

# THE MERTON WAY



# PITCHED OFF

**J**ust a general update on a few things that I hope you will find interesting.

I have attended a couple of meetings in the last week on progress with the Morden Park scheme for a new ground. Ray Skinner continues heroically to drive the project forward. There are some real difficulties now with the scheme; to complete the surveys to enable us to lodge a planning application we need to raise more than £30k, there are also some planning concerns (great crested newts for starters). However, we met the leader of Merton Council who confirmed his full support for the project but no money. I was able to tell him that we could not wait forever and if there is no sign of movement soon we will need the Council's support to improve the facilities at the Hood for Merton's top amateur football club.

This is also a time when we have to take stock as we complete the Annual health check to ensure we retain our Football Association's Charter Standard status. This says that we are well run club with all the proper procedures in place and operating and we have coaches, first aiders and Child safeguarding provisions etc all in place. Charter Standard is important because both the Leagues our teams play in (Southern Amateur League and the Surrey Youth League) require us to have achieved this and these are quality leagues. If you want to attend an Emergency

Aid course please contact me or our secretary. The safety of our members is a very high priority and we need as many trained people in every team as we can get!

Finally, I had rather a nice day out last Saturday as I went over to Kew as both our 1s and 2s were playing there. Kew is an interesting club. It has its own facilities and was one of the last clubs to get a large Football Foundation grant to build a new state of the art clubhouse. Despite that it has seen a decline in the number of teams it runs from nine some 15 years ago to two and now three. During this time it has built up a thriving youth section and is now starting to see those players come through to the adult club. They have also ground shared with Old Blues a welcome addition to the SAL who now have four teams. Old Blues is the old boys team for Christ's Hospital, public school. Our 1s won the Cup match 4-0 but it was a nice game to watch. The 2s drew 1-1 with Kew 2s scoring late but conceding even later. It was a very good competitive game and a fair result although always disappointing when you concede in the 96th minute. The guys at Kew have clearly worked hard to build up the club and I wish them every success and thank them for their hospitality. It was good to see both our teams in the bar after the game and I suspect being the last to leave. That is the Merton Way.

# THINGS TO KNOW

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## RUBBISH

It is important we remember that our home ground is a public park and we need to be careful with our language and also our rubbish.

From this Saturday a dustbin will be provided out on the pitch and please put your empty bottles, tape and trash at the end of the game.

## FIRST AID

We take the safety of our members very seriously and as a Charter Standard club we have to ensure that proper first aid kits with each match and certificated first aiders in each team.

- we need the Manager/Captain to check the first aid kit and ensure it has adequate contents
- any player with any health issues such as allergies/asthma/epilepsy/heart issues should disclose these to the captain before the game. (inhalers are important for asthma)
- We also will be running an Emergency Aid training course in November at the Hood and we need volunteers to sign up for that.

## VALUABLES

Please **DO NOT** leave any valuables in the changing rooms, and if a key is not available, take all belongings out to pitch side in your own kit bag or a team valuables bag.

**YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED!!**

## TRAINING

**LOCATION:** St Mark's Academy School, Acacia Road, Mitcham CR4 1SF

**TIME:** 8pm-9.30pm on Wednesday evenings.  
(please arrive by 7.30pm to stretch and warm up)

**SURFACE:** Astro-turf: please wear appropriate footwear

Each is responsible for their own physical fitness. Attendance at training is encouraged and preferable but not yet compulsory, however training is likely to affect team selection and there may be occasions when attendance is required.

## SHOWERS

Teams that have an earlier kick off than other teams, can you please ensure you **TURN THE SHOWERS OFF** when leaving changing room.

Last weekend, the 4s had a Cup game and finished early, they kindly left the showers on and then there was no hot water for the 6s & 7s when they finished their games!!

# RAM'S HEADS UP

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**I'VE RECENTLY GONE DEEP IN MY MIND AND THOUGHT OF SOME OBSCURE THINGS, HERE ARE A FEW THAT HAVE ROLLED AROUND IN MY HEAD:**

1. I might wake up early and do some exercise, or I might win the lotto, the odds are the same.
2. I wonder how police on bikes arrest people. "Alright, get in the basket."
3. Hmm, this text message is a little too harsh, I'll add LOL at the end.
4. Dear automatic flushing toilet... I appreciate the enthusiasm, but I wasn't done yet.
5. Paper cut: A tree's final moment of revenge.
6. Square box, round pizza, triangle slices, now that's confusing.
7. It may look like I'm doing nothing, but in my head I'm quite busy.
8. Don't disturb me, I am disturbed enough already.
9. When my boss told me this is the fifth time I'm late, I smiled and thought to myself, it's Friday!!
10. My girlfriend caught me blow drying my penis and asked what was I doing. Apparently, "heating your dinner" was not the right answer
11. The other day a spider ran across the room, stopped and looked facing me. I'm sure he said "I can make your girlfriend scream louder than you can."

