



2023/24 Head Coach's Report

As always, many of our teams have had some great successes on the pitch. This includes division winners, league cup winners and some great runs and triumphs in the District and County Cups. But a successful season isn't just about winning trophies, so well done to everyone for just making it through to May.

Of course, we've seen some challenges too, most notably recurring frustration around streaming - this is something we're keen to try and address, so in line with the Club's Development Plan, we'll be looking to put something into writing to provide managers and coaches with more guidance on what to do and how to do it.

The development teams (U6s) have proved to be a challenge this year with dwindling parent engagement, but we're just about on track now following a concerted effort to find additional players, identify prospective coaches and sort the players into teams. We should therefore have 4 new U7 Boys teams and a new U7 Girls team in September. Phil and Ollie are unfortunately stepping down from their roles as Boys Development Coaches at the end of this season, so this is something we're going to look at, and we have plans to work things differently next season. I'd like to express my thanks to Phil and Ollie for their years of service and the brilliant job they've done during their tenure.

I'm pleased to say that we've been able to get a couple of extra teams up and running over the course of the season with another well underway and plans for several more. It's also really pleasing to say that for the first time, we'll have U18s teams on both the Boys and Girls sides and we have some ambitious plans to create open age teams to give the opportunity to continue playing for those that want to. The 2024/25 season should therefore see us start the season with a few more teams than we had at the start of 2023/24 which is a quite remarkable achievement.

As always, we've lost a few teams and managers this season and the reasons vary. Some are standard issues, like work and family commitments etc., but there has also been a sense of disconnect from the club at times, leaving some managers feeling they are on their own. Last year I suggested more face to face meetings to improve engagement, and while we've done some, there is clearly more for us to do.

Lastly, I wanted to highlight the benefits of the Wharfedale Grassroots Academy and encourage more members to take advantage of the joint initiative. The WGA provides additional, high quality coaching to our members at an affordable price and helps to provide some protection against the 'academies'.

Many thanks,

Keving Harrison

Head Coach