12 league games in a very short time to conclude our season with several semi-finals and potentially finals to play. However, another league loss early April to our direct league rival meant we were able to come only second in the league. Furthermore, three days later, a narrow semi-final defeat in the Shane Telford cup, where we did not have our regular keeper, conceding 3-2 with the last kick of the game meant we lost 2 games back-to-back again. Nevertheless, the team has been here before. It did not stop the boys to bounce back even stronger and more determined. The U12s Blues went onto win the next 11 games played, with 70 goals scored and 11 conceded, to conclude the season successfully.

Overall, 38 games later, especially 17 games in the last 6 weeks of the season, resulted in three trophies, one semi-final and 2nd in the Garforth Division 1. Our U12 Blues retained the Leeds District Cup and League Cup whilst adding the County Cup to its cabinet.

All 15 players contributed to a wonderful, memorable

and successful season. The team scored 233 Goals whilst conceding 55 in all competitions. An average of 6 goals scored per game with 1.5 goals conceded. Special mention to Oscar Popplewell, who with help of his teammates, scored 112 goals. What an achievement!

Gaz and I would like to thank James March and Mark Popplewell for stepping in for the county cup semi-final win at the crucial moment of the season. A 100% record.

Coaching staff, grandparents and parents are very proud of the boys. An unbelievable season. One to remember for a lifetime. We look forward to the new 24/25 season where we will be transitioning to 11 aside. Vamos U12 Blues

### Leeds Under 12s Coaching Team



This is the fifth season for the Colts. We welcomed new players over the summer to extend the match day squad and it has been a pleasure to see how well they have integrated into the team.

The Colts faced a difficult challenge this season, being promoted to the very competitive Garforth League Division 2. However, the boys have adjusted really well to the higher division. After a tough start to the season, the boys showed real character, working hard in training and the results steadily improved in a very competitive league. We had entertaining and close games against some excellent teams. The highlight of the season has been two excellent cup runs, reaching the semi-final of the District Cup and quarter-final of the County Cup. These cup runs really instilled confidence in the boys. It was great to see some convincing winning performances against teams we had close results with previously in the latter part of the season. We finished the season with a six-game unbeaten run, highlighting the continual progression of the whole squad during the year.

Throughout the season, all boys have displayed great character and determination, with a positive attitude and a willingness to learn. The hard work they have put into training has seen significant developments in all aspects of football across the squad, with improvements in intensity, control, passing and movement. It is clear to see how the boys are enhancing their understanding of the game, particularly in their communication, positioning and reading of the game. Notably, as a squad they also continue to develop a real team spirit, celebrating goals together, supporting each other and discussing ways to improve during team talks.

Overall, a really enjoyable and successful season and it places the Colts in a great position for the challenges of next season as we go to 11 aside. We have recruited additional players to extend the squad further and I'm sure they will integrate seamlessly into the squad. The future is bright and I'm confident the squad will continue to work hard in training and develop as a group in the 2024/25 season.

Thanks to Mike Urwin, Andy White and Richard Ralston as part of the coaching team. Finally, thank you to all parents and our sponsors, Flooring 4 UK, Furness Partnerships, Bridge wind management and Drake's plumbing and heating services, for their continued support throughout the season.

### Leeds Under 12s Coaching Team





After being promoted last season, we struggled to secure wins, drawing a fair few games we should have won. Somehow, for example, we managed to go from glory—being 5:2 up against Horsforth with only eight players—to despair ... letting in three goals in the last ten minutes to draw 5:5! In the first half of the season, we were competitive in most matches, until, that is, the last twenty minutes. In the second half of season, the results didn't improve, but our team spirit did. We became stronger physically and mentally, fighting back against better teams, time and again. The Falcons were relegated but what resilience you showed girls. You played together to the end, as a team. Across the season, moreover, each of you developed as players technically, tactically and emotionally:

**Poppy:** you ran and ran, and, as our goal keeper, your handling at close quarters was really impressive.

**Ava:** you have mastered one-on-one defending and covered across the backline brilliantly.

**Abby:** you became a seriously good ball-winner, with good positional sense; and, as our captain, led on the pitch and at training.