**TV OF THE WEEK:**

Rillington Place – BBC1

**SONG OF THE WEEK:**

Black Beatles – Rae Sremmurd Feat Gucci Mane

# 1s

## MERTON FC 4 OLD BLUES 0



Merton 1s: there's a Rat about



Merton 1s: powering header with a foot in the waist



Merton 1s: well taken Siri



Merton 1s: 3 points in the bag and a can of Foster's for everyone

Saturday saw the Merton 1s travel to Kew for a cup tie against Old Blues. Normal order was resumed as Jonny, Sam and Chaz all turned up late.

The game got underway on a well kept pitch in good conditions and Merton instantly looked the more comfortable team. A lofted cross from Jonny resulted in a textbook header into the bottom corner by Nick 'the engine' van Wensveen for his first goal of the season. The team looked well balanced, playing out from the back with Rat and the newfound, ball playing, left back Browner. A well worked move led to the ball being laid back to Sam who managed to strike the ball not only over the bar, but over the club house too.

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Rat continued to look menacing down the right, linking up well with man of the match James and when the ball sat up to be volleyed on the edge of the area his eyes lit up but the result was the same; over the clubhouse once more.

As it became apparent that Merton were the stronger team, standards began to slip and mid-way into the first half passes were going astray and players began getting on each other's backs. The half time team talk highlighted this (Chaz teaching Clappers to play 10 yard passes) as well as an unintentional, but scathing reflection of Brown's illustrious career at Merton FC ('he is not a ball player - you lads may have only played a few games with him but I've played with him for over 5 years').

The second half began with Old Blues nearly nicking a goal; the strong centre forward's quick-fire shot deflecting off Chaz's shin and hitting the post.

Merton began to take control again and after missing a good chance in the first half, Jonny latched onto a through ball to coolly chip it over the goalkeeper for 2-0. Another shocking 30 yard strike from Sam shortly followed, this time sailing 5 yards over the cross bar. Merton continued to create chances with James looking menacing on the right wing, turning their fullback and looking confident on the ball. When he found himself in 10 yards of space, Woody chose to shoot rather than squaring it across which resulted in a tame effort, collected by the goalkeeper. A surging run from Rat down the right led to the third goal. After an exchange on the edge of the area, the ball bounced off a defender and into the path of a sliding Rat who guided it into the far corner for a rare, but well earned Merton goal.

The final Merton goal came from a nicely weighted corner, hung up at the back post where a back-peddling Chaz managed to direct a great header into the corner. In the closing moments Merton were awarded a free kick around 25 yards out. Both Nick and Woody stood over the ball but despite a torrid shooting display, Sam decided he would step up. Curling the ball 5 yards over the bar again, he quite rightly was labelled the DOD and will no doubt be stripped of set piece duties for future games.

A special mention to Man of the Match, James who looked dangerous down the right all game.

# 2s

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## MERTON FC 1 KEW ASSOCIATION 1

**W**hen the last of the Merton squad rolled into Ham to face bottom of the league Kew Association last Saturday it was with just thirty minutes to spare (some advice: don't try to travel to Twickenham by train at noon on a Rugby match day). Upon arrival we were informed that we were a bare eleven with our substitute James Laughton currently playing for the 1s on the adjacent pitch. Safe to say the team picked itself.

Following a somewhat truncated warm-up the game got underway and Merton quickly were in the ascendency. Finding a fair amount of joy down the wings (with Ben Victory in particularly swashbuckling form) the Boars carved out a number of promising attacks in the first twenty minutes while Kew were seemingly happy to sit back and counter when the opportunity arose.

It was surprising therefore that Merton's first big chance of the game came as a result of their own counter-attack when Dan Kelly was played through on the left-hand side of the area after a lovely build up move. Unfortunately his shot lacked the bend to beat the keeper who made a good save, but the signs for Merton seemed nothing but promising.

Kew rarely threatened, except for at set pieces - most notably the occasion when Alex Herbert in goal was particularly bamboozled by the flight of the ball and flapped somewhat, under pressure from the strikers closing in on him. His appeals that he had been impeded in the air were remarkably tenuous, and they rather entertainingly earned him no joy save the referee advising him to "man up". Not sure whether that is an official method for dealing with dissent endorsed by the FA...

