

THE MERTON WAY



-season-
2017-2018



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ABOUT US

We are an amateur sports team that currently has 7 adult football teams and 6 youth teams. Founded in 1910, we have affiliations with the Southern Amateur League and the Amateur Football Association.

As a budding young football club we welcome any new players at all levels to join our club.

We Invite you to come down to our training sessions.

ADULTS TRAINING:

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

TIME: 8pm-9.30pm on Wednesday evenings (please arrive by 7.45pm to stretch and warm up)

SURFACE: Astro-turf - please wear appropriate footwear

Each player 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.

HOW TO GET THERE:

TRAIN: Mitcham Eastfields train station is a five minute walk from the pitches with trains from Victoria, Clapham Junction and Balham.

Exit the station, walk up Grove Road with the school on your right. Just after the new building, there is a path on your right signposted '*Entrance to Adventure Playground*' which brings you to the pitches.

CAR: Acacia Road is off Tamworth Lane. Drive all the way to the end of Acacia Road, with the school on your left, follow the road around to the left and you reach the entrance to the pitches.

Our home ground is:
Joseph Hood Recreation Ground, Martin Way, Merton, SW20 9BU

Alternatively
Check out our website at:

<http://www.mertonfc.co.uk/>

Feel free to send enquiries and find more information about our club.



Merton Statistics

Top Goal Scorers

Name	League Goals	Cup Goals	Total Goals
Nick Englefield	2	0	2
Callum Fisher	1	0	1
Dom Plumridge	1	0	1
Dulanie Richards	1	0	1
Josh Fitzgerald-Smith	1	0	1
Tony Chaplin	1	0	1
Ty Fuller	1	0	1
Own Goal	1	0	1



Pictured: Golden Glove Leader - Siraj Durrani

Golden Gloves

Name	Clean Sheets	Pen Saves	1 Goal Conceded	Points
Siraj Durrani	1	0	0	3

HEROES & ZEROES

Name	MOTM Awards
George Brobby	1
Jordon Cox	1
Akram Choudhary	1
Sam Singer-Ripley	1
Lewis Ackerman	1



Pictured: George Brobby



Pictured: Graham Willgoss

Name	DOTD Awards
EJ Hypeson	1
Nick Englefield	1
Graham Willgoss	1



MERTON FC 5 HSBC 4

Starting line-up was as follows: Merton's number 1, Swanny in goal, back 4 of Kev, Chappell, Beans and new boy Reece. The three midfielders were Ty, Lee and Tony and the three strikers were Nick, George B and Callum. Impact subs were George H and Andy.

At last – the new 2017-18 SAL season had begun for the mighty Merton 6's. After integrating 5 new players to the match day squad, it was going to be a challenge to see how the team bonded after a successful last season!

Usual pre-match antics resumed with players running late (George B) and another going to the wrong ground (Andy – who claims he was not hungover!!). Anyway to the game, let's just say Merton forgot their shooting boots and created enough chances to have won the game inside the first 20 minutes. Nick got us off to a flier by racing through one on one after a great through ball (hoof) by Chappell and scoring. 1-0 to Merton.

As mentioned previously Merton missed some great chances to extend their lead, however with HSBC's first attack, their striker got in behind and seemingly going nowhere was brought down by Tony. Ref gave a penalty and it was dispatched. 1 – 1.

Merton were then asking questions about themselves after such a bright start, but kept attacking and finally scored again with Callum nicking the ball off their right back, cutting in and dispatching a shot passed the keeper. 2-1 to Merton and surely we would go on now, how wrong we were! Beans was having a good game at right back but his ankle finally gave way after making two or three lunging tackles and on came Andy. After a long hopeful ball held up in the pitch it dropped nicely for their striker who nicked the ball round Swanny and was brought down by Andy – another penalty and again was dispatched. 2 – 2. It was unfortunate for Andy, as I don't think the ref would have given it, but Andy's guilty expression probably swayed him!

Half time came and the lads were disappointed to be drawing considering we had numerous good chances, including two open goal misses (sorry George and Nick!).

Second half started and with HSBC beginning to tire, Merton began to make the pressure count. First Nick got on the scoresheet again with another one on one finish and then Tyron netted after good work from George. The shot was via a deflection and should have been an own goal in my eyes! Then Tony, also on debut netted with a cool finish!

Things were looking good in the Merton garden until a late flurry from HSBC got them back in the game! 2 quick fire goals gave the scoreline a rather flattering 5-4 outcome and with a late chance spurned by HSBC things could have been worse. The game finished with a victory for Merton and although the scoreline suggested it was a close match we should have won by more. The positives were that we were creating chances at will and the new lads all provided good performances.

Special mention to the HSBC lads who played the game in a good, but competitive spirit and it was great to see them not give in and keep going until the end, even with 12 players and no regular goalkeeper.

Unfortunately there is no game next week for the sixes and as the gaffer will be away for the next two games the organising will fall to others to deal!

Man of the Match: To be fair this was a difficult decision as everyone had a good game. After counting the votes Tony, Lee, Ty and Callum got nominations but this week it goes to George B, who despite missing a sitter created chances and never stopped running!

