



Welcome to the New Season

A Busy Summer of Preparation

Vol. 2, No. 1, August 2007



There has been a lot of activity behind the scenes this summer to ensure the Club is well-prepared for the new season.

New goalposts have been purchased for the main pitch, with financial help from Pirton Sports & Social Club, the Rands Foundation and the Football Foundation. Apparently, the posts are the same as those in use at the new Wembley stadium, so the lads have no excuse!

New turf and seed was laid in the goalmouths in May and the wet summer has ensured that the new growth has taken well—every cloud has a silver lining!

Once again, we are very grateful to our main Sponsors, Premier Computer Supplies and Hugh Byrne, for funding a new kit for the First Team this season.

Premier have been great supporters of the Club for many years now and in that time they have enjoyed fantastic success and expansion in their business. Hugh will be happy to talk to anyone from Lea Sports about any printing or computer-related requirements you might have—they can deal with all requests from office supplies to complete networks, so please support our Sponsors. Call 01582 572727 or e-mail hugh@premiercomputersupplies.co.uk.



FOOTBALL FOR THE UNDER ELEVENS

After a few scares, the new Under Eleven team is in place for the coming season. The Manager who was going to take charge left us suddenly, but with lots of help from the Committee at Shillington & Gravenhurst Utd the team was able to continue, although it will be playing seven-a-side football in the Filmergraphics League.

Saturday Soccer

In addition, we are now running Soccer Sessions, under the guidance of Coach Phil Toyer, at the Recreation Ground in Pirton on

Saturday mornings between 11.30 and 12.30. These sessions are open to all 5-11 year-olds, irrespective of ability. Girls as well as boys are welcome.

These two new activities have enabled us to obtain financial support from the Local Network Fund, which is a facility in Hertfordshire funding community projects until January 2008. This money has now been approved by the Fund, which is a great help to our finances.

In the coming weeks we will be applying for a grant from Awards For All, which is linked to the National Lottery, with a view to replacing the hot water system for the showers. As always, there's no guarantee of success, but we'll give it a go.



No Cup Joy for Adults

More Premier Cup Disappointment

Vol. 2, No. 2, September 2007

For the second year running the First Team managed to beat the eventual winners of the Premier Cup pre-season tournament, but could not make the advantage count.

A 3-0 defeat to Houghton Wanderers meant that Lea Sports ended up in 3rd place again and have now not won their own tournament since 1995. Leaside (who played as The Globe last year) ended up as tournament winners by dint of their 3-2 win over Houghton Wanderers. Last year's winners Peguform ended up with a solitary point, from their 2-2 draw with Lea Sports.



The curse of the new kit strikes again...

	Winners	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
1989	Lea Sports	Royal Oak	Park Town	Barbarians
1990	Luton Old Boys	Lea Sports	Stopsley Harriers	Stopsley Royal Oak
1991	Stopsley W.M.C.	Stopsley Harriers	Lea Sports	Nurdin & Peacock
1995	Lea Sports	Elm Park	Old Moat House	Farley Parrot
1996	Ewe & Lamb	Lea Sports	Old Moat House	Trident Athletic
1997	Old Moat House	Ewe & Lamb	Borough Arms	Lea Sports
1998	Old Moat House	Lea Sports	Borough Arms	Woodstock Wnds.
2003	Macdonald Humfrey	Christians in Sport	Ewe and Lamb	Lea Sports
2004	Magnum (ABC)	Lea Sports	Britannia Airways	Woodstock Wnds.
2005	Magnum (ABC)	Lea Sports	Britannia Airways	-
2006	Peguform	The Globe	Lea Sports	Houghton Wanderers
2007	Leaside	Houghton Wanderers	Lea Sports	Peguform Icknield

TOUGH CUP DRAWS TO COME...

The First Team have been unlucky in this year's Cup draws: in the League Senior Trophy they face a tough trip to Offley in the First Round. The County Cup has also provided an away tie—to Ocusta from Watford, and victory in that game would provide yet another away tie: to Roundbush or Crown (Review Sunday League Div.1).

The Reserves also have some travelling to do—in the County Cup First Round they face a trip to Hemel Hempstead to play new Club Shaka and a victory would give them another away tie: to Everett Rovers or Oaklands (Review Sunday League Div.3).

The Youth teams at least have some home games to look forward to. The Under 16s have a home tie with Echoes Youth, while the Under 13s play host to local rivals Hitchin Town.



Calling All Engineers....

As you probably all know by now, a new set of goalposts has been installed on the main pitch in Pirton. The posts slot into sleeves which have been concreted into the ground and can be removed fairly easily when there are cricket matches or other events on the recreation ground.

When the posts are removed, a set of metal caps is used to cover the sleeves so that they are not a danger to the public and soil does not fill the holes up. The problem is that we need to find a way of locking the caps to the sleeves to prevent them being removed and lost by the local kids.

If anyone has any ideas as to how we could drill the caps and lock them to the sleeves, please get in touch.

Lea Sports the Talk of the Town...



Thanks to Simon Jackson the Club is the new owner of a training kit of bibs and cones. Si entered a competition on talkSPORT to identify a League ground. An FA coaching course is also a part of the prize. Three of the season's winners will be picked at random to take part in a penalty shoot-out at the Commercial Vehicles Show at the NEC and the overall winner will receive a new Vauxhall Movano 15-seater minibus, so we could be travelling to those County Cup ties in Watford in style in the future!

Great Start for the Adults

After the disappointment of the Premier Cup, the First Team started their league program by thrashing Crawley Green Reserves 8-2 in Division 2. Jamie Richards got us off the mark with a penalty, but a Crawley equaliser pegged us back to 1-1 at half-time. Second-half hat-tricks from Greg Whelan and Titch Bevan, plus a further strike from Jamie, secured the points for the team. Still no clean sheets though...

Meanwhile, at Leagrave Park, Lewis Smith started his defence of the Golden Boot with a hat-trick for the Reserves against Crown. Despite leading 3-0 and 4-2, the Reserves were pegged back when the Crown secretary awarded the home side TWO late penalties to give them a point they hardly deserved in a 4-4 draw.

Please Look After Our Equipment This Year

Finally, another appeal to all players and officials to look after the Club's equipment this year. Whether it be kit, nets, pegs, corner flags, match balls, linesman's flags, etc - most of it has been replaced this year and it all costs money if it is lost or damaged, so please don't leave items lying about outside or in the changing rooms. If you don't know where a particular item is stored, ask a committee member, or if all else fails, leave the item in the net cupboard, as this is the only room used only by the football club.

A lot of effort has been put in over the summer to obtain grants for new equipment and to provide the best possible playing conditions for Lea Sports members. ***Please respect the kit provided and take your share of the responsibility for it.***



Calling All Coaches

Help us Push for Development Status

Vol. 2, No. 3, October 2007

This year the Club wants to push forward with an application for Development Club status. This is a vital step in the attempts to obtain funding for a new pavilion at the Recreation Ground.

The Club will fund any coaching courses players may wish to participate in, so if you would like to achieve an FA coaching standard, let me know. As a rough guide, the details below tell you what a Level 1 course entails:

ADULT LEVEL 1 COURSE CONTENT

Warm up, drills and why should we take part
Practical drills, support material brochure and video
Nutrition for Football
Fitness and Nutrition
Coach Development, coach philosophy
Code of Conduct, General, Players and Coaches
Football for All
Laws of the game
Developing your club
Action Planning
Drugs in Football
Child Protection and Best Practice.



Find more information at:

<http://www.hertfordshirefa.com/Development/Courses/>

If you are already a Level 1 Coach, how about trying for Level 2?



How Many???

For the Reserves' fixture against Luton Borough Reserves on September 9th, Phil Thompson teamed up with Archie Conway. It was pointed out to me that between them they have clocked up 1,140 appearances for Lea Sports, while referee Steve Baggett has another 254 appearances under his belt!

