ESFA
Membership Matters
Edition #7 - March 17

ESFA IMPACT TROPHIES U12 FOOTBALL FIVES

The ESFA Impact Trophies U12 Football Fives National Finals took place on Monday 6th March at PlayFootball Birmingham. 957 boys' teams and 628 girls' teams entered District Rounds before winners progressed through Area Finals to the National Finals. Gordano School (North Somerset SFA) defeated Thomas Telford School (Telford & Wrekin SFA) in the girls' competition 4-3, after extra time. Thomas Telford fared better in the boys' competition, where they were victorious over Poynton High School (Macclesfield & District SFA) 4-0.

Congratulations to all qualifying for the finals, to the runners up and to our first National Champions of the season, Gordano School and Thomas Telford School!

ESFA NATIONAL COMPETITION FINALS' DATES

We are pleased to announce that the following finals have now been confirmed:

ESFA Hudl Under 18 Girls' Cup Finals
Wednesday 22 March @ Notts County FC
Colleges' Cup: South Glos & Stroud v Gateshead College (12)
Schools' Cup: Durham 6th Form v Barking Abbey School (4 pm)

ESFA Hudl Under 18 Boys' Cup Finals:
Wednesday 29 March @ Doncaster Rovers FC
Schools' Cup: Altrincham GS v Millfield School (12 noon)
Colleges' Cup: Farnborough College v York College (4 pm)

ESFA Hudl Under 18 Elite Schools' & Colleges' Cup Final
Friday 31 March @ Blackburn Rovers FC
Monkseaton High School v Hartpury College (1.30 pm)

All finals will be available to view, free of charge, on ESFA TV. All other national finals will be held after the school Easter holidays and will be announced on www.esfa.co.uk

ESFA DEAF SCHOOLS' FESTIVAL

The ESFA Deaf Schools' Cup Finals took place on Tuesday 7th February. 31 teams travelled to the Derby Soccerdome where the players enjoyed a lively tournament which saw Royal School for the Deaf Derby 'A' victorious in the boys' junior competitions, beating Woodlands 2-1. Woodlands were also gallant runners up in the boys' senior competition, where they were narrowly beaten 3-2 by Allerton Grange. RSDD were victorious for a second time when, in the girls' competition, they defeated Oak Lodge by a single goal to nil.

THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME

As the international season gets under way, we wish our players, with their management teams, every success for the coming fixtures.

The Chairman's most recent newsletter contained an update about the training camps, courtesy of our tour partner InspireSport, and you can see the local television coverage that the girls visit to FC Porto generated on youtube, here:

https://youtu.be/NHj1ULpMtrA
https://youtu.be/KUMJxi1ZuMw

ENGLAND UNDER 18 SCHOOLBOYS

Congratulations to the England U18 boys' who enjoyed a 5-1 win against Scotland at Greenock Morton FC. Read the match report here:

http://www.esfa.co.uk/news/?2017/03/04/185212/englandtriumphant-in-their-first-centenary-shield-fixture

The ESFA wishes to record special thanks to all involved in regional trials and selections, and to express its gratitude in particular to the schools who generously release their staff to fulfil managerial responsibilities:

- The Aspire Academy Blackpool, for supporting Ben Lavelle in his role as Team Manager
- Northfield Sports College Cleveland, for supporting Richy Alderson in his Assistant Team Manager role
- Truro and Penwith College, for supporting Matt George to fulfil his Goalkeeping Coach duties
- Greenmount School Isle of Wight, for supporting Tony Harris to be our Sports Therapist

Learn more about the players, their favourite professionals and their career ambitions on our website, at:

http://www.esfa.co.uk/international/?2016/boys/under-18-squad

Best wishes to the squad for the forthcoming match against Northern Ireland in Torquay on 24th March – details of this fixture is on the back cover of this month's Membership Matters, and other fixture details, results and the league table can be found at:

http://www.esfa.co.uk/international/?boys

CAN YOU BECOME AN ELITE PLAYER IF YOU CAN'T ORGANISE YOUR OWN THOUGHTS?

Andy Williams, Chair of the ESFA Development Committee, poses the questions following his trip to Ireland with the England Under 15 Girls' Squad.

It's an interesting question to consider, particularly in the game of football, a game filled with ups and downs; and don't we know it sitting here in the departure lounge of Dublin Airport amid those who can only dream of achieving what our sixteen young England girls already have.

The conversation of the management team is focused solely on the facts rather than individual opinion as we've just been on the end of a 2-1 reverse (conceding a painful last minute winner) and are keen to dissect our performance in identifying where improvements can be made in time for the prestigious Bob Docherty Tournament in one month's time. They say you learn more in defeat than you do in victory; that may well be so, there are certainly lots of suggestions on offer on this occasion as the staff pore over every aspect of the team's performance today against their Republic of Ireland counterparts.