Dick of the Day: Again a difficult decision – votes were received for Gaffer (who's half time team talk didn't go down well with Beans), George B (for missing an open goal and attempting a diving header which came off his back), Ty (for smacking his head on the tap in the showers and Andy (for turning up at the wrong ground and giving away a penalty in first touch as a Merton player!). Unanimous decision this week though was for a player on competitive debut – step up Nick! (this was for missing enough chances to have won the golden boot in his first appearance)

Written by the Gaffer



15

MERTON FC 0 ALEXANDRA PARK 0

It's Saturday morning and football's back. Time to slip back into the old routine.

In fact mine started on Friday night with a quick call to EJ to make sure him and Robert didn't oversleep or leave South London too late. EJ assured me they'd be fine, I wasn't sure!

An early kick off meant a very early start. Picking Glenn up in Streatham at 10:15am we started our road trip to N22. I talked about my kids waking me up at 5:30am, Glenn talked about his week in Tenerife and going to bed at 5:30am. I'm starting to feel old!

An hour and three quarters later, allowing for a Tesco Express lunch, we arrived at Ally Pally. Glenn was buzzing from our chat, I was worried how many of our 12 were going to be there on time. Walking into the bar I was hit with a feeling of relief and happiness. Sat there were seven of the team, including James and Harrison for who this was their first SAL North London trip. Top marks boys. Then my phone rang, it was 10 minutes past the meet time and EJ's name was flashing up on the display. With dread, I enquired as to his whereabouts. Dread was soon replaced with joy as he said they were just outside the park and needed guiding in. This just left Woody. The positive being that as an old pro I knew he'd get there, the negative being he had the team sheets! With 25 minutes to go before kick off, Woody was here, team sheet was completed and we were warming up. Hang on, EJ's still got his headphones on. "I need to listen to music to psyche myself up, otherwise I don't play well". Kids these days!

It was 1pm and now we had a game to play.

A very solid first half saw us dominate possession with Jordan, James and Woody particularly impressive as a midfield three. The defence was well organised and Glenn and EJ were a constant menace to their full backs. Our domination didn't want any real goal chances though.

The second half was very much more of the same. Jordan ran himself into the ground and Harrison calmly cleared his lines on a number of occasions. As the half wore on though their 14 to our 12 started to tell. We were tiring and they were rotating. A good save from Siri and a couple of last ditch tackles meant we held on for a well deserved draw.

Rob, the single member of the MFC supporters club, North London division, went home happy. Jordan was a well deserved MOTM. He covered every blade of grass, won all of his tackles and used the ball intelligently. DJ EJ was our DOTD for the previously mentioned headphones.

Harrison entertained us in the bar with his pink shoes and loose grasping of the EG rule. Three quick pints of San Miguel and he was starting to learn.

In good spirits we set off back down south. Two hours later we were home.

10:15am - 6:30pm for a 0-0 draw. Some wonder why we do it. I'll tell you why. It's because WE LOVE IT!!

Welcome back Saturdays and welcome back football.

Starting Line-Up - Siri, Conor, Harrison, Clappers, Rat, James, Jordan, Woody, Glenn, DQ, EJ

Subs - Robert

MOTM: Jordan

DOTD: EJ



Pictured: 6s win over HSBC





Pictured: Merton FC on Tour





SERIOUS REMINDERS AND HOUSEKEEPING

So the season has started at last. It is quite a relief to get it underway. Both the adults and the youth sections got under way and in all not a bad set of results with a good turn out of new players and old putting in some good performances.

As ever at the start of the season there is some serious reminders and housekeeping:

Subscriptions – Please pay your membership. At the start of the season we pay out a lot of money for kit and pre paying for pitches so we need the money. Please pay up. We also need to know exactly who is joining. This season we are planning to spend some serious money on what we believe will be long term improvements at the club:- ie securing some storage on site, improving the appearance of the clubhouse and providing the memorial for Nick Pappanastasiou as well as paying more for our pitches but securing exclusivity at the Hood and hopefully better pitches in the future. [Note we will also be having a repeat of the Annual match on New Year's Day with Nick's Friends and family to remember him.](#)

Behaviour – We had our first sin binning and an SAL observer who came down on the 'off chance' that someone in our 4s would be sin binned for dissent! He was delighted to have witnessed it live and be able to report back to the FA. I was less thrilled. We need to be very careful about this and not let your team mates down for this sort of avoidable ill discipline. Also remember we play on a public park so please watch your swearing – it is not acceptable to shout out these expletives. There will be children in the park and often our youth teams. Also we need to clear up our rubbish and not leave plastic bottles just lying about. I realise it is too far to go to throw them into the sea but we do have bins back at the clubhouse. That is where they need to go.

First Aid- We take our responsibilities for the safety of our members very seriously and being a Charter Standard Club we have first aid kits and members of each team trained in Emergency Aid. We also have a Defibrillator on site for suspected heart attacks. But it is important that if you as a member have a pre existing medical condition you should tell your captain. Eg Heart Condition, allergy, Asthma (where is your inhaler ?)so that they and the referee can be forewarned and alert to the issue. This is a very serious as we have already had one incident and we don't want to be unprepared.