**Iris:** you marshalled the defence, covering and jockeying with poise and power.

**Daisy:** the foundations for being a defender are being able to clear with both your left and right foot and to tackle on the inside and outside – tick, tick, all in place.

**Grace:** what energy you brought, including a bustling quarter which caused Tingley real problems.

**Meghan:** your long-range passing and shooting were truly awesome.

**Enya:** your turns to leave behind opposition players were astonishingly, and your finishing was super cool.

**Holly:** you took up excellent positions time and again, including for your goal: you were always focused—on it.

**Cora:** tough in the tackle, two-footed, and able to run and run—wow, wow, wow.

**Hermoine:** you smashed in some beauties and kept some crackers out—what talent!

**Malak:** you are wonderfully committed and are acquiring neat ball skills—what promise!

We are so proud of you all.

**David Clayton and Beth Richards**



This was our final season as a 9v9 team and our first competitive season with us being placed in Division 1 in the West Riding Girls League. We had unfortunately lost a few key players for various reasons from last season but we recruited a few new faces who became key players for us.

The season started with a loss to Rothwell Jnrs then a last-minute loss to Rothwell Town which was hard to take as we had played so well, the girls took all the positives from this performance into October where we had 3 cup games and won all games comfortably to keep our reputation up as a cup team. We then lost narrowly to Rothwell Town again but finally got our first point of the season with a draw against probably the best footballing team in our league Bradford City. Another cup win vs Garforth followed at the end of November before the weather meant we did not play a game until the week before Christmas which saw us lose to Tingley.

The New Year started with a win in the cup against Pannal, a week later we lost on penalties to eventual winners Rothwell Jnrs. Then it was our County Cup Semi Final vs Tingley. This was an experience the girls will never forget, it really brought this already tight group closer. We lost to Tingley who went onto win the County Cup but could hold our heads high and the girls also saw what it was like to have 3 officials involved.

Now the cup runs were over we had to concentrate on getting some points to keep us in the top division, we did this immediately by beating Wetherby in probably our best performance of the season, we then beat Guiseley back to back, but suffered a defeat to Wetherby when we were very low on numbers and simply ran out of legs. This meant that it all came down to our last game of the season to stay up. On a sunny Saturday afternoon at Weetwood, a win or draw vs Horsforth would mean we stayed up. Despite all the nerves on the touchlines, the girls put in a dazzling performance and ran out easy 3-1 winners to secure our status in Division 1.

Thank you to parents, we play all over the county so we have a lot of long trips, your dedication is never in doubt. A huge thank you and well done to the girls who should be proud of their achievements this season. We are lucky to coach the most committed, hardworking and talented group who have suffered a number of injuries and setbacks but just kept going. 11 aside here we come!!

**Leeds Under 12s Coaching Team**





This has been Leeds City Juniors 5th year in the Garforth leagues and our last season in the 9v9 format for the under 12s. Our initial pre-season training had started well but unfortunately, we unexpectedly had a few players leave along with the lead coach, just days before the start of the season! Thankfully we had some great support from the Club and we managed to get new players in just in time. With such a tricky start to the season the results were initially always going to be hard to come by but we were so proud of the boys who very quickly learnt the importance of supporting and encouraging each other and being united as a team. As a result, the newer players soon settled into the team and the positive attitude of the existing players allowed for a happy and enjoyable environment despite results not always going our way.

In training, as the season progressed, we worked on drills that looked to encourage the players to move the ball quickly, keep possession and to be more physical when competing for the ball. The latter really helped come match day in particular as the team excelled in breaking up the opponents play and allowed for some very tense and competitive games. Although we only had a small squad, we aimed to rotate the player's positions where possible and it was great to see the boys willing to learn and excel in new roles. We were also fortunate enough to have two talented and enthusiastic goalkeepers who both put in some excellent performances.

Myself and Jamie would like to thank the boys for all their hard work, effort and commitment over the season. We hope they have enjoyed it as much as we have.

We'd also like to thank the parents for their support too, particularly in a very wet and windy season! More thanks go to our Team sponsors Castlehill Estate Agents and a final big thanks to Rob Grant for helping out with referring - as

always much appreciated!!