Archie made his debut on 11th October 1981 when he scored in the Third Team's 2-2 draw with Luton Teachers' Social Club. Phil scored on his debut too in another Third XI fixture vs. Toddington Farmers just over a year later on 21st November 1982. Since then Archie has notched another 48 goals for the Club...whereas Phil has scored another 573!

Many Happy Returns to Archie for his birthday on September 20th. Archie, I'm sure you won't thank me for reminding you it was your 54th birthday, but then you are 15 days older than me!



Mixed Fortunes in the Cups

The First Team made an excellent start in the League's Senior Trophy with a 2-0 win away to Division 1 side Offley Social. The heavy league defeat suffered on our last visit to Offley in November 2005 was avenged with goals from Danny Davis and a 'wonder goal' from Richard Knock. On the same day the Reserves travelled to Hemel Hempstead to take on Shaka FC in the Herts.Junior Cup First Round. On a bumpy, sloping pitch the Reserves made light work of the opposition and goals from Lewis Smith, Jon Whitehead and a hat-trick from Phil Thompson gave us a comfortable 5-1 win. The Under 13s were less fortunate in their County Cup tie at home to Hitchin Town. Despite taking the lead through new signing Cameron Alexander they were pegged back before half time by a goal from 'defector' Jack Stanton. Despite both sides having chances in the second half, it was a very late goal from Hitchin which won the match and gave the Under 13s their first home cup defeat since January 2006.



The following week, the Firsts made a swift exit from the Herts.Intermediate Cup, going down 2-0 to Watford side Ocusta. The Reserves now face a trip to Oaklands, who have won 4 and lost 1 in Division 5 of the Review and Observer Sunday League, which covers the St.Albans area.

Great Start for the Under Sixteens

CHILTERN YOUTH LEAGUE				FILMERGRAPHICS	
Under 16		Under 13		Under 11	
		Leighton Town	2-4	Central Milton Keynes	1-3
Stopsley Sports	3-2	Hitchin Town (Herts.Cup 1)	1-2		
Limbury Saints	3-1			Sandy Colts (Friendly)	4-2
Flitwick Eagles	3-0	Warden Hill Tigers	2-1		
Echoes Youth (Herts.Cup 1)		Leighton Utd.A			
		Luton Borough		Bedford Park Rgrs 'A'	
Luton Borough		Bedford FC			
Caldecote		Bedford Town			

Following their relegation last year to Division 3, the Under Sixteens have bounced back with three wins in their first three league games, scoring three times in each fixture. The Under Thirteens are still looking for one or two more players, but steadied the ship after two early defeats: playing with just ten men away to Warden Hill Tigers they achieved a creditable 2-1 win.

The Under 11s also played their first fixture away to Milton Keynes with a man short, losing 3-1. They have now managed to find one or two more players and recorded a 4-2 win away to Sandy Colts in a friendly fixture on September 23rd.

Comments, Suggestions, Complaints, Articles, Photos, etc.....

Send them to me at: secretary@leasportspirton.com



First Team's Home Record Suffers

Defeats to Woodstock and Lilley at the Rec

Vol. 2, No. 4, November 2007

The First Team began October in the worst possible fashion with two home league defeats. The first of these came against Woodstock Wanderers who had old boy Bobby McGrath at the centre of their defence. Things started well enough when Greg Whelan fired us ahead within 5 minutes, but Woodstock came back to score twice before the half-hour mark. A free-kick from Jamie Richards restored parity at half-time, but two further goals were conceded in the second half in a 4-2 defeat.

Against Lilley on October 14th the team again started brightly and looked the more likely to score, but another defensive lapse let Lilley in to take the lead. Another fine strike from Greg Whelan levelled things up by half time. However, more defensive errors in the second half produced a 3-2 defeat in a game we should have won.

Things looked brighter in the away fixture vs. Woodstock on October 21st as the team stormed into a 3-1 lead, however the defence again could not hold firm and the game ended 3-3. The following week should have seen the First Team matching up to Premier Division rivals FC Houghton in the second round of the Senior Trophy, but Houghton could not field a side so the firsts enjoy a walkover into round 3.

The Reserves, meanwhile, have been trying to overcome a shortage of candidates for the goalkeeping position. With Gavin Bidgood still injured, Steve Baggett has been pressed into service. An away fixture vs. runaway league leaders Houghton Wanderers brought a 5-1 defeat, but the County Cup hopes are still alive after a 4-2 win in St. Albans against Oaklands, who are currently top of the Review Sunday League Division 5. The Reserves will hope that striker Lewis Smith will be fit again for the later rounds.

Meanwhile the Reserves' Challenge Cup campaign is over when they lost 1-0 away to Aldwyck in Houghton Regis in a tight game.

Defensive problems for both sides mean that the adults have kept one clean sheet in 18 matches so far this season

The Under 16s are continuing to go well in the league with 4 wins from 5, but in the County Cup manager Mark Hill decided to rotate his squad and the team suffered a 6-2 defeat to Echoes Youth from Hemel. Unfortunately, striker Jonathan Crawford broke his ankle in this game—we wish him a speedy recovery.

On 21st October braces from Matthew Day and Danyal Javed with strikes from Chris Goodrum and Sam Tompkins following an own goal brought a fine 7-0 victory away to Luton Borough.

The final game of the month, however, brought a disappointing 4-1 defeat at home to Caldecote, although the scoreline was not a true reflection of the play.

The Under 13s started the month as draw specialists: Cameron Alexander rescued a point in a 1-1 draw at home to Leighton Utd., while against Luton Borough the team were leading 4-0 into the second half but ended up drawing 4-4! The final game of the month—away to Bedford Town—saw us concede another 4 goals, but this time we only managed one in reply.

The Under 11s finally played their second league game and it brought a victory in a 2-1 win at Bedford Park Rangers: Ross Embleton and Jack Kirkwood with the goals. Their first home game will be vs. Brickhill on November 4th.



Pavilion News

On October 2nd I had a meeting with Karl Lingham from the Hertfordshire FA and Stuart Lamb who is the FA Regional Development Officer for the South East and London, to discuss our plans for funding a new pavilion at the Recreation Ground.

They were very helpful and interested in our project, however they pointed out that since we only have two adult size pitches the Football Foundation would probably only fund two changing rooms, plus an officials room, together with a social area of 40-60 square metres (including showers, storage, etc.). Since this would probably give us less room than we have in the lounge now we have to consider whether it would be better to apply for a separate block with changing rooms, showers and garage space. This would be about one third of the cost of a whole new pavilion and we would stand a much better chance of getting funding for the project.

Happenings at the Rec



October 26th saw a new venture for the Sports and Social Club with a Murder-Mystery evening, in collaboration with local amateur dramatics group Pirton Players. The players presented a 3-act play with clues as to the identity of the murderer and the accumulated audience of 40 or so people were invited to guess the identity of the killer. Ample helpings of lasagna and chilli were on hand to help the little grey cells do their job!

Saturday November 3rd is the date for the Annual Firework Display at the Recreation Ground. This is an event for all the family with mulled wine and barbecue on offer as well as the normal bar facilities. Pay on the gate on the night (7 pm gates open). Adults £5; Under 16s £2.



On Friday December 7th we have the return of local band Sharp's Hooter. It was the Hooter who started off the current programme of events in March this year—if you missed them then, don't make the same mistake again. Should be a good night.

FRUITION

Then to round off the year we have another local band Fruition (featuring my son Chris) presenting their annual Christmas Party on Saturday December 22nd. If you like your Indie rock loud and fast this is the one to come to. Check out their website at www.fruitionhq.co.uk.



Comments, Suggestions, Complaints, Articles, Photos, etc.....