Quiz Night – **October 7th** is the Annual Merton Way Quiz and we are hoping there will be a big turn out. With at least one entry of a table of six from each of our teams including the Youth section. We hope to increase club revenues through the bar and will be having a number of new events after football. Eg Darts Match Happy Hour as well as the Vets Game (**Saturday October 21st v OWCs Vets 12.30 KO**).

So its not just the weekly football to look forward to but some good club/bar activity with your team mates. See you there!!



LIVERPOOL TOUR

MERTON SELECT XI 4 KINGSFORD FC 2

The Boars on tour defied travel logistics, council cock-ups, sleep deprivation and of course the obligatory hangover to return from Merseyside victorious.

Keen to ensure the Boars were exposed to the sights and sounds of the whole greater Merseyside conurbation, Neal cleverly booked the Boars in to a Fawlty-Towers-esque guesthouse in Birkenhead (aka “the dark side”), while Jordan lined up a pitch out of town on the opposite side of the city. For London readers, it was the equivalent of staying in Barnet and playing in Raynes Park.

However, challenge brings with it opportunity and after some grumbling about an early start, the Boars took advantage by taking the ferry across the mersey (complete with group pic and flag) before taking a taxi out of the city to the pitch.

Ah, the pitch. At first glance the freshly cut, lush, flat surface looked perfect for the brand of free flowing, passing football all amateur teams aspire to. However, on closer inspection the lush look was the product of some extremely long grass, and the pitch was absolutely massive.

Our hungover hearts sunk further when it transpired the keys Jordan had for the changing room and goals didn't fit any of the multiple locks on the door. Jumpers for goalposts beckoned, but in true scouse style Jordan Lad jumped in a car and came back 10 minutes later with a drill to facilitate access in a more... direct way. Game on!

Ferry across the Mersey and some light breaking and entering. They do say you should embrace local culture...

So, to the game. Fitz lined the boars up in a 451/433 formation, with Chappell donning the gloves behind a back four of Jordan, Vin, Welch and Connor. Mustard, Gresty and Neal formed a central midfield triumvirate bristling with aggressive intent if not masses of pace. Glenn and Joe (beard) filled the wide positions behind the indefatigable DQ who led the line. Fitz, DK, and Todty made up the 14.

Despite the hangovers, Merton actually started pretty well, with a few nice passing moves and an definite air of competence. Neal Davison was seeing plenty of the ball in the middle and linking the play, with Mustard shermanning his way through more than a few tackles in an advanced midfield role. Gresty, back after injury, was playing a new game, if not quite skipping and a jumping into tackles with his usual relish just yet. Glenn also looked a threat down the left but Merton couldn't quite fashion a chance from a few promising positions.

At the other end, Merton were looking secure down the middle, but the home side did threaten sporadically down the wings. An early raid down the left saw a cut back just fail to be turned in, thanks to some sharp reactions from Chappell and Welch. However, a flowing move down the right on the 20 minute mark saw the oppo get in behind again and this time a low cross was turned in from 10 yards, somehow slipping apologetically under Chappell as he dived to stop the shot. 1-0.

Merton were perhaps (and understandably) looking a little leggy and on the half hour Fitz brought DK on for Mustard to get more support around DQ. DK made a somewhat inauspicious start, inadvertently getting nutmegged within 5 seconds of coming on, but the plan soon yielded an equaliser. Jordan (now on the wing as Todty joined the fray) played DQ in behind, drawing the covering defender. DQ, doing his best James Dean hollywood ball, held off both players and threaded a delightful square pass through the pair to the supporting DK. The ball was duly slipped first time under the onrushing keeper for 1-1 and the DQ/DK axis was back in business for a new season.

Merton had a couple of other half chances, with both DK and Glenn spinning away down the left on separate occasions only to be tackled by the variable length grass on the pitch (DK) or just miss picking out DQ (Glenn), so 1-1 it was at half time.



The second half saw Conor come off - after a busy evening of sleeping standing up in various locales the night before, and Merton were determined to push on and get the win.

Ready to go a couple of minutes before the oppo, Merton watched them shuffle back on to the pitch and line up slightly raggedly. An exchange of significant looks and nods passed between DQ, DK and Neal as a plan was formed, and then time seemed to slow down.

The whistle went. DQ passed back to Neal on the edge of the semi circle, who took a touch and looked up to see DK already in motion, heading for the criminally large gap behind the oppo's high line. Neal clipped the ball over the defensive line, DK surging on to the pass and chesting the ball out of reach of the desperately chasing CB. So far, so good. Then, a touch to steady as the ball came in the box and, as everyone collectively held their breath, a left foot finish from 9 yards across the keeper into the far corner. They had only gone and done it! Back into normal speed now and Merton were unashamedly cock-a-hoop. 2-1, and a quite brilliant opportunistic move to embarrass the home side.