At the other end the breakthrough should have come just before half-time when a textbook training ground throw-in routine saw Tom Benham spurn a golden chance six feet out with the goal gaping. Unfortunately his volleyed effort soared over the bar and Merton went in at half-time level but with their tails up and a goal seemingly only a matter of time.

As it was they somewhat struggled to get going in the second half, and the game became very scrappy - lots of long balls and headers rather than Merton's heretofore "keep it on the turf" passing game. In fact, it was a style very much suited to the hosts who visibly grew in confidence the longer the game remained goalless, and as such they started to carve out chances of their own, even hitting the bar twice.

Then after approximately an hour played, Tom Benham was played into the box and rounded the keeper only to be taken out. Never one to be denied a goal-scoring opportunity, Dan Kelly seized the advantage and attempted a shot at the open goal, only to see his effort rattle off the inside of the woodwork. In the post-match debrief in the bar, Dan would insist that the angle made it nigh on impossible, but this reporter still requires convincing. Despite this, the referee called play back and awarded Merton a penalty, much to the chagrin of the opposition who claimed the advantage had been well and truly played (and squandered). Surely now Merton would break the deadlock?

Before we get to that, some caveats: Firstly, the penalty spot was in truly an horrendous state and even to get the ball off the ground in such circumstances should be considered a feat worthy of applause. Secondly, with the cries and recriminations of the opposition ringing in the air it is understandable that a penalty taker could be wholeheartedly put-off. Thirdly, there were not exactly an abundance of volunteers to take the penalty, and

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responsibility was very much thrust upon the shoulders of yours truly. Despite these factors, I stepped up very confidently and with the skill and accuracy of Owen Farrell (doing the very same thing just a few miles away in Twickenham) sent the ball soaring high over the posts...0-0 it remained (and if we are being honest, justice was probably served...it was a very very very ropey advantage call by the referee).

So the game continued and Merton's depleted squad soon suffered a few niggles, none more notable than Ben Victory who received a big whack to the knee and had to hobble off to be replaced by an already injured substitute. Ben returned to the fray five minutes later with just under ten minutes to go, visibly limping and saying a quick hail Mary. Whether it was divine intervention or not, as the ball was cleared from a corner it fell to him to start a counter attack. He then set off like a greyhound up field, seemingly free of all pain, and was able to finally bundle the ball past the dumbfounded keeper. Cue wild celebrations. It is unclear whether Ben was crying with joy or agony...

The celebrations were short-lived unfortunately, as with the last action of the game, Kew managed to find a - probably deserved - equaliser and round off a very frustrating game from Merton's perspective.

Still, we choose to see it as an away point gained, and have the chance to finally put a few past the same opposition this weekend as we host them at the Hood.

**MAN OF THE MATCH:** Paul Pearce – captain for the day and a veritable rock at the heart of the Merton defence which performed very steadily all game .

**DICK OF THE DAY:** Andrew Holder Ross – the fall guy, cruelly and harshly punished for his penalty miss.



**Merton 2s:** the car's were in danger of the penalty miss



**Merton 2s:** goalmouth scramble



**Merton 2s:** whose marking the free man, all drawn to the ball



**Merton 2s:** a boar thinking the ball is 2 inches off the floor



# 3s

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## **MERTON FC 1** **ACTONIANS ASSOCIATION 3**

It was a rather cloudy dreary day for Merton as they travelled to Acton for a cup game against a side a league below with a solitary win all season. Merton started the game with a 5-3-2 system utilising two wing backs and three central defenders in a more attacking system than normal. As the game kicked off Merton came under immediate pressure and had conceded within a few minutes of kick off after a long ball from the centre of midfield out to the right wing by Actonians where a low ball was fizzed into the centre and converted into the Merton net.

The first half continued in the same way with a lot of pressure being withstood by Merton until an unfortunate miskick by Neal who had been solid at centre back sliced into the top corner of the net leaving Dan scrambling. Despite a few efforts Merton were unable to make any headway with Glenn testing the keeper and Frankie scooping a couple of chances wide of the goal. After half time Merton came out with a revised 4-4-2 formation reverting to a standard left and right back, the change assisted in allowing Merton to consolidate in the middle of the park and begin to create more chances at the right end of the field.

Against the run of play Actonians scored again leaving Merton trailing 3-0 with around 25 minutes of the game left to play, despite a number of chances it was only with 10 minutes of the game left where after a good ball across the box Merton converted leaving the boys looking to recover 2 goals with time against us.