Send them to me at: secretary@leasportspirton.com



Reserves Make Light Work of Tolmers

Through to the County Cup Fourth Round

Vol. 2, No. 5, December 2007

The Reserves began November in excellent fashion, beating Hexton on their own patch 2-1. The win was all the more creditable, since Hexton had won in Pirton by the same scoreline on September 23rd (if a little fortuitously). Lewis Smith, still struggling to overcome a ligament injury, lasted an hour of the game, but it was enough time to score the first goal. Hexton equalised with a speculative shot before half time, but a strike from Jon Whitehead in the second half secured the points. On Remembrance Sunday the Reserves travelled to Newgate St. Village to take on Tolmers from Division 3 of the Mercury Waltham Sunday League. The Reserves showed no mercy to the Mercury league side and a brace each from Richard Randall and Phil Thompson saw the team through to the last 32 where they will have a home tie to Broxbourne Athletic on Dec. 9th. If they can win that one they will have a further home tie in January en route to the Quarter Finals. November 18th brought a 'game of two halves' in high winds at Lothair Road. Leading 5-0 at half-time, we found the going tougher in the second half and ended up winning 7-4. Phil Thompson scored five and Ash Cooper and Pat McAneney scored one each. The following week saw another second half collapse—leading 3-0 at home to Magnum Reserves at half time, with goals from Ed Thomson and Luke Day (2), the Reserves managed to lose 4-3. And it wasn't even that windy!!

The First Team began the month with a tough home game vs. Luton Old Boys—made even tougher by having no official referee. This allowed the Old Boys forwards to get away with murder—and a 2-0 win. The end of the month brought better fortunes, with a 2-0 win away to Macom Eagles, with goals from Greg Whelan & Jamie Richards.

The Under 16s began the month with a fine 2-1 win in a friendly against Crawley Green B, but missed chances the week after meant a 2-1 defeat to Warden Hill Tigers, despite a spirited second half come back. They lost again by the odd goal on November 18th—this time 4-3 away to Watling Youth. The following week saw a return fixture with Watling, this time in the League Cup. At full time the scores were level at 0-0 and extra time also failed to produce a goal. In the failing light the game went to penalties and Watling finally triumphed 4-2.

The Under 13s only had one fixture in November—but it was against the league leaders Bedford Town at Pirton on November 18th. Having lost the away fixture in October by a 4-1 scoreline, the lads knew it would be tough, and so it proved. Final score: 6-1 to Bedford.

The Under 11s continued their good form. On November 4th they played their first home game—a tight encounter with second-placed Brickhill, which ended 0-0. The following week the team travelled to Bedford FC Juniors 'A' and goals from Sal Digrado and Jack Kirkwood secured a 2-0 win. They began their matches in the League Cup round-robin phase with a home game vs. Bedford FC Juniors 'B' on 18th November and ironically they found the opposition much tougher than the previous week. Goals from Ross Embleton and Jack Kirkwood were enough for a 2-1 victory. Ross was on target again in the last game of the month as the lads beat Wootton Rangers 2-1 at Pirton. Sal Digrado was the other scorer.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CONTINUES

The Saturday Soccer sessions for 7 to 10-year-olds have proved popular, with a regular attendance of around 10 children. The hope is to bring these players on into league teams for next season. On November 26th a meeting took place between Lea Sports and Shillington & Gravenhurst Utd with a view to closer collaboration between the clubs next season. Both clubs were very positive about a merger for next season bringing the possibility for football for all ages from Under 7s to veterans. More details will follow in the January Newsletter, but the prospects for 'Lea Sports PSG' are looking good.



Golden Boot Race Closer Than Ever

Injury to last year's Golden Boot winner, Lewis Smith, has meant that the race for this year's trophy is the closest for many years.

In matches played up to the end of October 2007, the goalscoring standings are as follows:

Phil Thompson (Reserves) -	8	(8 matches) (inc.2 for 1st XI)
Jamie Richards (First Team) -	8	(11 matches)
Greg Whelan (First Team) -	7	(11 matches)
Chris Goodrum (Under 16s) -	5	(6 matches)
Lewis Smith (Reserves) -	4	(3 matches)
Cameron Alexander (Under 13s) -	4	(5 matches)
Adam Nunn (Under 13s) -	4	(8 matches)

Happenings at the Rec



The 'away' dressing room has had a bit of a facelift, thanks to a donation of some paint from former player Gary Hyde.

As well as a coat of paint on the walls and ceiling, some new benching has been installed, the coat hooks have been replaced and a new rubberized floor has been laid.

No wonder the First Team prefer to use this room.

TRIP TO HENLOW DOGS—17th JANUARY 2008

A planned trip to Henlow Dogs on 17th January has had to be postponed because it clashes with the adults' five-a-side. Look out for rearranged dates.

Don't forget on Friday December 7th local band Sharp's Hooter will be playing at the Club. Should be a good night. £3—pay on the door. Then to round off the year we have another local band Fruition (featuring my son Chris) presenting their annual Christmas Party on Saturday December 22nd. If you like your Indie rock loud and fast this is the one to come to. £4—pay on the door.



Merry - Christmas.

Comments, Suggestions, Complaints, Articles, Photos, etc.....

Send them to me at: secretary@leasportspirton.com



Discussions Continue on Club Merger

Committees Meet in January

Vol. 2, No. 6, January 2008

A Meeting is planned in January between the Committees of Lea Sports Pirton FC and Shillington & Gravenhurst United FC, with a view to merging the two clubs at the end of this season.

S & G currently run teams at Under 8, 9 and 10 in the Filmergraphics Seven-a-side league. They play their home matches in Gravenhurst, but have no facilities available to them other than a pitch.



Potential New Badge and Logo for the Renamed Club

Lea Sports have ambitions to develop youth football, especially for younger age groups, so the merger, which would be centred around the Recreation Ground in Pirton, would benefit both clubs.

Providing no difficulties emerge at the January meeting, the merger would take place before the start of next season. The enlarged club would stand a much better chance of achieving Development Club status, although there is still some discussion on whether to affiliate the whole Club to Hertfordshire, or adults to Herts and Youth to Bedfordshire.

UNDER ELEVENS LEAGUE CUP CAMPAIGN ON TARGET

The Under Elevens won the second of their four round-robin league cup group games on December 16th to keep their campaign on target.





Stormy Start to December

On December 2nd, thirty years to the day after my debut for Lea Sports, none of our teams in action managed a point. The Under 11s put up a great fight against unbeaten League leaders Central Milton Keynes. In driving rain, chances were missed at both ends until two minutes from time a corner was volleyed into the roof of the net by a Milton Keynes forward to give them a slender 1-0 win. The First Team were also up against unbeaten League leaders in Saracens Head. Despite goals from Danny Davis, Rich Randall and Ollie Manning, the final result was a 3-5 defeat. The Under 13s were also in action away from home and conceded a late goal to lose 2-1 to AFC Dunstable.

Reserves' Cup Dreams Get Washed Away

On December 9th the Reserves played their Fourth Round County Cup tie at home to Broxbourne Athletic. At this stage last year a trip to Goff's Oak brought a 6-0 defeat to AC Enfield on a near-waterlogged pitch. This year, conditions ended up no better as a first half deluge soaked players and officials. Unfortunately, the result was not much better either, as the lone Broxbourne striker took advantage of defensive lapses to score a first-half hat-trick and give the visitors a 3-0 half-time advantage. A second-half rally, which brought goals for Phil Thompson and Luke Day, was short-lived as Broxbourne romped through to the last 16 with a 6-2 win.

The First team repeated its scoreline of a week before, losing 3-5 away to Luton Old Boys, in the second of 5 consecutive away games. Greg Whelan with two and Richard Horsted were the scorers.

The Under 13s recovered some confidence with their first win since September—a 2-0 victory over AFC Dunstable at Pirton. Bradley Turner—back with the Club after a spell with Milton Keynes—scored the first and Cameron Alexander made the points safe.

A Macca Cracker for Christmas

With the rain finally gone, all 5 teams were in action on December 16th and the Club managed to record 4 wins and a draw.

The Under 11s had to come from behind in their League Cup group game against Bedford Park Rangers at Pirton. A first-half hat-trick from Sal Digrado made the half-time score 3-1 and a goal in the second period from Diluckson Sivasothy made the points safe. The Reserves too found themselves a goal down to 9-man Dynamo Old Boys, but recovered with goals from Lewis Smith, Ben Thomson and a tremendous volley from Paul MacLennan to finish as 3-1 winners.