Despite the jubilation, (and as John Mellancamp can testify), life goes on, long after the thrill of scoring has gone. And so it proved, as the next 25 minutes consisted of almost unceasing pressure on the Merton goal. Corners, attacking throw-ins, and diagonal crosses bombarded the Merton goal as the visitors struggled to do any more than clear their lines. And yet, every time it seemed a goal must come, a Boar would stand firm and defy the seemingly-inevitable.

Chappell made several brave claims as the ball pinged around the box. Toddy and Welch both made crucial clearing headers. Neal chased back after giving the ball away to make a crucial tackle from behind with no room for error, just as the striker was pulling the trigger from 10 yards. Vin would step out and read the pass, his composure helping Merton to pass their way out and relieve the pressure on occasion. Joe did likewise, winning a crucial tackle on the edge of the box as an oppo player skipped through a few tackles. On one occasion Vin took a yellow card for holding as stopped a dangerous break in beautifully cynical fashion. The message was unmistakable: the Boars were here to win.

Mustard and Fitz came on to add fresh(er) legs, and slowly the siege began to lift. Merton began to threaten again on the counter, as DQ continued to hold the ball up and play in Glenn, Joe, Mustard, and DK.

The momentum was shifting, and even when Welch decided to channel his inner Lee Smith and fire a short free kick at the unsuspecting (and closely marked) Mustard, rather than clear long, the Boars survived, although Mustard's very vocal displeasure as the ball was robbed precipitated round 56 of the Mustard/Welch bickerfest.

As the game entered the last 15 minutes, Merton struck again. Just minutes after a heavy touch (understatement) cost him a great chance to make it 3, some smart interplay on the edge of the box from Fitz, Neal, DQ and Mustard saw the ball find DK on the edge of the box. A pause, then a short inside pass to DQ saw him once again find a delightful through ball, DK running on to the return, opening his body and arcing the ball past the keeper to the far corner. 3-1.

With just 10 minutes to go, Merton just needed to see the game out, but as the home side began to flag and Merton regained the ascendancy they were guilty of over committing, as well as missing a few chances to finish the game off. Mustard almost pounced on a loose back pass only for the keeper to save, and great work down the left from Glenn saw 3 Merton players lined up for the cut back. DQ dummied to allow Vin to hit the ball, but he was denied his first Merton goal by a fine save at the near post.

Unfortunately, from the next Merton attack, it was the home side that got themselves back in it. Merton poured forward as Glenn led an attack, but a stray pass saw 6 Merton players on the wrong side of the ball. Two passes later the oppo striker ran through on goal through a massive hole on the middle, rounded Chappell, and slotted home for 3-2. Game back on with 5 to go plus injury time.

It seemed set for a nervy grandstand finish, but Merton defended solidly and then scored a killer fourth on the counter. Vin intercepted and clipped a ball over the top, taking a deflection along the way and wrong footing the defence. Fitz strolled in unopposed, waited in vain for the keeper to go down before smacking it at him, and then calmly stuck the ball in on the rebound. 4-2 and the game was safe.

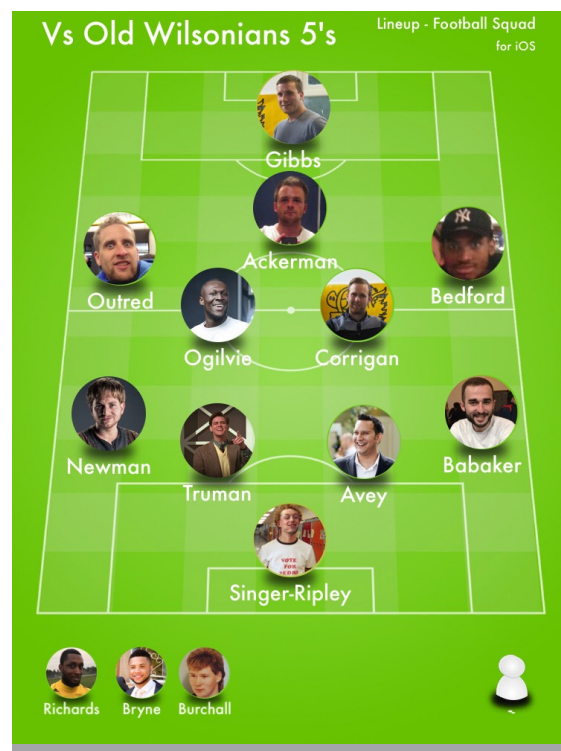
A quite fantastic tour capped with an all important victory. Bragging rights return to London, along with more than one story. A massive thank you is due at this point to Jordan for making this all possible.

MOTM. DK for the hatrick, but DQ and Neal (both outstanding throughout) pushed him close
DOTD. A three way tie between Welch (that pass), Vin and Jordan (wrong key).



5s

MERTON FC 1 OLD WILSONIANS 2



So we started the season about as fast as it takes a fat person to run away from cake.

