

HARROW SOCCER COMBINATION

*A leading and award-winning FA Charter Standard League,
facilitating development football for the Under 7 to Under 11 age-groups*

Introduction

At our AGM and Meeting on 11 August 2020 (attended 'virtually' by over 120 people), we looked back, with regret, at the inevitable close-out of season 2019-2020 and made plans for season 2020-2021, albeit with a slightly later start date than normal, due to the on-going impact of the Covid-19 global pandemic.

We also all recognised that we would need to be flexible and agile over the coming weeks and months, to meet any requirements of the Government and Public Health England, and also having due regard to guidance from The Football Association.

Season 2020-2021

In total we had 73 clubs (including 7 new clubs) and over 635 teams (HSC - 329 and HYFL 306) affiliate for the season. This is at the same record level as for last season (albeit variances seen at different age groups), which is remarkable given the overall decline seen across the country this season in the number of youth teams, which The FA attribute to the impact of Covid-19. That is a testament to the hard work and commitment of all our members clubs, since March 2020, in keeping engaged with their members.

We held a pre-season meeting on 5 October (attended virtually by over 80 people) at which we discussed, inter alia, different ways of working and engaging in a Covid-19 secure environment.

Our next virtual on-line meeting will be held on Monday 4 January 2021.

Fixtures

The Combination season was able to, successfully, kick-off on Sunday 11 October.

A full programme of matches was facilitated in all 29 groups.

As we all know, the season was temporarily curtailed after a four-week period.

At the time of writing, we are hopeful that this can commence again on Sunday 6 December.

If that is the case, then there will be fixtures for a 3-week period through to Sunday 20 December; with then a 2-week Christmas/New Year break, and back again on Sunday 10 January 2021 for Phase II of the season; hopefully then through to the season-end in March 2021 without any further major or lengthy interruptions.

Fixtures and groupings for Phase II will be distributed to all member clubs on Monday 21 December 2020.

Finally, in this section, please do read page 8 of the Handbook for the correct and mandated pitch size and goal size; and that pitch interventions are used as mandated by The FA (barriers or cones or additional marked lines).

Player Registrations

In total, to date, clubs have registered over 8,200 players across all age-groups. This is a marginal decline on last season, which is attributed to clubs running slightly smaller squad sizes this season, due to the impact of Covid-19.

The quality and input of player data and documents to the registration system, by member clubs, remains highly variable; and we encourage all clubs/teams to make use of the detailed User Guide to improve this going forward.

The player registration and transfer and de-registration process is also set out on page 7 of the Handbook.

Player laminate ID cards will be distributed to all clubs, largely via a suitable collection point, as soon as possible after the current Covid-restrictions are lifted.

Match Results

The completion of the on-line match result forms are also generally satisfactory, with a small number of exceptions noted to clubs/teams, as to timing of receipt and accuracy of completion.

Web-Site

The Combination website: www.firsteleven.co.uk/harrow; is a portal for important information about the Combination and its operations; including a tab for Covid-19 related matters.

It includes, fixtures, the Combination handbook plus club detail amendments, and much more.

We encourage all clubs to visit the site frequently for updates; along with our other forms of communications, such as via email.

Finance

As we indicated at the meeting back in August, we have now completed a review of the Combination's finances.

Given the current financial position of many; the Combination has decided to utilise reserves and apply a circa 33% reduction (per team) in invoiced amounts for this season, compared to last season; being a circa 20% reduction (per team) including player registrations, which are a direct cost.

In addition, as you know, the normal invoicing date of end-September has passed, and we have extended this by some 3-months to end-December for payment; to provide clubs with further direct cash flow benefits. Invoices will be sent out to clubs shortly.

RESPECT

This is an area of continuous review and improvement required. This covers both on-field and off-field behaviour of players, coaches and parents/spectators alike.

We encourage all clubs to advise us of any unacceptable behaviour (preferably via the match result forms) and we will take action along the lines of the four Levels previously communicated to all clubs:

- L1 – review and note;
- L2 – review and speak to club;
- L3 – review and speak to club and Combination action as appropriate/permitted;
- L4 – review and pass direct to The FA for action.

FA Charter Standard Club – status

The vast majority of our member clubs are duly accredited and receive the benefits of being an FA Charter Standard Club.

For those that are not, can we please encourage you, in the months ahead, to engage with this programme and gain accreditation, by end May 2021.

Concluding remarks

We are in extraordinary and unprecedented times, in many respects, and grassroots football is not immune to this. We thank all member clubs for your on-going support and co-operation.

We would ask that this and all of the Combination's communications are shared with all of your club members; so that they can be fully engaged in the activities of the Combination.

Please stay safe; and we thank and wish you and all your club members the very best.

Andy Lowe – Chairman
For and on behalf of the HSC Management Committee

27 November 2020

**HARROW
SOCCER
COMBINATION**



“National FA CHARTER STANDARD LEAGUE OF THE YEAR”

“National FA RESPECT SILVER REWARD WINNER”