Having drawn twice last season with Luton Wanderers, the First Team were pleased with a 3-2 away win, with goals from Danny Davis (2) and Richard Randall.

It was all plain sailing for the Under Thirteens in their away game with Dunstable Town. Goals from Danny Butler (2), Matt Baxter, Cameron Alexander, Yusuf Mushtaq and Adam Nunn gave the team an emphatic six-nil win.

Despite taking the lead against Luton Borough with a goal from Chris Goodrum, following a free kick for a back pass to the keeper, the Under Sixteens lost concentration and conceded a late equalizer to let two points slip away.

Comments, Suggestions, Complaints, Articles, Photos, etc.....

Send them to me at: secretary@leasportspirton.com



It's A Breeze For The Under Thirteens

Through to the League Cup Third Round

Vol. 2, No. 7, February 2008

On a windy morning on January 13th, the Under Thirteens blew away their third division opponents Oakley Rangers in the League Cup second round. A first half brace from Bradley Turner, plus goals from Andrew Smith and Matty Baxter gave the lads a comfortable 4-0 half-time lead. It was the midfielders who showed the way in the second half: Yusuf Mushtaq scored twice, Matty Baxter grabbed his second and Adam Nunn and Elliot Isted rounded off an emphatic 9-0 scoreline.

This result followed a 7-0 thumping of Dunstable Town at Pirton to see in the New Year. On target were Danny Butler (3), Jack Mordecai (2), Yusuf Mushtaq and Adam Nunn.

After an enforced rain break on January 20th, all three teams in action on the 27th achieved victories. The First Team recorded only their second home league win of the season with a 4-0 victory over bottom club CSFC. A first half strike from Richard Knock gave us a 1-0 lead at the break and goals in the last 20 minutes from Richard Randall and Jamie Richards (2) made the scoreline a convincing one. In Division Four, the Reserves moved up to fifth place, with games in hand on the teams above them, after a 4-2 win over Flint Utd at Leagrave Park. Phil Thompson scored another hat trick to take his total to 595 goals; Mark Williams made a welcome return to the team and was also on target. With games still to come against all four teams above them, the Reserves could still challenge for a promotion place.

The Under Sixteens played their first match since December in Chiltern Youth Division Three and romped to a 3-0 win over Shefford Saints in the spring-like conditions at Pirton. Despite missing early chances, Sam Tompkins scored with a quality strike and Chris Goodrum converted a spot kick after an own goal from a Josh Pope corner.

LEAGUE RESULTS....

FIRST XI	HOME	AWAY
C.S.F.C.	4-0	
Crawley Green Res.	8-2	
FC Houghton		
Lilley Rangers	2-3	0-2
Luton Old Boys	0-2	3-5
Luton Wanderers		3-2
Macom Eagles		2-0
Postels 2000	1-2	2-2
Saracens Head		3-5
Woodstock Wnds.	2-4	3-3

RESERVES	HOME	AWAY
Ashcroft Athletic		7-4
Bird & Bush		
Bricklayers Arms		
Crown (Sundon)		4-4
Dynamo Old Boys	3-1	
Flint United		4-2
Hexton	1-2	2-1
Houghton Wnds.		1-5
Luton Borough	3-1	
Magnum (ABC) Res.	3-4	
61 FC Res.	5-0	

CLUBHOUSE NEWS

Discussions are continuing about building new facilities at Pirton. After exploring many avenues of funding, the pavilion sub-committee has concluded that the money is probably not available to completely replace the Clubhouse. Instead they are looking into the possibility of building a new changing room block alongside the existing structure. This building would house new changing rooms, officials' room, new showers and storage to replace the 'shed' at a cost of around £250,000. Meanwhile attempts are still being made to improve the existing showers—different plumbers have given different opinions as to the best way forward with the options ranging from new taps to a complete new plant room! We will do our best to get decent showers for you all within the limitations of the current building.



Golden Boot Race—They Think It's All Over—Scorers to the End of January

First XI—Jamie Richards 11

First XI—Greg Whelan 10

Second XI—Phil Thompson 23 (inc.2 for 1st XI)

Under 16—Chris Goodrum 9

Under 13—Cameron Alexander 7

Under 13—Danny Butler 7

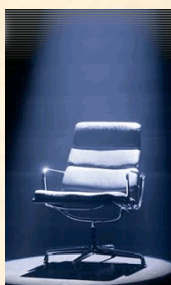
Under 13—Adam Nunn 7

Under 11 (7-a-side) Salvatore Digrado and Jack Kirkwood 6 each

Happenings at the Rec



Why not come along to the Clubhouse on February 29th for a Bingo Night (presented by Pirton Tennis Club). Prices available nearer the time.



General Knowledge Quiz

== FRIDAY MARCH 28th 8.00pm ==

Teams of 6 ■ Fish and chip supper
£6 for Lea Sports Members (£6.50 otherwise)

SOME LIKE IT HOT

Adult Club members are invited to get together for a Curry in Luton on Saturday March 1st. If you're interested drop an e-mail to Greg Whelan (chairman@leasportspirton.com) or phone him on 07887 752995).



ARTICLES NEEDED....!

If you have any ideas for articles for the Newsletter, I'd love to hear from you. Drop me an e-mail. Photos especially welcome...

Comments, Suggestions, Complaints, Articles, Photos, etc.....

Send them to me at: secretary@leasportspirton.com



23-0 !!

Lea Sports Have a Good Day at the Office!

Vol. 2, No. 8, March 2008

February 10th turned out to be a pretty good day for the Club! The First Team won 1-0 away to Crawley Green Reserves in Division 2, despite having Chris Hills sent off early in the first half. Chairman Greg Whelan grabbed the all-important goal. The Reserves entertained Flint United at Pirton and took all 3 points in a 2-0 win thanks to first half goals from Luke Day and Jon Whitehead. Meanwhile, the Under Thirteens were in action away to Leighton United A in the Chiltern Youth league Division 1. The lads continued their sparkling post-Christmas form with a 6-0 win. The Under Elevens completed their League Cup group games with an away fixture at Caldecote Youth. Since the Under 11s have only scored 7 league goals all season, it came as a shock when they recorded an 8-0 win. What's more, six different players got on the scoresheet: James Lovett and Ross Embleton got 2 each and Jack Kirkwood, Salvatore Digrado, Andrew Kinsella and Lewis Sadler one each. The result sees the team through to the quarter-finals next month. In the afternoon, the Under Sixteens didn't spoil the perfect record—they too notched up a 6-0 win away to Stopsley Sports to give the Club a 23-0 record for the day.

FEBRUARY ROUNDUP

The month started well with all 5 teams avoiding defeat, although both adult sides had to come from a goal down. The Firsts went behind after 2 minutes against Macom Eagles, but goals from Danny Davis (2), Greg Whelan and Richard Horsted produced a comfortable 4-1 win. The Reserves fought back to take a 2-1 interval lead against Magnum Reserves. A fine save late in the game from debutant keeper Jake Howard secured the points in the gale-like conditions at Lothair Road. Jake was in action again in the afternoon for the Under 16s, who gained a valuable point in a 2-2 draw at Caldecote. The Under 13s kept their third clean sheet since Christmas as Yusuf Mushtaq scored the only goal against Warden Hill Tigers and a goal from Diluckson Sivasothy maintained the Under 11s unbeaten League cup group record in a 1-1 draw away to Brickhill Wanderers.

The fixtures got tougher later in the month: on February 17th the Firsts were drawn away to Premier side Brache Green Man in round 3 of the Senior Trophy, while the Reserves had a tough draw in the third round of the Reserve Cup away to Crawley Green and the Under Thirteens had a home fixture against the league leaders Barnfield Colts. Only the Under 16s game looked easy on paper—at home to second-from-bottom Caddington. In the end the games ran true to form: the Firsts lost 4-1, with Greg Whelan grabbing the consolation goal. The Reserves' game fell victim to the frost and the Under 16s ran out 6-0 winners. The start of the Under 13s match was delayed by the frost and the team too started slowly, with Barnfield going in front after 10 minutes. The lads fought their way back into the game and were unlucky not to equalise before half time. In the second half, however, Barnfield showed their extra power and ran out 4-0 winners to end the Under 13s six-game winning streak in which they had scored 31 times without conceding.