We arrived at Wilsonians' main ground 2 hours before kick-off, with Stormzy visibly impressed by the state of the pitches. "Are we playing on there?" asked a young, naïve rapper from the fiery depths of Croydon. No, Stormzy, we are the 5s – we will never be playing there.

Once we managed to drag Stormzy away, we arrived at the hilly, slopey pitch. It was as if we had all climbed a beanstalk and ended up in a field of giants.

We started quite well, fashioning some decent chances in the opening exchanges. A good run from Gibbo, who picked the ball up wide, came inside and hit a ferocious shot from 20 yards or so which went narrowly over the bar. Likewise, a good ball released Forrest [Dwayne] on the right wing. He ran into the box, cut inside the defender and it momentarily opened up for him. He pulled the trigger with his left foot, and the ball went narrowly wide of the right hand post. Throughout the first 30-40 minutes, we were pressing without conceding many chances, in part due to the excellent sweeper-keeping of Sam in goal. We won more corners, free kicks in promising positions and played the ball around neatly around the edge of the box throughout the first half, however we lacked a cutting edge to create a clear-cut chance. It seemed almost an inevitability that they would score against the run of play. They hit us on the counter, outnumbering us on the break. As they shifted the ball out wide to their winger, it looked like we had it contained and managed to get the numbers back. However from 25 yards, their winger clipped in a cross-shot that conveniently floated over Sam to put the home team 1 – 0 ahead.

The goal changed the game, and just before and just after the half time whistle we went on the back foot. They utilised their height up front, got a few flick-ons causing our defence some issues. We dealt with it fairly well, including pressure asserted through a series of corners. Unlike our pressure though, their breakthrough finally came in the 65th minute or so. We gave the ball away around 35-40 yards away from goal – a rather non-precarious situation. Their winger hit a speculative effort that looped over Sam and it was 2 – 0 to Wilsonians. Very soon after, they had the opportunity to put the game beyond us. A cross was tipped away by Sam, unfortunately to the feet of their winger. Luckily, he misjudged the bounce and spurned their best chance of the game.



Dulanjie's arrival paid off and in around the 75 – 80th minute he levelled. Through a crowd of bodies in the box, Dulanjie played a composed finish past the keeper. A desperate attempt from the defender was not enough, with the deflection hitting the underside of the bar and going in. We were 2 – 1 down with only a short period of time to go.

We put in a lot of pressure and created quite a few half chances. More corners and free kicks went amiss, however we had one very good chance towards the end. Stormzy played a good ball through to set Dulanjie off on an intelligent run. He took a touch to set himself, however the goalkeeper was out fast to narrow the angle. As Dulanjie hit a stinging shot, the keeper spread himself well and pulled off an impressive save. The game was to end 2 – 1, and we find ourselves in need of a good result in the next game.

Although we didn't play too badly, and although we dominated for parts of the game, we were beaten by their physicality and by giving the ball away a lot more than we would like to. I think everyone has it in themselves to do a bit better than we did on Saturday, and we will need that to come sooner rather than later.

That being said, none of us had a terrible game. Apart from the goals, which were both decent strikes, and one clear chance they did not create much at all, with our defence relatively solid. Delman had a good game defensively, not doing a lot wrong, and if we can unlock him more going forward then that will help us be more of a threat as we did successfully in pre-season. Our midfield was strong and the balance with Clive and Stormzy skilfully marshalling and breaking up play made the balance just about right. Dwayne had a good, energetic game going forward on the right and could have had a goal & assist on the day – it will surely come if he keeps making the intelligent runs he did on the day. Chris had a good game at left mid and was solid when moved back to his natural left back, and Ackers always looked completely comfortable & a calming influence when getting on the ball. Gibbo was strong up front and could have scored a couple from long range, and Dulanjie did superbly to come on and score one with only a good save denying him a second. Man of the match went to Sam in goal for a good performance, coming out for the ball and collecting in very dangerous situations as well as sweeper-keeping to prevent some of their best attacks.

Take home message: we know we are capable of more, and we must improve for the next game.



Pictured (left to right top row): Lenners, Dwayne, Phil, Gibbo, D, Darren, Clive, Aaron, Daniel and Andy
(Left to right kneeling): Delman, Ackerson, Steve, Samuel, Luke and Chris

MERTON FC 2 NORSEMAN FC 2

By no means a classic worthy of comparison with Henman v Ivanisevic at Wimbledon, but Merton 2s – settling for a home draw with Norsemen – can at least point to a rain (storm) break five minutes from the end that turned the tide just as effectively as it did in that fateful SW19 match-up.

Mario Del ‘Trotter’ Prestito’s appetite in the final third piled the pressure on early doors. Josh Fitzgerald-Smith, as tall as two players (and with the name of at least three), marked his 2s debut by latching on to an Ally Shields flick to slot home the opener. Just minutes later, the very idea of Chris Rayner bearing down on the defence was enough for Norsemen to deflect the ball into their own net for 2-0.

The visitors bagged one before half-time. They also forced a flying, textbook – neigh, picturebook – save from Sherbs in goal. They would continue to have the best of it in the second half.