In modern day elite sport we hear so much now about the importance of bringing your 'A' game to the table at the right time - peaking for performance. I'm guessing everyone who competes in any sport no matter at what level wants to do that, but what does it actually mean, what does it look like in reality, and how do you achieve it? In searching for the answers to what it does actually take to become an ESFA international schoolgirl footballer I turn to the players. We've made the psychological corner a team focus in our attempts to help prepare them in making the required step up from county level. That decision, many years in its making, is an appreciation of what it takes to 'bring it all together' when it matters. It will ultimately shape the team's culture.

"Mental organisation" - comes a swift repost from one of the fresh faced protégés. But I want to understand what that is in more depth. As we begin to unpick this together it becomes immediately apparent that it is an accumulation of mental constructs specific to the group, each equally as important as the next, i.e. each will become a piece in the bigger picture which in this instance you could argue is 'The ESFA Way'.

What we settle on are ideas such as mental preparation, milestone goal setting, ambition and resilience.

I'd love to stop the conversation there and quickly head over to the Duty Free to buy them each a bottle of this new found wonder ingredient to elite sporting success. Yet sadly mental organisation isn't sold in bottles of course, it's a learned process. But my question to you the reader is, "Do you know how to help your players develop their skills for mental organisation?" because that's the game we're in when you get to this level.

ENGLAND UNDER 15 SCHOOLGIRLS

As the girls contested in the John Read Trophy in Dublin over the weekend of 11/12 March, we congratulate all of the girls on their selection. Lining up for England over the season will be:

In defence:
Abigail, from Lancashire CSFA, Arabella, from Hampshire CSFA, Gemma, from Staffordshire CSFA, Libby, from Oxfordshire CSFA, Melissa, from Lancashire CSFA

In midfield:
Deearna, from Worcestershire CSFA, Emily, from Berkshire CSFA, Georgia, from Wiltshire CSFA, Jasmine, from Durham CSFA, Jessica, from Northumberland CSFA, Lexie, from Cheshire CSFA, Sharna, from Durham CSFA, Sophie, from Herfordshire CSFA

In goal:
Lucy, from Essex CSFA, Molly, from Lincolnshire CSFA

And Emma, from Berkshire, who completes the line up front.

MATCH REPORT - REPUBLIC OF IRELAND 2-1 ENGLAND

The England Under 15 Girls travelled to the Republic of Ireland on Sunday 12 March, to attempt to get their season off to a winning start at the Athletic Union League Complex in Dublin, but were thwarted by a late sucker punch to lose their grip on the John Read Cup.

Starting brightly, England had the ideal opportunity to take an early lead when Jess Brown was fouled in the box and a penalty was awarded, but she sent her spot kick wide of the post and the home side breathed a sigh of relief.

England continued to look the most likely to score early, Emma Harries went close when she charged into the box only to lift the ball over the advancing keeper into the side netting, whilst Jess Brown had a chance to shoot on the left but cut inside and saw her shot deflected wide.

As the half wore on the home side began to edge their way into the game and were beginning to look dangerous themselves and took the lead from a set piece on 23 minutes when a free-kick was lifted over the wall towards the top corner and, despite Lucy Williamson getting her finger tips to the ball, she could not quite keep the ball out and the hosts were ahead.

In the second half England began on the front foot and were clearly looking to be more incisive around the penalty area having failed to trouble the home keeper often enough in the first half but it was Republic who nearly extended their lead when Molly Bull, in goal for England replacing the injured Lucy Williamson, pulled off a remarkable save to prevent a header doubling the home side's lead early in the second half.

With England still struggling to puncture the home sides defence, Emma Harries being denied by the home keeper with a shot from just inside the box their best effort, they certainly began to look more dangerous when Lexie Harrison came on as a substitute late in the game with her energy and forward runs beginning to unsettle the home side.

Harrison had a great chance to equalise but could not quite connect with a Emma Harries cross but shortly after, and with just a handful of minutes on the clock, England did draw level when pressure on the Republic defence forced a mistake which put Jess Brown one on one with the keeper and she slotted home to tie the score at 1-1.

With the prospect of a penalty shoot-out on the horizon, the Republic snatched victory with almost the last kick of the game, despite having been under pressure during the closing stages with England in search of a winner.

A long ball through saw Sophie Liston lift her shot over Molly Bull and Gemma Lawley just failed to prevent the ball crossing the line to give the home side the spoils and see them lift the John Read Cup and avenging their 1-0 defeat in last year's game.

A game that could so easily have gone England's way but with the Bob Docherty Cup being played at the same venue in mid-April they will have plenty of opportunity to make amends when they return to the AUL Complex next month.

A big thank you to all parents and supporters who made the trip over to support the girls on Sunday, we hope to see you back in April - and don't forget to bring your England flags!

England v Northern Ireland

Under 18 Schoolboy International

Plainmoor Stadium, Torquay United FC, Friday 24th March @7pm

£6 adult seats, £3 children

Tickets orders to: commercial@torquayunited.com tel: 01803 328666

General Enquiries: CPORTER@tbgs.torbay.sch.uk

Hospitality packages available at £20 per person