The Club was involved in 3 cup matches on the last Sunday of the month: the Reserves lost narrowly away to Crawley Green in the Reserve Cup (1-2). The Under 13s also lost narrowly in the League Cup Third Round—1-0 at home to AFC Dunstable, while the Under 11s booked their place in the League Cup semi-final with a 1-0 win away to Bedford Panthers: Lewis Sadler scored the all-important goal.

The First Team maintained their good league form with a 2-0 home win over Luton Wanderers. After a fairly uneventful first half, Richard Horsted put the team in front with a tremendous direct free kick and Danny Davis wrapped up the points 10 minutes from time after good work by Richard Knock.



Greens vs. Yellows on a Saturday Morning

SATURDAY SOCCER SESSIONS STILL SUCCEEDING

The Saturday morning sessions for 5-10 year olds are still proving popular, attracting on average about 10 children each week. The sessions were set up with funding from the Local Network Fund, an organ of Hertfordshire County Council. This enabled the Club to buy the necessary kit and equipment and to have the sessions supervised by qualified coach Phil Toyer.



Wha's Happenin'?

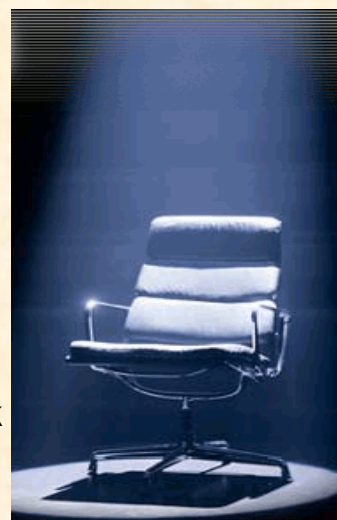


Details of the merger between Lea Sports Pirton FC and Shillington & Gravenhurst Utd FC have now been finalised and the merger will go ahead this summer, subject to the members' approval at the AGM. The merger will mean that we will have seven-a-side teams from Under 8s through to Under 10s, as well as 4 teams in the Chiltern Youth League, at Under 11, 12, 14 and 18.

We have also had discussions recently with the Hertfordshire FA about developing girls' football. Coach Phil Toyer will soon be taking some taster sessions at local schools for girls in school years 3, 4 and 5, in advance of coaching sessions at the Recreation Ground.

Friday, March 28th 8.00 pm General Knowledge QUIZ

Including a fish and chip supper.
Teams of up to six people.
Tickets are £6.00 each to Lea Sports members. Contact Steve Smith to book your places.

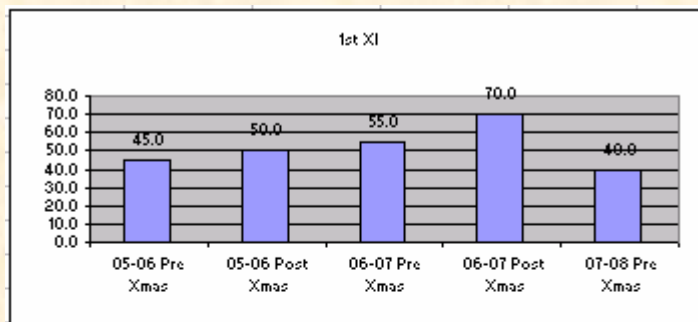


NOTTINGHAM

This year's tour is on May 24th to the City of Robin Hood. The price will be around £25 per person. See Greg Whelan for more details or to reserve your place. Maid Marian awaits...

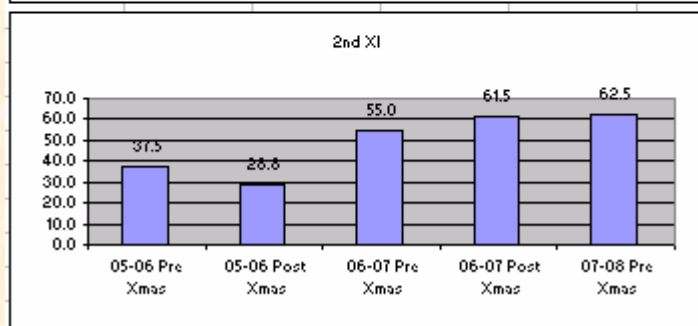


Do We Get Better After Christmas??



An analysis of all results over the past 3 seasons shows that the First Team usually get better after Christmas.

The Reserves and the Under 13s are inconclusive, getting worse one year and better the next; whereas the Under 16s have got worse each year.



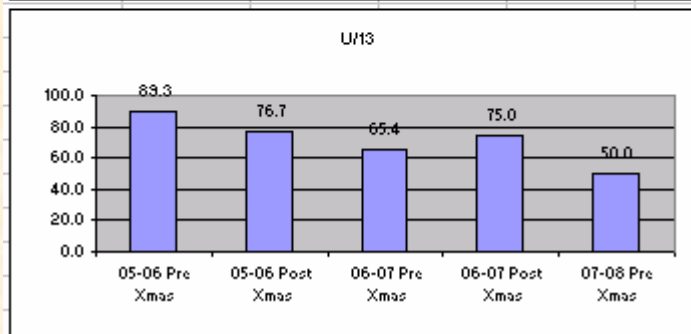
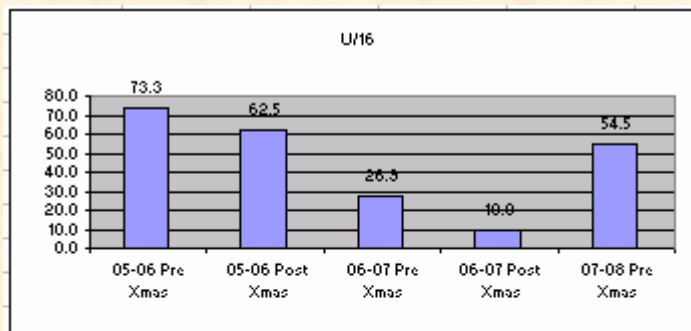
The graphs show the percentage of points won across all games (cup, league and friendly). The trend is exactly the same if cup and friendly matches are excluded.

Let's hope the Under 16s can buck the trend this year!

The First Team have had their worst Pre-Christmas period for 15 years, winning just 40% of the points available (apart from the ill-fated season in the Premier Division in 1999-2000 when the team withdrew after 4 league games). In 1992-93 Keith Lee's team managed just 34.6% in their Division 2 campaign, losing in the first round of the County and Whitbread cups.

The two best seasons were in 1994-95 and 2004-05 when they achieved 62.5%.

By contrast, the Reserves have had their best start since the 73% they achieved in the 2004-05 season.



ARTICLES NEEDED....!

If you have any ideas for articles for the Newsletter, I'd love to hear from you. Drop me an e-mail. Photos especially welcome...

Comments, Suggestions, Complaints, Articles, Photos, etc.....

Send them to me at: secretary@leasportspirton.com



MAGIC 600...

Vol. 2, No. 9, April 2008

March saw the achievement of two fantastic milestones for the Club:

Phil Thompson scored his six-hundredth goal for the Club and Archie Conway made his six-hundredth appearance.



MARCH ROUNDUP—First XI

The First Team were left to rue their decision to hit the town for a curry and a few beers on March 1st—the following morning they put on a woeful display against lowly FC Houghton and lost 5-1 in what Chairman Greg Whelan called an 'embarrassing performance'. Richard Horsted grabbed the only goal as the Firsts good recent league run came to a shuddering halt.

The weather put paid to any further fixtures in March, with a deluge on 16th, followed by snow on 23rd ruling out any fixtures. The Firsts now have 3 games left: vs. FC Houghton on 6th April in Pirton, CSFC at Lewsey Park on 20th April and a final match vs. champions-elect Saracens Head on 27th April in Pirton.



Macca gets his first taste of a Madras...