All being well and if we can increase our squad size we would aim to build on our success into next season in what will be a new challenge of the 11v11 format - a challenge I know the boys will embrace!

**Managers: Tim Lehan & Jamie Harrison**



What a fantastic season from the boys!

After gaining promotion from Garforth League Division 3 last season, this season was a bit of a step into the unknown.

We got off to a fantastic start to the campaign by winning our first match 3-1 away at Hemsworth Miners - a team who would be challenging for the league all season and who ultimately finished 3rd in the league.

The harsh reality of life in Division 2 hit us in the second round of games, with a 6-0 defeat to a very strong Knaresborough Celtic outfit. We then lost our next couple of games by the odd goal as we were punished for a couple of defensive lapses late in both matches. Next up was against our old rivals NE Leeds - where we managed our first win against them in several years. It was made all the more special as the winning goal arrived with the last kick of the game!

We then experienced a mini wobble, losing five matches out of the next six. All the matches we lost were tight apart from a bit of a working over away at Pudsey. In amongst this run, we managed to get a point against NE Leeds with a 1-1 draw to preserve our unbeaten run against them. Another last-minute goal ensured we got a share of the spoils!

We then got back to winning ways with two consecutive wins. A very strong all round team performance saw us win 2-0 at Collingham and then the next week we won a thrilling game 4-3 at home to Pannal Ash. The game swung both ways and again we managed to get a late winner to send players, coaches and parents into delirium!

We then lost three of our next four games including a 3-4 reverse against Pannal Ash who claimed revenge with a last-minute winner of their own. The boys managed to bounce

back though - winning a key match 4-1 away at Durkar Devils after being 1-0 down at half time. We wrapped up the season in fine style by winning our last 2 matches. A 5-2 at home to Farsley and a 4-2 win away at local rivals Old Mods.

We finished the season in 7th place in Garforth Division 2, having played 22, won 8, drawn 2 and lost 12.

In summary, it really has been a superb season and the way the boys have stood up to the challenges in a new division has been a real credit to them all. As per last season, it has been a real team effort with goals and assists coming from all over the park.

Thanks to the parents for all your support and help across the season.

Bring on next season!

**Alex, Dunc & Ian**





After a successful season in the Harrogate league last year, we jumped over to the Garforth League for a new challenge and few less miles on the clock for away trips.

With the league full of teams, we'd never played, except our nearest challengers from last season Nidd, we kicked off at home to Seacroft in the autumn sunshine. We ran out 4:2 winners albeit with the boys finding the switch to 11v11 a real test of their fitness!

In the following game we played Sherburn, the eventual league winners, and were on the wrong end of a 4:0 defeat although it was a game of missed chances for us and we would get our revenge!

We got back to winning ways in our next game against a good team from Ackworth, initially racing in to a 3:0 lead before getting pegged back to 3:3 then Shay Metcalf popping up with a late goal and take all three points. The season progressed along similar lines winning one week, but unable to get a run together and losing the next game.

We hosted Sherburn at the end of November and the boys were well up for the game, hoping to give them a better game. Unfortunately, the game got off to the worst possible start, Sherburn scoring with their first three shots! 3:0, became 4:0 and things were not looking good and it was all smiles and jokes on the Sherburn bench much to my annoyance. The boys however were sticking to the game plan to stifle Sherburn's attempts to play-out from the back with their pressing. 4:0 quickly became 4:2 with a couple of goals from Aaron Herbert before the ref blew for half-time. The boys came in with renewed energy and a belief that there were more goals in it for them. Cody popped with our third before Arron completed his Hatrick to make it 4:4 and the smiles nowhere to be seen one the Sherburn bench! Then, with time running out, Cody went on a mazy dribble

down the right, reaching the edge of the box completely on his own. With no teammates available for a pass, he decided the best course of action was to put his foot through the ball and watch fly in to the top corner! Que wild celebrations and some deep thinking and analysis from the Sherburn coaches on their first defeat of the season!

Unfortunately, the weather really played its part in stopping us getting any momentum going and we finished the season bang in the middle of the league, 14 points behind the winners and 15 points above the relegation spots.