Unfortunately despite an active last 10 minutes, Merton were unable to recover and get back into the game meaning an exit in the cup after a stalwart performance in the preceding rounds and what could be described as a harsh result on the day.

# 4s

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## MERTON FC 1 OLD SALESIANS 6

**A**fter our convincing win in the first round away to Winchmore Hill, this fixture was meant to send us on our travels again only for the opposition request a switch in venue due to unavailability of a pitch. With a few regulars unavailable through injury (John Gridley), work (Ryan Burchell), getting called up (Mike Todt) and choosing a cricket social over football! (Will Harrison) we welcome a few new faces into the fold. Sonny brought along a couple of mates in Michael Vogt and Aaron Loftus who both made their Merton debuts and will now hopefully join the club, Steve Burchell gave us some experience at the back and Akram Choudhury was also part of the squad for what would turn out to be his Merton debut too.

Not for the first time this season, Kieran seemed to vanish off the face of the earth as nobody could get hold of him. Had it not been for Malcolm Kandulu who drove to Banstead and knocked on his door to revive him from his alcohol induced coma, we would have been without our regular keeper. As he didn't arrive in time for KO we had to settle for Chris Outred deputising between the sticks.

In all honestly we struggled to get a foothold in the game as the visitors seemed to be ping-ponging the ball around with ease. With our midfield a little too open for my liking, and a few others for that matter, it wasn't long before Old Salesians took the lead. Not long after conceding the first did we find ourselves two behind....then three in the blink of an eye. Following the third going in, Kieran replaced Chris in goal so he could take his place in his usual left wing position with Carl making way.

We seemed to compose ourselves a little before going into the break but were unable to find a consolation. We did however manage to pick up a yellow card. Joe Plumridge the culprit.

The team talk was a sombre one. It was clear we were missing the presence of our captain at the back and Will in the middle of the pack.

The second half started the same as the first in the sense that we conceded an early goal. Joe got dismissed harshly for a second yellow which was not deserved. We did manage to fit the back of the net via a penalty. Aaron played a long cross field ball to Michael on the left who took it down with ease, while taking the ball into the box the right back went to ground attempting to connect with the ball however failed in the process taking Michael down. Dom stepped up and converted into the bottom left.

From the restart the visitors went on the attack again and scored their sixth. Little too late but we the last twenty minutes were actually carved out chances, good ones at that, but Sonny and Dom couldn't find the back of the net.

Next week we travel to Acton for a tough test against Actonians Association. With seven defeats in eight league games it is a must win. With regulars back we will be going into the game with a positive mentality.

Let's put this one behind us and concentrate on our league campaign. Come on the 4s!!!! **FINAL SCORE:** Merton 4s 1 – 6 Old Salesians **SCORERS:** Dom Plumridge (pen) **MOTM:** Nobody

**STARTING LINE-UP:** Chris Outred (GK), Chris Dodd, Joe Plumridge, Steve Burchell, Edward Plaistow, Aaron Loftus, Danny Gridley, Carl Kewley, Michael Vogt, Sonny Kennedy, Dom Plumridge

**SUBS:** Kieran Lee (GK), Akram Choudhury

# 5s

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## MERTON FC 0 POLYTECHNIC 5

**C**hiswick is very quickly becoming known as the 5th teams 2nd home pitch due to our seemingly constant run of matches being held away from our beloved hood. Another venture away, wading through the onslaught of egg-chasers commuting to nearby Twickenham – one would be mistaken to think that surely a little bit of luck was due to come our way. Unfortunately- you would be mistaken. This week saw a heavily depleted 5s take on a mid-tabled Polytechnic team 3 leagues aloft. With the news of man-flu flooding the ranks, a few new faces stepped up to the challenge of continuing our recent successful form. New faces included Noor, Billy Golding, Dave Golding and Alex Quinn who we are grateful for assisting this week.

After a quick warm-up we were game on with heavy pressure being applied by the lean opposition donning the usual red kit. Within a matter of minutes our defence was tested with Sam continuing his recent superman impressions, flying from one side of the goal to the other, keeping attackers at bay. With only 15 minutes played, disaster struck with the Poly winger running through to the side of goal. Realising he was going into a dead-end he felt a sneeze from our bounding Delman and took a tumble in the box, the whistle blew but not to bring back a review of the dramatics witnessed but to give a penalty. First goal conceded. Not to be disheartened Merton started again but a mistake in midfield led to a quick counter attack to goal number 2. This was swiftly followed by a substitution for Merton as Alex Quinn came off with a strain. Another goal followed to end an unfortunate half. The second half saw the team come out looking to reduce the deficit but the makeshift team for the week was telling as a fourth was conceded, despite Sam's efforts. Further injuries at the back provided a rare opportunity for Dulanje and Ackers to be partnered as our centre-half pairing with the former forgetting his position and scoring from a set piece. A goal, which had it been at the correct side of the pitch, I'm sure Dulanje would have been proud of. This summarised an unfortunate performance, but we look forward now to making amends as we take on their 8th team this week.

