



2025/26 Head Coach's Report

As always, many of our teams have enjoyed significant success on the pitch this season. This includes division winners, league cup winners, and some excellent runs and achievements in both District and County Cup competitions. However, a successful season is not defined solely by trophies, so I would like to congratulate everyone for their commitment and perseverance in reaching the end of the season.

I have been particularly pleased with the progress of our youngest age groups (U4/U5). Participation numbers remain high; however, we would benefit from additional volunteers at this level, which would allow us to accommodate more players currently on the waiting list. The coaches of our development teams (U6s) have also done an outstanding job, and I would like to thank them for their continued support. Following the FA's introduction of the 3v3 format, they have been proactive in arranging their own 3v3 games, which has been a valuable learning experience for all involved. At present, there remains some uncertainty around how teams will be structured at U7 level. This is very much a work in progress, and we may need to adapt our approach as required. The 3v3 format currently feels more focused on development than competitive match play, which should provide new coaches with an additional season to better understand their players. We are pleased to confirm that we will have one U7 Girls team in September. While this is now standard, we would welcome additional players. Please encourage anyone interested to register via the club link; they can begin immediately. We are also always in need of more volunteers to support the group.

I would also like to take this opportunity to recognise Rob for his excellent work with the U7 Girls this season. Starting with just four or five regular players, he has successfully grown the group into two teams, an outstanding achievement. Thank you, Rob.

Our expansion into open age football has progressed well. Our two Women's teams have enjoyed exceptional success, both securing league titles, along with a County Trophy win for the first team. In addition, plans are in place to launch a new Men's team, with the intention of entering the Yorkshire Amateur League for the 2026/27 season so please encourage any players you know to complete the club registration link.

As is often the case, we have lost a small number of teams and managers this season, for a variety of reasons. While this is a natural part of club football, it is important that we continue to reflect and consider whether more could have been done to retain those teams. I would therefore ask that anyone considering stepping down engages with the club at the earliest opportunity, so that we can support a smooth transition. The later this is addressed, the more challenging it becomes.

Streaming has generally been positive this season, although there have been some challenges for the age groups involved. Due to the recent changes in playing formats, it has been difficult for the club to provide the level of support we would normally offer. Looking ahead, if your team is due to change format at the end of the 2026/27 season, we would ask that you engage with the club and other teams shortly after Christmas to assist with planning.

Finally, I would like to highlight the benefits of the Wharfedale Grassroots Academy (WGA) and encourage more members to take advantage of this joint initiative. The WGA provides quality coaching at an affordable cost, while also helping to retain players who may otherwise be drawn to external academies.

Many Thanks

Kevin Harrison
Head Coach

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