Phil Thompson



*Phil before his 500th game
for the Club vs. Limbury
Black Swan on 11th October
2004.*

There's not much that hasn't been written about Phil Thompson since he made his debut for the Third XI against Toddington Farmers on 21st November 1982. He scored in that game and apart from a few lean years due to illness, and a spell away with Ashcroft, Phil has scored consistently ever since.

This season he scored 2 goals for the First Team in pre-season games, before hitting 29 for the Reserves in 20 games, to take his total for the Club to 603 goals in just 583 games. His 600th goal came after just 20 seconds of the match vs Dynamo Old Boys on March 30th 2008—he went on to score a further three in a 6-0 win.

A P P E A R A N C E S.....							G O A L S.....						
1st XI	2nd XI	3rd XI	4th XI	Sat.XI	Vets.	TOTAL	1st XI	2nd XI	3rd XI	4th XI	Sat.XI	Vets.	TOTAL
4.02	9	2	0	0	0	15.02	82-83	3	4	1	0	0	8
14.01	1.02	3	0	0	0	18.03	83-84	12	0	1	0	0	13
2.02	5	3	0	0	0	10.02	84-85	1	3	5	0	0	9
3	5.01	7	0	0	0	15.01	85-86	2	2	14	0	0	18
18.02	5	5	0	0	0	28.02	86-87	11	2	10	0	0	23
22.01	5.01	1	0	0	0	28.02	87-88	7	6	1	0	0	14
22	0	5	0	0	0	27	88-89	24	0	14	0	0	38
25.02	2.01	0	0	0	0	27.03	89-90	20	1	0	0	0	21
26.01	0	1	0	0	0	27.01	90-91	29	0	0	0	0	29
17.02	2.03	0	0	0	0	19.05	91-92	12	1	0	0	0	13
0	1	0	0	0	0	1	92-93	0	0	0	0	0	0
26	0	0	0	0	1	28	93-94	37	0	0	0	2	42
26.01	1	0	0	0	0	27.01	94-95	26	2	0	0	0	28
0	0	12.01	0	0	3	15.01	95-96	0	0	19	0	17	36
24.01	1	1	0	0	0	26.01	96-97	16	1	3	0	0	20
0	3.01	21	0	0	0	24.01	97-98	0	4	28	0	0	32
0	4	27.01	0	0	0	31.01	98-99	0	10	45	0	0	55
0	1	21.01	0	0	0	22.01	99-00	0	1	24	0	0	25
17	0.01	0	0	0	0	17.01	00-01	25	0	0	0	0	25
19.01	0	0	0	0	1	20.01	01-02	31	0	0	0	1	32
25	0	0	0	0	0	25	02-03	33	0	0	0	0	33
13	0	0	0	0	1	14	03-04	11	0	0	0	0	11
24	0	0	0	0	0	24	04-05	23	0	0	0	0	23
19	0	0	0	0	0	19	05-06	12	0	0	0	0	12
20.03	0	0	0	0	1	21.03	06-07	10	0	0	0	2	12
2.01	20	0	0	0	0	22.01	07-08	2	29	0	0	0	31
368.20	65.10	109.03	0	2	6	550.33	Total	347	66	165	0	2	603

Archie Conway



Archie pictured before his 600th game—vs. Dynamo Old Boys at Lewsey Park on March 30th 2008.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ Archie Conway made his Lea Sports debut in a third team friendly vs. Luton Teachers' Social Club on 11th October 1981, scoring in a 2-2 draw. Apart from a two-season gap in the late eighties, he has appeared in every season since, making over twenty appearances in twenty of the seasons since 1981. ★

★ He made 29 appearances for the Reserves in their great season of 1994-95 when they won division 5 by a mile and made it to the Beds County Cup Final. He also made 19 appearances for the Third team when they were Champions of the Luton Sunday League Division 1 in 1997-98. ★

★ He has appeared in seven Cup Finals: one for the Reserves, five for the Third Team and one for the Fourths, winning three and losing four. In May 1999 he scored in the Third Team's 4-0 Cup Final win over Dunstable Drivers (Phil Thompson failed to score that day!) ★

★ Archie's goalscoring has 'tailed off' somewhat in recent years: he scored for the Third's in a 3-0 win vs. FC Connaught in February 2000, then again in April 2007 vs. Hillymede Horners in a 9-1 win. He now needs just one more goal for his 50. ★

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

APPEARANCES.....							GOALS.....						
1st XI	2nd XI	3rd XI	4th XI	Sat.XI	Yets.	TOTAL	1st XI	2nd XI	3rd XI	4th XI	Sat.XI	Yets.	TOTAL
0	0	13	0	0	0	13	81-82	0	0	5	0	0	5
0	25	0	0	0	0	25	82-83	0	3	0	0	0	3
0	26	0	0	0	0	26	83-84	0	1	0	0	0	1
25	4	0	0	0	0	29	84-85	4	0	0	0	0	4
20.01	6	0	0	0	0	26.01	85-86	2	2	0	0	0	4
22	3	0	0	0	0	25	86-87	3	0	0	0	0	3
4	24	1	0	0	0	29	89-90	0	4	0	0	0	4
0.02	11	5	0	0	1	17.02	90-91	0	2	0	0	0	2
1	26.01	1	0	0	0	28.01	91-92	1	2	0	0	0	3
0	20.01	0	0	0	0	20.01	92-93	0	1	0	0	0	1
0	25.02	4.01	0	0	0	29.03	93-94	0	1	0	0	0	1
0	27.02	0	0	0	0	27.02	94-95	0	1	0	0	0	1
0	5.01	19.01	0	0	0	24.02	95-96	0	0	1	0	0	1
0	0	22	1	0	0	23	96-97	0	0	5	0	0	5
0	4	19	3.01	0	0	26.01	97-98	0	0	6	0	0	6
0	2	24	2	0	0	28	98-99	0	0	3	0	0	3
1	0.01	26	1	0	0	28.01	99-00	0	0	1	0	0	1
0	14	1	0	0	0	15	00-01	0	0	0	0	0	0
1.02	15.01	0	0	0	1	17.03	01-02	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	21	0	0	0	0	21	02-03	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	21	0	0	3	0	24	03-04	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	23	0	0	0	0	23	04-05	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	15.02	0	0	0	0	15.02	05-06	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	12.10	0	0	0	1	13.10	06-07	0	1	0	0	0	1
0	16.04	0	0	0	0	16.04	07-08	0	0	0	0	0	0
74.05	345.25	135.02	7.01	3	3	567.33	Total	10	18	21	0	0	49



Mixed Fortunes for the Youth Teams

The Under 11s found their scoring boots in a 6-1 home win over Bedford Park Rangers at Pirton on 2nd March. James Lovett and Salvatore Digrado both scored twice as the Under 11s recorded their third win over the Bedford side, having beaten them away in the league and in the league cup group games. Lewis Sadler and Jack Kirkwood completed the scoring.

On 9th March the team travelled to second-placed Brickhill Wanderers. Unfortunately, James Lovett and Diluckson Sivasothy were both unavailable which meant that the regular goalkeeper had to play on the pitch. This disruption to the defence meant that after having conceded just 7 league goals all season, they conceded 6 in this game. There were consolation goals from Salvatore Digrado (2) and Ross Embleton, but this result probably means that the runners-up spot is now beyond the team.

The Under 13s traveled to unbeaten league leaders Barnfield Colts on 9th March and had the better of the first half, with Danny Butler firing the team into a 1-0 lead. Matty Baxter shot just over the bar and a penalty appeal for a foul on Cameron Alexander fell on deaf ears, before Barnfield grabbed an equalizer just before half time. In the second half, Barnfield's extra power told and with the wind in their favour they eventually ran out 3-1 winners. Meanwhile the Under 16s braved the squally weather in Flitwick to defeat the Eagles 4-1 to maintain their unbeaten run stretching back to December.