**STARTING LINE-UP:** Sam Singer-Ripley, Delman Babaker, Josh Fitzgerald Smith, Alex Quinn, Dave Golding, Noor Emad, Richard Gibbs, Aaron Ackerman (Capt), Dwayne Bedford, Aaron Byrne, Dulanje Richards.

**SUBS:** Kevon Bedford, Billy Golding, Anam Hassan.

# 6s

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## MERTON FC 3 OLD BLUES 3

**A**nother match report written by the gaffer can only mean one thing! More of that later!! Anyway, with selection being a headache this week it meant the mighty Merton sixes went into this home game with the 13 hardy soles! Well I say 13, prior to game John was sent to the stands by the ref for wearing his “light” half plaster cast, when John explained that Montero was allowed to wear one and tried to argue that he could elbow someone and cause the same damage the whole team sighed and knew that was the end of that argument!

So this left us with 12 and with all the confusion going on and sending the sevens players to the right pitch a lack of warm up and team talk went un-noticed!

On to the game then, Merton have started to build a friendly rivalry with Old Blues. We are two teams evenly matched and over the years we have had many a great game against them and they are a great bunch of lads!

Merton started slowly and the lack of warm up was beginning to show. Everyone’s touch was letting them down and passing was pretty much non-existent! Old Blues were looking threatening and putting in dangerous crosses which we struggled to clear.

About 20 mins in, Old Blues finally took the lead with a bit of mix up between keeper and defender ending up with Michael punching the ball 5 feet to an attacker who put the ball in the empty net. Merton were struggling and some last ditch tackles from Chris and the skipper prevented further damage.

After the skipper barked instructions very angrily, Merton seemed to wake up and finally got a foot hold in the game. Paul missed a glorious chance from some great work by Pete and everyone thought maybe this wasn’t going to be our day.

Another couple of close long range shots from Chris (getting closer and one day will hit the target!) meant that Merton kept up the pressure.

Approx 30 mins in Merton equalised. After some great work by Callum then Trey to square the ball to Ty, he calmly shinned it in to the bottom corner (only joking it was a great curling finish!!).

Old Blues then rallied and had some more great chances but was denied in particular by a superb save from Michael, unfortunately he dislocated his thumb in the process and was in pain but held out to half time.

Merton went into half time 1-1 and we could count ourselves very lucky as we knew we weren’t playing up to our normal greatness. During half time the gaffer desperately tried to sneak on Swanny but realised he wasn’t on the team sheet, so that was ruled out, but with Chris injuring his dodgy hamstring, he volunteered to put on the gloves for the second half.

The second half started slowly but Merton were the better team and started to create some great chances with Paul, Pete and Trey all coming close.

Merton’s defence looked a bit more solid and withheld the physical play of Old Blues. That was until a counter attack caught Merton out down our right and after their skipper put in a dangerous cross in the corridor of uncertainty, the gaffer tried to desperately to divert it from danger, but managed to divert in onto the far post and with the ball creeping along the line their striker smashed it in. It wasn’t an OG at all!! (ok, maybe it was!).

Merton then went on the attack and managed to create yet more chances and this definitely had the feeling of one them days. George went off injured as he couldn’t see properly and then with our only substitute coming on (our original GK) at right back, the gaffer was met with discontent from the crowd (Matt) as that wasn’t his position (if I hear that phrase again I will shoot someone!), but Michael didn’t complain and got on with it!

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Callum was causing all sorts of problems against a tiring Old Blues and kept driving at the defence, eventually his talent prevailed and he skipped past a few challenges and smashed the ball in the net - 2-2!

Merton with the wind in their sails, went for a winner and again created numerous good chances! However, we fell behind again to a brilliant header from a great Old Blues corner. We were left reeling and wondered what we had to do to beat Old Blues!

Anyway, with time ticking away Merton went to a 4-3-3 to try and snatch a draw. Now as mentioned at the top of this brilliantly written article, there is a reason Mr Skipper/Captain/Organiser and general dogs body chose to write this match report. In the dying moments of the game the skipper ventured forward for a corner, with a first poor ball in by Ty, he made amends by drawing out the defenders to put a whipping ball in for the skipper who scooped low, like he was picking up dropped kebab meat after a night out and powerfully worked them neck muscles to glance a header into the bottom corner – it was superb header and the best so far of his 3 – yes 3 goals (strikers take note!) this season!