That was despite the obvious quality of Lewis Ackerman, who put in a man-of-the-match-performance in midfield and spent much of Wednesday evening at training feebly, but not unenjoyably, answering Clappers’ questions about why he was trying to hide in the 6s. Gabby ran him close with his constant foraging down the flank from right-back.

Ackers and Gabby combined could do little about Norsemen’s equaliser, however – a deflected shot that looped over Sherbs’ best efforts. By that stage, though, Norsemen were banging on the door almost as hard as the rain.

One damp squib worth mentioning, unrelated to the result: we’re sure the referee’s assessor will have some interesting things to say to the man in black about elbows and dangerous play. Still, a good point to start the season. Far from a wash-out.

Squad: Alex Herbert (GK), Mike Reed, Dan Rist, Paul Pearce, Gabriel Draghici, Luke Mora, Graham Willgoss, Josh Fitzgerald-Smith, Chris Rayner, Lewis Ackerman, Mario Del Prestito, Ally Shields



Pictured: 2's Half-Time team talk



MERTON FC 2017-2018 EVENTS



MERTON QUIZ - SATURDAY 7th OCTOBER

- 7pm START prompt – 10pm FINISH
 - Classic Quiz with all the proper rounds!
 - Teams of 6, £10 per person – including fish & chips.
 - ALL teams to put forward a team for entry.
 - BOOK YOUR TEAM NOW** – Alex.herbert@velocity-ww.com
-



SATURDAY 2nd DECEMBER – THE MERTON CHRISTMAS JUMPER OFF

- 7pm – Midnight
 - Kick-off silly season with your 1st Christmas party at the Hood!
 - Drinks, food & Carol singing a plenty – with the now annual competition for the best Christmas Jumper on the night!
-



New Years JANUARY 2018 – Annual Memorial Match day

- NYE Drink the bar dry challenge?
 - Memorial Match for Nick Papanastasiou.
-

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4S

MERTON FC 1 OLD SALESIANS 6

The new season was upon us, and the Merton 4s had good reason to believe that this would be one where they were more than just relegation fodder. That said, the restructuring of the SAL leagues meant that the Yellows found themselves in a division which was unlikely to be much easier. First up was Old Salesians Reserves - a team who had embarrassed us by a score of 6-1 last season in the Cup.

Determined not to let history repeat itself, Merton made an excellent start. The first few minutes saw them absorb a few dangerous attacks from the visitors with a solid shape, and what followed was a barrage of opportunities at the other end. Chance after chance came thick and fast, with Dom, Matt, Adam and Bill all going close, as the lads played the ball around with aplomb. It seemed only a matter of time before the breakthrough came in what was a brilliant passage of play. But, as was typical of last season, the goal came entirely against the run of play. Salesians benefited from a mix up on the left, and the finish was pure. 1-0, and a gutting blow.

One soon became two, although this time it was down to pure bad luck (and a pinpoint finish). Ed did well to intercept an attack on the left, and got a decent boot on it to make the clearance. Unfortunately, it struck Akram, ricocheted into the path of the Salesians centre forward, and his curling left-footed finish from range snuck into the top-left corner of the goal. Despite the further setback, Merton began to settle down, and once again enjoyed an impressive spell, where chances and half chances accumulated. But, yet again, they were undone at the other end - this time a mix up between Dan Gridley and Mike leaving their striker to pick up a bouncing ball, and in a 2 v 1 situation, Merton suddenly found themselves 3-0 down.

It was inexplicable really, given how the game had gone. Had the scoreline been reversed, it wouldn't have flattered Merton, who had enjoyed by far the better of the game. Yet they had no choice but to soldier on, knowing that getting a goal back before half time was essential if they were going to harbour hopes of mounting a comeback.

Finally, they were the beneficiaries of some luck, as a mix up between keeper and defender left them exposed at the back. Dom latched onto the loose ball, and showed his usual composure in a one on one with the keeper, slotting it past him with ease and grace.

3-1, and Merton had something to build on. That was how it stayed until the break, and, as the manager said, that was probably the best half of football this team had put together in a long time. Sounds crazy at 3-1 down, but it was true. It was going to boil down to who scored next, and Merton nearly did exactly that right from the kick-off. But, for some reason thereafter, they just weren't at the races. The simple passing, intelligent through balls, and generally playing football on the deck, which had served them so well in the first half, suddenly when missing, as they began to aimlessly hoof it long.

The momentum of the game changed as a result, as Salesians began to produce waves of pressure, and it soon told, as they carved open the Merton defence to score the crucial fourth goal. It further deflated an already-flat 4s team, although they were robbed of the chance of an instant reply, as the oppo goalkeeper produced what can only be described as a rugby tackle on Dom in the box. The ref was unsighted, and didn't give it. An absolute stonewaller if ever there was one, but it wasn't to be. Dom then became the first man to grace the sin bin for dissent, albeit that his comment was pretty innocuous. Nevertheless, it was the straw that broke the camel's back, and after Bill's lob over the keeper struck the side-netting, it was all Salesians, as Merton had no choice but to gamble with three at the back.