#### Leeds Under 13s Coaching Team



Refreshed after the summer break and with no new players to bed in, The U14 Group made a solid start to the season with 2 away wins on the bounce at Sherburn and Whitkirk. A hat trick for Ben and a clean sheet for the defence were added bonus'.

With Sam now fully committed to goalkeeping, with fantastic extra tutelage from Alan, we were buoyant and looking forward to the season ahead. We went into our first home game against Chapeltown confident; too confident it seemed as we just managed to scrape a draw after an open, end to end encounter and a last minute penalty conceded.

Next came the away trip to Crofton Panthers with a threadbare squad due to the half term holidays. We made the long trip home having lost 10 - 3, our heaviest defeat in 2 years. This was to be the theme throughout October as we suffered 3 more losses in a row. The word "press" became more of an obscenity to us all after playing Leeds Athletic Navy who shouted it every time they could during the 4 - 8 loss at home. A defeat in the District Cup to Division 2 Pudsey Warriors was easy to get over, but what was hard to accept was a surprise defeat to arch rivals, Leeds Maccabi where we just didn't compete.

November to December brought 2 wins, 2 losses and a draw. As well as a second defeat to Leeds Athletic Navy, we were also out of The Craig Pearson Memorial Cup after a thrilling penalty shootout at Bradford Park Avenue Stadium. BPA would eventually win the Cup outright. Will and Haris were quickly becoming the go to goal scorers with Rio pitching in with a few from defence.

We lost Sebbie to a broken foot at this stage and wouldn't see him again all season. Get well soon.

As we said goodbye to a below average 2023 and hello to 2024, we welcomed Division 1 Rothwell Junior Blacks to The Hub in

The County Cup. A really good contest finished 2-2 after 70 minutes. We then succumbed to penalties for a second time. Yet again, the team we lost to won the Competition outright.

January to February finished with 3 wins, 2 losses and a draw. A great 3 - 0 win over Crofton at Home and 10 - 1 win at home to Yorkshire Amateurs which was our biggest victory of the season were the highlights although Maccabi doing the double over us was a big blow.

By this point 12 of the 16 outfield players had scored, leaving just Sully, Jake, Harry and Sebbie to net. A really strong finish to the season saw 4 wins out of 4, 23 goals scored and 2 more additions to the scorecard in Sully and Jake.

18 league matches played, 10 wins, 2 draws and 6 losses. 3rd place in Division 3 and hopeful for promotion to Division 2.

A great group of lads to work with who get on well, support each other and have a laugh along the way.

#### Leeds Under 14s Coaching Team





LCJ U14 Girls Team has faced a challenging season, marked by both struggles and growth. Despite not achieving the desired results, the team has shown commendable resilience, dedication, and improvement in various aspects of their game.

We faced our first challenge at the start of the season with being unable to field a full team for our first game. With a lot of the girls playing their first full season of competitive football the gap was inevitably noticeable.

Our fortunes changed and some new signings improved the quality and won our first game of the season in the Yorkshire Shield competition. We eventually got knocked out at the quarter final stage on penalties.

Although we improved our squad in the outfield positions, we lost our goalkeeper mid-way through the season meaning all the girls had to give it a go. Some enjoyed that challenge more than others, until Lily stood up and put the gloves on and has really given her all to the team. Such a big move can't go un-noticed.

#### Kaye's Comments

"I am incredibly proud of the girls for their perseverance and hard work throughout a tough season. Each challenge we faced was met with determination and a willingness to learn and improve. While the results were not always in our favour, the growth and development we have seen in the players are invaluable. We will take the lessons learned this season and come back stronger next year. Thank you to all the players, parents, and supporters for their unwavering support."

With a dedicated group of players and a clear plan for improvement, we are optimistic about the future and excited to see what the next season holds.

A heartfelt thank you to our coaching staff, parents, and volunteers whose support and commitment have been instrumental in navigating this challenging season. Your contributions have made a significant difference, and we look forward to continuing this journey together.

#### Leeds Under 14s Coaching Team



The season got off to a bang with a solid four-week discussion around the new kits.

Mid-season saw Hollywood calling with the potential of a Nike TV ad and talk of day rates at £1,000. Filming was set for Spain. Or Manchester. Hence the day rate. We were shortlisted to the final stages but sadly it wasn't to be. However, for a moment, the dream was on and it was exciting for the girls to be part of it and enjoy the anticipation together and the dreams of what could have been.