	Second XI	Under 16	Under 13	Under 11
APRIL				
THURSDAY 3rd	Luton Borough			
SUNDAY 6th	Bird & Bush	Warden Hill Tigers		Wilstead Harriers (League Cup Semi Final)
TUESDAY 8th		Shefford Saints		
THURSDAY 10th				
SUNDAY 13th	Bricklayers Arms	Caddington	Bedford FC	Wootton Rangers 'A'
TUESDAY 15th				
THURSDAY 17th	Ashcroft Athletic			
SUNDAY 20th	61FC Res.			
TUESDAY 22nd	Bird & Bush	Watling		
SUNDAY 27th	Houghton Wanderers		Leighton Town	

Full details of all the results and fixtures are on the website at

www.leasportspirton.com

ARTICLES NEEDED....!

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Comments, Suggestions, Complaints, Articles, Photos, etc.....

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Club Merger Confirmed

AGM Approves the Merger

Vol. 2, No. 10, May 2008

The Club's Thirty-Sixth Annual General Meeting was held on 28th April and the main subject on the Agenda was the approval of the merger between Lea Sports Pirton FC and Shillington & Gravenhurst United FC.

The new Club—now called Lea Sports PSG—will provide footballing facilities at Pirton for children from five years old upwards.

The existing Chiltern Youth League teams will continue next season at Under 18 and Under 14 and will be joined by this year's successful Under 11s, who will play 11-a-side football at Under 12.

In addition, there will be mini-soccer (7-a-side) teams at Under 8, Under 9 and Under 10 in the Filmergraphics League on Sundays and another Under 10 team in the Chiltern Sevens League on Saturdays.



Phil Toyer, who has been heavily involved this season in coaching our younger youth sides, assumes the role of Head of Youth Football and will be assisted by Paul Boggon, who will be Youth Development Officer.

Hopefully, the merger will be a springboard for the Club to push on towards achieving FA Charter Development status, although there is still a lot of work to be done before this becomes a reality.

In particular, anyone wishing to obtain an FA Coaching award, or to add to any existing coaching qualifications, should contact Phil.

UNDER ELEVENS LEAGUE CUP FINAL AT BARTON ROVERS

April 13th proved lucky for the Under Elevens as they were victorious in their League Cup semi-final against Wilstead Harriers. Ross Embleton scored the decisive goal as the lads ran out 1-0 winners.

The other semi-final was also a tight affair with Wootton Rangers defeating champions elect Central Milton Keynes after extra time.

The final will be played at **Barton Rovers on Sunday May 4th at 2.00 p.m.** and the lads would appreciate all the support they can get.





Under 13s Back on Track

After three defeats on the trot and one game conceded through lack of players, the Under 13s were glad to record a 5-0 victory away to Bedford FC in their penultimate game of the season. With Cameron Alexander missing through injury, the boys started without substitutes on an excellent playing surface at the Bedford Cricket Club grounds. Jack Mordecai broke the deadlock after 20 minutes with a well-placed shot past the Bedford keeper. Shortly afterwards the keeper intercepted Yusuf Mushtaq's intended cross only to lose his grip on the ball and watch it drop into his own net. Bedford started the second half well and only an excellent save from Warren Bell prevented the home side from reducing the arrears; but straight from the resulting corner some fine inter-passing released Danny Butler who made the game safe at 3-0. Adam Nunn added a fourth before Jack Mordecai made it five with a shot from the edge of the box which flew into the top of the net.

The lads last game was away to Leighton Town on April 27th. Jack Mordecai lobbed the keeper to give Lea Sports a 1-0 half-time lead but they were pegged back by a dubious penalty in the second half and the game finished 1-1.

Pavilion Update

Believe it or not, the project to improve the pavilion facilities is still alive and well. Unfortunately, two of the committee members have had to withdraw from the committee for a while for personal reasons and this has delayed matters. The plan is still to build a new changing room block, with new showers and storage facilities, between the existing main clubhouse and the 'shed'. Funding of around £250,000 will be needed to achieve this goal, but the committee remain confident that this can be achieved in time.



In the meantime an application has been made to the Awards for All scheme for funding to renovate the shower facilities in the existing block. We now have a firm quote to replace the hot water tank, to install new pipework with a new blender valve and to replace the shower heads. You will all have seen the efforts we are making to try to improve facilities, with the new Club entrance, sign and handrail, as well as improved furniture and kitchen facilities and the redecoration of the changing rooms. If the grant for the showers is not forthcoming then we will have to look elsewhere for help with the funding, but we will keep trying to provide the best facilities available.

Under 11s Maintain their good League Form

Following their Cup semi-final success, the Under 11s faced back-to-back fixtures with Sandy Colts, starting with a home fixture on April 20th. Sandy played some good stuff and took a deserved first half lead, but this was cancelled out by a second-half equaliser from Jack Kirkwood, before Andrew Kinsella popped up with a winner.

A week later the teams met again in Sandy, but this time the Pirton side made no mistakes and goals from Lewis Sadler, Jack Kirkwood and James Lovett secured a convincing 3-0 win.

Comments, Suggestions, Complaints, Articles, Photos, etc.....

Send them to me at: secretary@leasportspirton.com



First Team Lose the Plot!

With one game to go on May 4th at home to Champions Saracens Head, the First Team's season is stuttering to a finish. Their last two games have both brought 2-1 defeats against sides in the bottom two in the division, so they will need all the luck going against Saracens Head.

In the home game vs. FC Houghton the lads were determined to make up for their 5-1 humiliation on March 2nd, but it was not to be. Danny Davis rounded off an excellent personal season, but it was not enough to prevent a 2-1 defeat—the Firsts 5th home defeat in the league this season.

The match away to bottom side CSFC at Lewsey Park on April 20th also produced an uninspiring display. Richard Knock scored as the team crashed to another 2-1 reverse.

Reserves Win, Draw and Lose in the space of six days.

The Reserves began their April program on a chilly Thursday night away to an unusually strong-looking Luton Borough team. Despite looking the better side, the Reserves conceded two headed goals and had to come from behind twice with goals from Phil Thompson and Kieran Duff salvaging a point.

This was followed by a more convincing 4-1 win away to strugglers Bricklayers Arms, with goals from Simon Mayes, Ben Thomson, Jon Whitehead and Luke Day.

On April 20th 61FC Reserves could not field a team, which just left 3 matches in six days. The home match with Bird & Bush was one of those really unusual games which only seem to happen midweek. Phil Thompson returned from holiday and hopes were high—if the Reserves could beat Bird & Bush twice and defeat league leaders Houghton Wanderers there was still an outside chance of taking the title. Despite a hat trick in the first 18 minutes from Greg Whelan, the teams turned round at 3-3. Lea Sports then fell behind to a header from a corner but equalized through Phil Thompson before a defensive slip let Bird & Bush through to snatch the game 5-4.

Two days later, with the title hopes dashed, the Reserves faced Ashcroft Athletic knowing that a win would secure third place. Things did not go to plan, however, with Ashcroft playing some good football and taking a deserved first half lead. Lea began to apply the pressure and following confusion from a corner Pat McAneney forced the ball home for an equalizer. The second half was a different story, with the home team very much on top. Despite squandering good chances, Lea Sports powered into a commanding 4-2 lead, before more bizarre refereeing from the notorious Peter Eastwood (he was the one who booked 'Frank Borat' in the game at Hexton!) gave Ashcroft a penalty to make the score 4-3. After a nervous last five minutes the Reserves had the 3 points they needed for third position.

This left the final match of April at home to Houghton Wanderers, who needed just a point to be Champions. Both teams played through a downpour in the first half and a game of few clear chances ended goalless. This was the Reserves' first 0-0 draw since a game vs. Luton Wanderers in January 2005 and only the fourth goalless draw in the last dozen years.

The final fixture for the Reserves will be on May 4th and is a chance to gain revenge against Bird and Bush, who now have the runners-up spot.

May the Fourth Be With You!!

Comments, Suggestions, Complaints, Articles, Photos, etc.....

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Adults End on a High

Firsts and Reserves win their Final Games

Vol. 2, No. 11, June 2008

Both adult sides showed what they are capable of in their final league fixtures on May 4th.