They scored another two goals, and probably could have had more, as Merton were basically just waiting for the final whistle. It finally came, with a 6-1 scoreline to digest in the end. Obviously a disappointing result, but plenty of positives to take from a spirited, quality-filled first half. They'll need to rekindle that - and consign what was a poor second half to history - when they face Polytechnic 8s next week.

Team: Frankie Kalogirou (GK), Ed Plaistow (c), Mike Todt, Dan Gridley, John Gridley, Mike Elgar, Akram Choudhary, Adam Collings, Matt Shreeve, Will Toms, Dom Plumridge
Subs: Aaron Loftus

MOTM: Akram (special mention to John Gridley for a good performance too)



3S

MERTON FC 0 POLYTECHNIC FC 6

1st game of the season, the excitement of what could be, brewing, the group chat as dirty as ever. New kit, new and returning faces, experience and youth, what could possibly go wrong?

A somewhat depleted squad due to absences further up the club meant that some of our key players were unavailable for our opening game. A lot of players had to play out of position but none the less everyone was ready to give it their all.

The performance as well as the end result could not have been further from what we imagined, whether that was down to Poly playing well or us being way off the pace, we were totally outplayed.

The on the day absences did however, allow for a shining light in Ryan Burchill stepping up from the 4th team to put in a man of the match worthy performance at left back.

A lot to learn and a lot more to forget from this performance. Onto next week to really get the season going!



Pictured: 3's in their kit first game of the 2017-2018 season.



Landscaping the Hood

Your club needs you!

The committee has signed off on improving the patio area outside our beloved clubhouse.

This initiative has been very generously subsidised by the Papanastasiou family, in memory of Nick, who we sadly lost last year.

In order to do this, we need your help. Our man Peter Kemp is the brains behind the operation, has it all worked out, and will be directing us on the day. **But we could use another specialist or two**, and definitely need willing labourers to help with things like shifting dirt in wheelbarrows, laying slabs, digging etc etc.

We will be doing this project (weather permitting) on the following 2 days, starting at about 10am:

Sunday 8 October

Sunday 15 October



**Coming
Soon!
Under
Construction**



YOUTH U-9S

MERTON FC 1

ESHER WIZARD WHITES 6

The newly formed under 9s kicked off their season with an away game against Esher Wizard Whites. Managed by Roy Crabb and coach by Neil Davison they gathered the kids for a warm up and tactic talk before the 10 o'clock kick off. The boys started off well, playing some good football, passing ball about and getting ball out wide. Unfortunately so were Esher, so getting any chances to shoot were slim. Esher took the lead with their player slotting the ball beyond Max. 1 – 0. 3 changes made half way through first half and we managed to level before the end of the half. Poor distribution by their keeper to their defender (who was in front of own goal) saw Farris pounce on the keepers mistake, gather the ball and hit it into the top of the net. 1 – 1 and going into the 2nd half with a draw.

Boys gathered on sideline, had their drinks and listened to the gaffer and coach's half time team talk. Start of the second half and a couple of changes made. For most of the 2nd half Esher pinned us in our own half and piled on the pressure, Harry was playing well in defence along with Ollie and Archie trying to keep the ball from going in, Max pulling off a lot save including impressive one from their free kick, tapping the ball onto the crossbar. Unfortunately a couple of defensive error and some good play saw Esher put the ball in 5 more time making it 6 -1 at the end of the game. David, Louis, Lewis, Joe, Percy and Farris all worked hard to get the ball in Esher's half, but Esher had the edge over us. Lewis making a great run near the end, taking on 3/4 of their players but got tackle just as he was about to strike.

All the boys worked hard and tried their best in their first league game, a bit more work needed to get the best out of them and to see them turn into a great team. Man of match went to Harry for his great tackling and defending.

It was also proud moment to see son put on Merton shirt having played and still playing for the club for over 15 years, like wise for Neil.

Next game at home against Carshalton Athletic Whites.

Report by Matt Haswell



YOUTH U-10S

MERTON FC 0
CLAYGATE ROYALS FOLEYS 6

This was the first match of the season in the second tier of SYL. Claygate Royals have just come down from Div 1 so it was going to be a real test for our team.

We had to defend from the off as Claygate pressed us hard ,and Josh and Jack did well under sustained pressure. Sam made some great saves but Claygate scored just before half time.

In the second half Merton continued to defend, with Tommie getting in some good tackles but in the end it wasn't enough as Claygate scored another 5 goals.

Disappointing as the result was, Merton should be proud of the way they battled right to the end of the match against a difficult opposition, Claygate's coaches complimented us on our defending and our great team spirit.