Moments later the full-time whistle went and Merton fault to the end for a hard-earned draw.

**MAN OF THE MATCH:** It wasn't the best week for Merton, but like the Arsenal managed to get a draw when playing bad! There was no doubt about the best player on the pitch though and that was Callum, so well played!

**DICK OF THE DAY:** This was a harder choice, it could have gone to a number of players – Paul for missing numerous good chances (he was ill though, so definitely get lets off!). John for plastercast gate. Dan P for kicking the ball miles out of play at every opportunity (can't give it to him though for playing out of position!). But this week I am giving this to a forgotten face who used to be play in the centre of midfield for Merton – Matt, this is for having a go at the gaffer for a substitution he had no choice to make as we had nobody else. It was truly out of order and maybe the frustration of those knees not healing is getting to him – we miss you Matt!!

Let's get another win next week!

# 7s

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## MERTON FC 8 ALLEYN OLD BOYS 3

Striding out onto the spacious 1s pitch for what will probably be the only time, the Merton 7s were ready to face Alleyns Old Boys. News had filtered to us that that Alleyns had only managed to get 9 players down to face the mighty 7s, as such the 7s were feeling confident about the prospect of getting a first league win of the season. Starting out in a classic 4-4-2, Merton took a few minutes to adjust to the understandably strange 4-3-1 (or was it 3-4-1!) of Alleyns. Getting the ball out to the wings where Merton could stretch the 9 man Alleyns seemed to be the go to move. One early move saw Glory collect the ball and play it across to Dobson who slid it into the feet of Malcolm; he kept his composure and fired home low past the keeper. 1-0 Merton.

Buoyed by this early goal Merton began to press the opposition, knowing their options were limited. After some further pressure, Glory collected the ball on the left wing, spinning past the right back, he quickly ran across the back-line before firing past the keeper low into the corner a brilliant solo effort, Merton had doubled their lead! Two quickly became three when Dobson collected a simple ball through the middle, beating the keeper at the second attempt. Merton were 3 up and making their numerical advantage count. At this point Merton were nonchalantly passing the ball about, sensing an easy afternoon. However a simple ball over the top, leading the injured Lenner to shout for the ball only to get into a mix up with the centre back and striker for Alleyns. The striker profiting from this mix up to slot home. 3-1. Merton were then again caught cold when the Alleyns big number 9 picked up the ball in between the midfield and defence running at the defences before curling the ball into the goal from outside the box with a wonder strike. 3-2. Things were now a lot more tense and soon after, another Alleyns player had turned up leading to them now boasting 10 players, surely they couldn't let this one slip! The game becoming a lot more even before the referee blew for half-time.

A couple of changes were made to freshen up the side with Nathan and Jon replacing Tom and Dobson. Merton looked to have restarted with a renewed composure to their game, spreading the ball about and waiting for the opportunities to present themselves rather than trying force the issue. Their patience soon paid off, Glory made himself another great goal following a jinking run to restore the home side's two goal cushion.

Again Merton managed to lose their composure and shape, finding themselves wide open to the counter on a few occasions. Alleyns capitalised after the right winger found a great cross after a run down the wing which was nodded in by the oncoming striker. 4-3 and the game was back on.

From here on in the goals flowed for Merton, in all honesty with 11 goals in this game I can't remember them all and the order may well be wrong! For the fifth, Josh spotted the run of Glory and found him just inside the box, Glory's cross-come-shot bobbed around the box and landed at the feet of Malcolm who doubled his tally for the game. The chance were coming thick and fast now with the 10 men of Alleyns back to 9 after an injury to one of their players, Adam managed to miss a golden opportunity with the goal at his mercy and Glory and Malcom both got their Hat-Tricks. Jack rounded things off with a lovely side footed finished low into the bottom left as the game was drawing to a close. 8-3 was the final score and there were 3 points were on the board for the fledgling 7s. Full respect must go to Alleyns for giving

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it a right go in difficult circumstances, but as the saying goes, you can only beat what's in front of you and Merton managed that.