At Pirton the Firsts found themselves up against the Champions Saracens Head—a repeat of last season (when they were known as AFC Chalk Hill). Lea Sports dominated from the start with Richard Horsted blasting a left-foot shot against the Saracens' bar. The pressure paid off before half time with goals from Greg Whelan and Richard Randall, although Saracens Head pulled a goal back following a defensive mix up. After the break Lea kept going forward and only the Head goalkeeper kept the score down with some fine saves. Chances were missed, but Danny Davis rounded off a fine performance to give the team a 3-1 win.

Meanwhile the Reserves were in action in Luton against the team which pipped them for the Runners Up position, Bird and Bush. Again, the Pirton side had the better of the play and missed a couple of one-on-ones with the keeper, before top scorer Phil Thompson secured the 3 points with two more goals in a 2-1 win. This gives the Reserves a fine away record in the league, with the only defeat coming in October against the Champions Houghton Wanderers.

UNDER ELEVENS LEAGUE CUP FINAL AT BARTON ROVERS

The Under Elevens just failed in their bid to win some silverware in their first season, when they lost their League Cup Final at Barton Rovers by a 1-0 scoreline to Wootton Rangers. In a very tight game the Pirton side probably had the better chances, hitting a post in the second half and seeing the Wootton keeper just smother the rebound. Tom Hall made some excellent saves for the Pirton side, while James Lovett was singled out by the League sponsors Filmer-graphics as the Man of the Match after a tremendous performance at the heart of the defence.



James Lovett receives his Man of the Match Award



Under Sixteens Finish on a Winning Note

Also on May 4th, the Under Sixteens took part in Lea Sports' 4,000th 11-a-side match since 1973—away to Warden Hill Tigers. The lads had a point to prove, having lost the home fixture 2-1 very much against the run of play in November 2007. The Under Sixteens were leading 2-0 with goals from Kilm Brooks-Lynch and James Robertson, when one of the opposition parents took exception to the proceedings on the pitch and encroached onto the playing area to confront referee Steve Baggett. Steve immediately abandoned the game and warned Warden Hill that they would be severely fined should he decide to report the incident. The opposition manager did apologise for the behaviour of the parent, but Warden Hill have once again lived up to their reputation in local football and spoiled what should have been an enjoyable final game for both teams.

ANNUAL AWARDS EVENINGS

The Annual Awards Evening for the adult teams and Under 16s will be held in Pirton on Sunday, May 25th.

The Awards Evening for the Under 11 and Under 13 teams will also be at Pirton, on Saturday, May 31st.

The Clubhouse will be open on both evenings from 7.00 pm and presentations will be at 8.00 pm. There is no entry fee and a buffet and music will be on offer.

Under 11s Overcome Cup Disappointment

The Under 11s bounced back from the disappointment of defeat in their League Cup Final with a 7-1 win over Bedford FC in their final home game on May 11th. For a while, however, it looked as though this match was also going to go wrong, as Bedford snatched a surprise lead when keeper Tom Hall fumbled a corner into his own net. Despite almost constant pressure, the home side could not force the ball home until a couple of minutes from half-time, when Ross Embleton cut in from the left and slammed home an equalizer. The first 10 minutes of the second half were not quite one way traffic and although James Lovett put Lea Sports ahead it took two excellent saves from Tom Hall to maintain the lead. The third goal killed off any remaining Bedford hopes and four more were to follow, with Lovett and Embleton both grabbing a second, Sal Digrado getting 2 goals and Jack Kirkwood finishing things off nicely.

The Under 11s went into the final game of the season, away to rivals Wootton Rangers on May 18th, knowing that a draw would secure third place in the league and maintain their record of fewest goals conceded. The omens weren't good with top scorer Sal Digrado having to take over in goal from Tom Hall, who was unavailable. The lads pulled out all the stops, however, and goals from Ross Embleton and Jack Kirkwood gave them a well-deserved 2-1 victory.

New Website Address

To reflect the Club's new name, the main address of our website has changed to:

www.lpspg.co.uk

You can still reach the site through the old addresses of www.leasportspirton.com or www.leasports.co.uk.

Why not take a look?

Comments, Suggestions, Complaints, Articles, Photos, etc.....

Send them to me at: secretary@leasportspirton.com



Rain Fails to Dampen Spirits at the Annual Do

Awards Evening Enjoyed by All

Vol. 2, No. 12, July 2008

The Annual Awards Evening for the two Adult teams and the Under Sixteens was held at the Clubhouse in Pirton on Sunday, May 25th 2008.

In true Bank Holiday style, the weather was atrocious, with driving rain lashing the windows through the evening. Ed Thomson was undaunted, however, and went ahead with the barbecue, serving up sausages and burgers for those attending.



Greg Whelan presents the First Team awards

Music was provided by my son Chris and Chris Stimson—both members of local band Fruition.

Winners of the awards were as follows:

Players' Player: Danny Davis (1st XI), Phil Thompson (2nd XI), Mathew Hill (U/16)

Manager's Player: Scott Morgan (1st XI), Jon Whitehead (2nd XI), James Robertson (U/16)

Top Scorers: Greg Whelan (1st XI), Phil Thompson (2nd XI + Golden Boot), Chris Goodrum (U/16)

U/16 Man of the Match: (1) Jack Baggett, (2) Mathew Hill, (3) James Newton

U/16 Supporters' Player: Jake Howard

U/16 Most Improved Player: James Newton

600 Goals: Phil Thompson

600 Appearances: Archie Conway



Lifetime Achievement Award:
Steve Smith



Scott Morgan receives his Manager's Player award

Premier League Competition won With a New Record Low Total

The Competition to guess the final positions in the Premier League was won by Ben Thomson with a new record low of 26 points, beating the previous best total by 4 points. He received a cheque for £50. In second place, winning £25, was Frank Beirne, who works for sponsors Premier Computer Supplies, whilst third place and a cheque for £15 was claimed by Jack Baggett from the Under Sixteens.

Now that the play-offs are complete and we know the line-up for next season's Premiership, entry forms will soon be available for next season's competition (available NOW on the website). Please photocopy and distribute as many of these as possible—and of course have a go yourself!



Under 13s and Under 11s Awards Night

The Awards Evening for the Under 13s and Under 11s was also well attended on Saturday 31st May. Phil Toyer gave his Manager's Award for the Under 11s jointly to Ross Embleton and James Lovett, whilst the Players' Player was Tom Hall. The race for top scorer was very tight: Sal Digrado was top scorer going in to the last game—but had to play in goal! Jack Kirkwood and Ross Embleton both scored in the final match to take their tally to 12 each, but Sal stayed in front on 13. Jack Kirkwood was the Under 11s Clubman.

For the Under 13s the top scorer race was even closer: in the end four players ended up on 9 goals—Jack Mordecai, Cameron Alexander, Danny Butler and Adam Nunn. The Manager's Player was Eliot Isted and the Players' Player was Lewis Wilson.

Pirton Summer Fair—July 12th at the Recreation Ground

The Summer Fair is back again this year with lots of stalls and events through the afternoon. Also in the Evening we have entertainment from the Blues Brothers. If you missed them last year, don't make the same mistake. Free entry in the evening—should be a good one...



Magazine copies still available.

I have a number of copies of this year's Magazine left. If you would like one, please get in touch. Alternatively, a fuller version of the mag will be available for downloading from the Club's website as soon as the final tables for the Filmer-graphics Under 11 Division 1 are published.

www.lspsg.co.uk/Mags.htm

New Website Address

To reflect the Club's new name, the main address of our website has changed to:

www.lspsg.co.uk

You can still reach the site through the old addresses of www.leasportspirton.com or www.leasports.co.uk.

New features have been added: in Cup Finals, the Under 11s vs. Wootton Rangers; in Special Occasions, Archie and Phil's '600' day; plus the Photo Gallery has been completely revamped. Please take a look and if you can help with some of the names on the old team photo's (youth teams especially) please drop me a line.

Comments, Suggestions, Complaints, Articles, Photos, etc.....

Send them to me (Steve Smith) at: secretary@lspsg.co.uk