Man of the Match: Josh



YOUTH U-12S

MERTON FC 7
ROCKS LANE UTD 2

NO REPORT SUBMITTED



YOUTH U-13S

MERTON FC 1
KINGSTONIANS YTH EAGLES 6

NO REPORT SUBMITTED



YOUTH U-14S

MERTON FC 7

WORCESTER PARK COLTS 2

The day started off brightly at the Hood for the first game of the new season. The game had a cagey opening with no clear-cut chances and a fair few broken passes as the teams adjusted to conditions and the new season. Worcester's number 7 was their key man as he switched wings and looked to use his pace and skill to get in behind the fullbacks. For Merton Kieron was a constant threat as his touch and skill on the ball consistently brought his teammates into the game and allowed chances to materialize. After a great run by Kieron his ball across the box was just missed by debutant Fareed in what would have been a great early goal to settle the nerves. Minutes later Kieron again used his pace to get in behind, battling past two defenders and poking the ball under the keeper to make it 1-0. After a short spell of pressure Worcester equalized through a penalty after a tug on the shirt by McKenzie. Not to be deterred, Merton hit two goals in quick succession to go 3-1 up with great play between our two strikers leading to Fareed tapping into an empty net after Kieron's shot was saved by the keeper. This was followed by a sweeping move across the pitch with Daniel and Fareed setting up Justin to rifle home. Shortly before half time Worcester managed to grab a goal back with the dangerous number 7 bombing down the wing and whipping in a cross which unluckily for Merton nestled in the top corner.

After halftime Merton began to assert their dominance with Nikoy and McKenzie doing an excellent job in stopping Worcester's number 7. This allowed Merton's attacking play to flourish and a succession of unanswered goals followed. The first came from Fared after more great holdup play in the centre of the park from Kieron and he showed great composure to take the ball into the box, round the keeper and slot home. A sustained spell of possession for Merton brought more fouls from Worcester Park that led to a free kick on the edge of the box and an opportunity for Theo to hit it hard into the roof of the net. Another foul led to a penalty that Andrei stepped up to take but this thumped the crossbar and the rebound was straight at the keeper.

However more goals followed for Merton and the goal of the day came from Justin who showed great perseverance on the wing to win the ball and take it past three men with skill before flashing it into the top corner. Fareed managed to cap his debut with a hat trick before the game was over with a low shot into the corner making it a 7-2 victory. Overall it was a great team performance, well refereed and a fair and enjoyable game.

GK - MILO
RB - LIAM
CB - NIKOY
CB - ANDREI
LB - MCKENZIE
CM - THEO
CM - DANIEL
RW - HUGO
LW - JUSTIN
CF - KIERON
ST - FAREED

MOM: KIERON

GOALSCORERS: FAREED (3) JUSTIN (2) KIERON (1) THEO (1)



Pictured: u-14's shake hands with worcester park colts before game.



YOUTH U-16S

MERTON FC 0
KPR SCARLETTS 0

Entertaining opening game, despite the result. A battle between both sides, Merton trying to improve on last season and KPR coming down from the division above.

A battle that mainly took place in midfield with it being very congested.

First half Merton edged slightly, creating more chances and were disappointed not to have been ahead at half time. Kai, our goalkeeper, pulling off 1 or 2 good saves to keep a clean sheet. We kept the ball well, under particular pressure from the opposition and moved the ball well at times.

2nd half started well, with a neat bit of play that created an opening early on in the second half. This was a game of many opportunities ... however none of them clear enough to score a goal.

With many crosses entering the opposition box from our wide players, including Harry we just couldn't convert one of the crosses.

We kept on battling to take the lead, and were nearly punished on the counter attack by a quick turnaround in possession with Kai pulling off a few more excellent saves to maintain the clean sheet.

Despite the disappointment of not winning, we take a point from a team that came from division above.



Pictured: U-16 Team photo



WHO'S WHERE AND WHEN

SATURDAY 16th SEPTEMBER 2017

- 1s
MERTON FC v Old Lyonians
Home - 2pm
- 2s
Carshalton v MERTON FC
Away - 2pm
- 3s
MERTON FC v Kew Association
Home - 2pm
- 4s
Polytechnic v MERTON FC
Away - 2pm
- 5s
MERTON FC v Actonians
Home - 12am
- 6s
NO GAME
- 7s
MERTON FC v Old Willsonians
Home - 2pm

SUNDAY 17th SEPTEMBER 2017

- U-9
MERTON FC v Carshalton Athletic Whites
Home
- U-10
Claygate Royals Foleys v MERTON FC
Away
- U-12
MERTON FC v Lyne Cougars
Home
- U-13
MERTON FC v CB Hounslow Utd Greens
Home
- U-14
Kingstonian Yth Colts v MERTON FC
Away
- U-16
Stoneleigh Athletic v MERTON FC
Home



SAM'S SHOWER THOUGHTS

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. Iphone X costs \$1000, airplane mode better take me on bloody holiday!
2. The faster you climb an escalator, the more steps it takes to reach the top.
3. A bra has cups because boobs have milk
4. Birthdays are just a personal new year.
5. So much paper would be saved if we treated every part of a toilet paper roll like the end of the roll.
6. If you're at a restaurant waiting for the waiter, does that make you the waiter?
7. Our brains always talk about themselves in third person
8. Unlocking your phone with facial recognition must suck if you're a twin.

Footballer of the Week
Messi - Scoring 2 past Buffon

TV of The Week
People Just Do Nothing



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