**STARTING LINE-UP:** Lenners (GK), Josh K-H, Dan A (Capt), Tom, Martin, Adam, Jack, Dobson, Glory, Malcom, Tom

**SUBS:** Nathan and Jon

**MAN OF THE MATCH:** A tough one but it's a tie between Glory and Malcolm who both scored a hatfull of goals.

**DICK OF THE DAY:** No one deserves to be dick of the day after such a good performance.

# MARK CHAPPELL



## 1. Tell us who you are outside of the club. What do you do, how would you describe yourself?

I'm a recruitment consultant by trade and spend most of my free time doing stuff behind the scenes for Merton FC (or so Mrs Chappell would say). I have a wife and young daughter who fill up all my remaining spare time. I have always been a sore loser and passionate player – often times too passionate for my own good. I cherish my friends and my team mates, and will defend both until my last breath.

## 2. How did you end up at Merton FC?

My brother joined the season before me and encouraged me down. Scored at both ends on my debut at Bank of England for the 3rd XI... 23 seasons ago!

## 3. What was your best moment in your MFC career till now?

Captaining the 5s to league victory and nearly going unbeaten in season but for the meanies at West Wickham.

## 4. If you could play for a professional team, which would be it and why?

Any that would be silly enough to pay me money... Except Chelsea... You couldn't pay me enough to wear that shirt

## 5. Do you have any pre-match rituals or superstitions?

Usually too busy chasing around organizing stuff!. I've always worn a 2nd pair of socks or compression socks under my pads – but its far from a superstition.

## 6. Lastly, share us your goals/expectations for the season.

As for the 6s I think we have a great squad this year and will be up there.

**Player of the season (so far):** For 6s: Paul Onomor... Despite his finishing

**Childhood Team:** Wimbledon

**Favourite team in the UK:** AFC Wimbledon

**Favourite team outside the UK:** Miami Dolphins

**Childhood Hero:** Don't believe in hero's

**Favourite Food:** Italian

**Favourite Drink:** Mojito

**Favourite Band/Artist:** Phil Collins/Genesis

# RAPID FIRE



# SIRAJ DURRANI



## 1. Tell us who you are outside of the club. What do you do, how would you describe yourself?

I currently work as a Data Security analyst, so I deal with internal and external threats to a large American Insurance firm. My work colleagues know me as a very reserved guy, which I totally agree with. My childhood friends know me as the dictator which says something for my footballing demeanor.

## 2. How did you end up at Merton FC?

I moved to London around July and was looking for a new team. Had a look on Gumtree and here I am.

## 3. What was your best moment in your Merton FC career till now?

Getting Man of the Match versus Bank of England and saving two pens in said game.

## 4. If you could play for a professional team, which would be it and why?

Eibar. Small ground, ¼ of the population at every home game. Small budget, yet fight way above their weight.

## 5. Do you have any pre-match rituals or superstitions?

Never wear the same brand boots and gloves and always tape left knee before right.

## 6. Lastly, share us your goals/expectations for the season.

Get promoted and have a decent cup run.

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**Player of the season (so far):** Chaz Martin/Ander Herrera

**Childhood Team:** Manchester United

**Favourite team in the UK:** Wigan

**Favourite team outside the UK:** Eibar

**Childhood Hero:** Santiago Canizares

**Favourite Food:** Pizza

**Favourite Drink:** Rose Milk

**Favourite Band/Artist:** Erra

# RAPID FIRE

# U9s

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## **MERTON FC 2 EPSOM & EWELL 7**

**O**ur final festival group match on yet another sunny Sunday morning at the Hood. Merton FC v Epsom & Ewell, both unbeaten with the victor taking the honours of winning our group. Epsom kicked off and started like a rocket scoring the opener within a couple of minutes, we kept our heads and with some great pressure soon equalised. The match turned into a great battle and as the 3rd quarter ended the teams came off 2-2 and a draw at that point looked the likely and fair result. Fantastic game.

However the match was taking its toll on our boys, a number of crunching tackles, a couple of minor injuries and general tiredness forced us to make a number of changes going into the final 12 minutes which proved to be of an ask on the day against such a good team.

We have played and beaten some very good teams this season, Epsom & Ewell are amongst the best we have played and in our weakened state, they took their chances and smashed 5 goals past us in that last quarter to beat us 7-2.

A tough end to an otherwise fantastic match but plenty of positives to come out of the game including our new signing Tommie in his first start for us scoring both goals with a really determined display and Kalyan once again winning man of the match for a cracking performance in defence.

Next week we are away to Spelthorne in the new league we have been placed in, another new experience for us (have to get the map book out!)

Onwards and upwards U9s.

**Match report from:** Gary

# U11s

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## **MERTON FC 4**

## **HAMWORTH BEES 0**

We arrived with 2 subs on a freezing cold wet windy pitch in Hamworth.