Then it rained. But only for about 3 months.

And then we got down to some serious football, finishing the league 3rd at the first time of asking in the top flight.

A special mention to one of our very own superstars: Gracie. In her first season with the U15s, and bearing in mind she plays up a year, she's won the league's golden boot which is a magnificent achievement. Well done Gracie.

Lots of our girls play competitively away from LCJ as part of the FA's County squad and as part of the Lionesses' pathway whilst also playing for school teams. Another special mention to Lara for her contribution towards her school's 2 cup final wins in the Leeds Cup and Merit Table final. Well done Lara.

Having watched both finals at South Leeds Stadium it's clear the standard of girls' football in Leeds is exceptionally high and LCJ plays a crucial part in that by providing credible opposition at the highest level in grassroots football – something all the squad should feel immensely proud of to be part of this side.

We've had some notable squad movements this season where we've said goodbye and best of luck with their future football to both Erin B & Jessica. We've also welcomed Gracie, Lara, Erin H, and Issi this season, all of whom have contributed massively towards an impactful season alongside the other existing, highly talented squad members.

Since the end of the competitive season we've also welcomed Freya B to the squad so we're very much looking forward to seeing what next season holds for a group oozing talent and potential.

Thanks to the committee for their endless work behind the scenes and thank you to all the parents, grandparents, and reluctant siblings who support us throughout the season [not just in suggesting areas of improvement for the referees but] logistically and financially too, it's all greatly appreciated this season as always.

#### Leeds Under 15s Coaching Team





2023/24 was comfortably our biggest challenge to date after winning promotion to Division 1. As a group we set ourselves a tough yet achievable aim to finish top of the lower half.

Pre-season Training and Friendlies also involved Strength & Conditioning sessions and a successful Squad Challenge. With a small yet committed and well-balanced squad we looked good going into our first fixture of the season Away v's Whitkirk who would go on to win Division 1. An impressive start not only held our opposition but matched them at times for a long period of the game. Unfortunately, a disappointing second half resulted in an overwhelming defeat come full time and showed the importance of maintaining high levels and focus for 80+ minutes.

Our next 2 matches were similar and whilst the successful periods were impressive it became clear the squad needed to believe in their own ability more and look to overcome adversity sooner rather than later if we were to succeed in Division 1.

Our strength as a group has always been developing together to move forward rather than looking elsewhere whilst other teams chop and change for a quick fix. October brought four highly competitive fixtures, regular positives and signs that we belong in this Division and are more than capable of competing.

November went from strength to strength with 3 matches that kickstarted our season, a highlight Away at Wortley in a physical fixture. A compact and formidable defence soaking up pressure throughout whilst being brave enough and having just enough belief as a team to cause the first major upset of the season by scoring a last-minute winner to devastate a team that considered themselves title challengers. A County cup fixture away v Yorkshire Amateurs U16's showed many of our squad rise to the challenge and excel in a David v Goliath second half performance. And a cup fixture comeback v Durkar had everyone eyeing up some silverware.

The coming months brought ups and down and inconsistency with injuries, postponements and fixtures against varying oppositions. Our cup runs in both the Craig Pearson & Black Prince Trophy brought some unforgettable moments and showed just how good we can be when confident and playing

for each other. An overwhelming performance in a LCJ derby cup fixture, a resilient comeback and last-minute equaliser Away v Carlton before convincingly winning the Penalty shootout. This result led to a pivotal moment as we met Carlton for the 3rd time this season in a Semi Final, two teams that have gone toe to toe over the years.

After a cagey start and end to end football, we were finally settled by a Wondergoal that inspired some outstanding and devastating football at times plus unbreakable teamwork with a full squad available to push and support each other. By the time the final whistle blew the gap between the 2 teams looked enormous and our next meeting with Carlton for the fourth time this season was merely a formality and deservedly so. Following our Semi Final success we reached the U15's Leeds & District Black Prince Trophy Final on Sunday 14th April v's Chapeltown.