The team warmed up thoroughly and we stuck to our mission .... keep ball on ground and pass, pass and pass.

Six minutes into first half ball was fed through to Cormac... who twisted right and then left and then right again and finished with a curler into top left of net.

Ten minutes ball was again played through and Steven lept like a olympic jumper onto ball and slotted ball low into goal.

By this time I could not feel my hands.... was it trembling from match play plus totally frozen.

We kep attacking pass after pass came and their keeper certainly had warm hands as he saved shot after shot.

Half-time and the oppo manager and I bantered as I offered to buy his keeper for hot dogs and hot drinks.

We made some further changes and then 2 further goals came Steven road runner Gumble great shot bang into net.

Cormac Little Messi went on a run and his low gravity and twinkle toe feet executed another fine finish.

This team has lost 1 game in 8 and we are really developing....we now know the best positions for boys and this brings depth and strength.

Great team effort.... just shows play ball on ground and pass you can win.

Thanks Parents.... great support.

David

**Co-Manager**

# U13s

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## MERTON FC 2

## EPSOM & EWELL COLTS 0

**O**n a cold miserable Sunday morning, Merton FC played Epsom and Ewell, this was a grudge match seeing that we lost 3-1 against them at the beginning of the season. We arrived at Joseph Hood at 9:15am and went over to our pitch and started training. The opposition arrived and they were watching us (with fear in their eyes), the game started and Merton had kick off and from the start, we pressed them and got a lot of shots off but their goalkeeper saved all of them.

Soon after that they had a couple of shots but Milo had that covered then Milo booted the ball up the pitch and Marcus saw the goalkeeper running out and put a lovely chip over the keeper he made it 1-0. We won the ball back from the kick-off, and shortly Marcus scored again to make it 2-0, a left foot in to the bottom corner.

The second half began and we continued with Steve's instructions in our heads, with our passing game, everyone was on form and fighting for each other as hard as they could with only one sub and a couple of players injured, we still carried on the fight until the final whistle.

All round a great performance and fight from the team. It was hard to choose a man of the match because the whole team fought well.

**Match report from:** Theo (Centre Midfield)

# U14s

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**MERTON FC 6**  
**HASLEMERE TOWN YOUTH 4**

**NO MATCH REPORT SUBMITTED**

# U15s

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**MERTON FC 0**  
**MET POLICE 1**

**D**isappointing game today where Merton just did not turn up and play the way they can and have shown recently.

Defensively, we were very strong and kept our shape well. We tried out a new backline and it seemingly worked. However, on the ball we were disappointing and wasted a lot of good possession by playing long ball and hoping for the best. At times we kept the ball well and passed the ball around, which carved out potential opportunities for us to score.

Midway through the first half, George pulled off a fantastic double save. This was a wake up call and Merton ended the half the stronger of the two teams.

We were largely untroubled, but also didn't trouble very often going forward.

The second half was very scrappy and was nicked by the odd goal. A Miskick from goalkeeper and it ended in the back of our net.

We never really troubled and ended up in defeat without much battling.

Major positives were the new found backline, but more confidence on the ball needed.

Heads up and go again next week!

# WHO'S WHERE AND WHEN

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## SATURDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2016

**1s**  
**MERTON FC v ECONOMICALS**  
Joseph Hood Recreation Ground – 13:30

**2s**  
**MERTON FC v KEW ASSOCIATION**  
Joseph Hood Recreation Ground – 14:15

**3s**  
**NO FIXTURE**

**4s**  
**ACTONIANS ASSOCIATION v MERTON FC**  
Old Actonians Sports Club – 14:15

**5s**  
**MERTON FC v POLYTECHNIC**  
Wimbledon Common Extensions – 13:30

**6s**  
**BANK OF ENGLAND v MERTON FC**  
Bank of England Sports Ground – 14:15

**7s**  
**MERTON FC v OLD BLUES**  
Joseph Hood Recreation Ground – 14:15

## SUNDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2016

**U9s**  
**ASHFORD TOWN WARRIORS v MERTON FC**  
Away – AM

**U11s**  
**CLAYGATE ROYALS HARES v MERTON FC**  
Away – AM

**U13s**  
**EPSOM & EWELL COLTS WHITE v MERTON FC**  
Away – AM

**U14s**  
**CROYGAS TOWN v MERTON FC**  
Away – AM

**U15s**  
**BEDFONT EAGLES v MERTON FC**  
Away – AM

**MERTON FOOTBALL CLUB**

Joseph Hood Pavilion, Joseph Hood Recreation Ground, Martin Way, Merton, London SW20 9BU