This was a huge achievement from a highly competitive pool of teams and a moment to cherish. Despite Chapeltown running out 2-0 winners on the day, this was a day to remember for all involved and hopefully will prove to be a valuable learning experience to develop further.

Our final fixture of 2023/24 was a perfect end to the season. Home v's Leeds Porto showcasing all our strengths to get the better of one of our greatest adversaries over recent years whilst securing an impressive 5th place in Division 1 (10 Teams) after promotion.

The signs of continued development and improvement are clear to see year on year with the same group of players. Consistently improved results in return fixtures across the season show the potential our squad have.

The squad have benefited greatly this season from appointing a Captain (Noah) and Vice-Captain (Eoin) who have both been hugely influential and successful on all fronts in both Training & Matchday.

Huge Thanks to our Sponsor Ewan & all at ICON

Thank you all for your encouragement and continued support throughout

**Coaches: Pete Walsh, Mike Inman, Kev Brown & Josh Falkingham**

With a slight change to the Management Team, with Kev and Larner taking the decision to step aside, I welcomed Hamish join me on the Coaching Team.

We were starting a new 2023/24 season in the top Harrogate division having finished Champions last year.

It was a tough start to the season against Guiseley, the runners up from the previous season. We gave them a scare losing narrowly 6-4

Up next was last year's champions which was a real eye opener to what lies ahead. With a heavy defeat 11 - Nil.

Our next game was a real nail biter against Harrogate. We levelled the game with 2 minutes to go only to concede what they thought was the winner. No way. Josph lobbed the keeper from 20 yards to gain a well-deserved point.

Then our old rivals Wigton. Letting them take an early lead made our 3-1 win even more satisfying. First win in the top division.

A couple of defeats followed before our cup tie against..... Wigton. Another 3-1 victory which set up a quarter final against the Garforth squad. Less said about that the better!!

It was becoming clear that the league was made of two mini leagues with 2 well-earned draws against Harrogate and Ilkley which could have gone our way with a little bit of luck.

Then Wigton away. Game played on a mud bath without a referee. Dubious offside goal given by their coach just before half time gave them the advantage. However, this was followed by arguably the goal of the season with an absolute screaming free kick from Nate. Just like Beckham Ward-Prowse

With everything to play for we entered the last 3 games of the season needing points. Narrow defeat by Clifford 2-1 made the last 2 games must wins. Along came Ilkley which we won 3-2 to take us off the bottom of the league. All we needed was a point to make sure we remained above Wigton. All looking good until the last minute when Clifford scored a late winner. Thankfully Ilkley thumped Wigton so no damage done. With no decision on the number of teams to be relegated due to a possible league restructure, our fate awaits us.

A big thanks to all the Parents who are always very supportive and to Elliott, who refereed our games extremely well.

#### Rob and Hamish





The 2023-2024 season started brightly for the Under 16's in the Garforth league, Division One. Several new players joined the squad from last season, and great additions they were! We had several wins and great team performances against some established division one sides. The boys really started to develop a good team spirit and ethos.

And then teams around us in the league started to fold. This was disappointing for us, as we had beaten them all! Especially Ackworth, where in the best performance of the season, we came out as worthy winners.

Unfortunately, due to the year 11 exams, we have struggled to have a full squad for a lot of the games. It has been tricky to field a full team some weeks and a big well done to those boys who have been available every week – you have been committed and dedicated. This was also not helped by the huge number of games which were postponed due to the rainy season!! Lots of midweek games in April have been a challenge.

We have seen some special moments this season though.

A brilliant 1 -1 draw against Ventus, a bad-tempered side who did not like our team keeping calm and organised!

Defeating Wrenthorpe 3 -2 at home with 3 great goals.

The emphatic 11- 0 defeat of Crossley Juniors in the County Cup.

The thrilling penalty shoot-out against Wakefield Jets after drawing 0 -0 in normal time. Brave penalty takers and goalkeeper!

Defeating 'local rivals' Old Mods 2-1 in the final few minutes of the game.

We have seen a few injuries, great goals, and great saves!

Well done to all of the boys this season, it hasn't been easy, it has been cold and wet, but you have shown great resilience, perseverance and team spirit. Football is a team sport, and you worked as a team, and for the team, every week.

A big well done to the parents as well. Thank you for your support with early kick offs, putting up the goals and the respect barrier! Football is a team sport, and parents are a big part of that team too.

### Leeds Under 16s Coaching Team



The majority of the match squad from last year stayed together and we gained two players Korede Ayileka, a skilful midfield player and Miradi Nzondo, showing strong potential in midfield and our most improved player over the year.

Our two recruits last year (Lashan Zeca and Hera Carabbacan) have had a great impact, Lashan finishing as top goalscorer with 29 goals (although we had 12 players make the scoreboard this year) and Hera (along with Emily Bell) has played in all 25 games this year. Hera's passion and commitment has impressed the coaching team, always leaving everything on the pitch, often before the final whistle has been blown, never keeping anything back.

Despite playing in goal for a number of games, Emily has the joint highest number of assists (9), as well as 4 goals, yet at times we have gone 3 at the back with Emily in the centre of defence. Our usual goalkeeper Chloe Smith returned in February but I would like to thank Sasha Lam and Annabel Burrrough for sharing the goalkeeping duties with Emily for the majority season showing a lot of good

ability. We recruited a number of players including a goalkeeper from a local U16 team that folded before Easter. One of these players, Rhiannon Kelsey, got her only goal of the year with us.

Ruby Brady, Lorna Boomer and Annabel are all marching towards the 150 appearance mark. Lorna has proven to be an asset in either defence or midfield and Ruby has also successfully transitioned from wing to centre midfield whilst Annabel took the team by surprise with a great performance when asked to play up front rather than in the centre of our defence.

Maisie Kelly and Jess Scarr have been excellent at right and left back this season, whilst Tariro Buzugbe, Evie Rose

and Hera have shared roles at either end of the pitch with the speed and ability to both sit in defence and snuff out opposition attacks and at the other end as speedsters to attack the opposition defence along with Lily Hamilton, Ruby and Katie Brown. Lily got a goal of the season contender and Katie continues to play for the ladies' team.

I would like to thank Kieran Brady for his coaching and the many hours he still puts in on and off the pitch, Darren Hamilton for his coaching support and invaluable statistics which the team love. Jon Burroughs for his refereeing and running the line whenever required and Mike Inman for his help and guidance, enabling us to play our home games when Boddington wouldn't let us.

### Leeds Under 17s Coaching Team





Following promotion last season, Leeds City JFC U18s started their final season of junior football, in Harrogate League Division 1.

It was always going to be a tough season, stepping up, and the fixtures were not kind to us. Our first four fixtures involved playing the two teams who were expected to be battling for the title come the end of the season.

However, away against Pannal Sports, who won the League and Cup double the previous season, we earned our first point with a 3-3 draw. Harry scoring his first of the season and Archie following with a brace. In the Home fixture, we beat Pannal 5-3, in what was to be their only defeat of the season, and showed we can spread goals across the team, with goals from Nyal, Archie, Ben S (2) and Sam T.

We also noted a memorable win against Horsforth St Margarets, 3-2, goals from Harry (2) and Kian. With 2 minutes left, Horsforth scored from a freekick just outside our box. From the resulting kick off we raced down the other end of the field, won a corner and Kian headed it in!

We secured a point against Nidd, 1-1, with Sam T scoring the equaliser, in what was the most one-sided game of football I have seen. I think Nidd only got into our half once in the entire game!

We also drew 4-4 with Collingham, goals from Lucas, Ben S, Archie and Sam B.

We finished 6th in our first and last season of top-flight football. Well done to all the lads!!

The Leeds and District Cup was also a major achievement for us. We beat a Wortley team, who are mid table in the Garforth League, 4-1 with goals from Nyal, Ben S (2) and

Sam T, in a much-postponed semi-final. This was the best football I have seen the boys play and shows the level of skill, understanding and fitness they all possess!

The Leeds District Cup Final was against North-East Leeds, who finished runners up in the Garforth League. Unfortunately, we lost 3-0, where we were unlucky and had to chase the game at the end.

Well done guys on a thoroughly enjoyable season, and good luck in your future footballing endeavours.... You have been a joy to coach!

#### Leeds Under 18s Coaching Team



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