



touchline

News from League Football Education

Kick it Out

LFE actively embrace the Kick it Out Action Week See Page 12



LFE is a partnership between The Football League and The Professional Footballers' Association.

LFE technical partner PUMA



GRADE 2

news



Rising Stars

LFE would like to offer their congratulations to the Apprentices at Football League clubs on ASE who recently represented England in the Under 17s World Cup.

The official squad of 21 included: Ashley Chambers (Leicester City), Medy Elito (Colchester United), Dan Gosling (Plymouth Argyle) *see p10 for full length interview*, Krystian Pearce (Birmingham City), Tristan Plummer (Bristol City), James Reid (Nottingham Forest), Thomas Smith (Ipswich

Town) and Alex Smithies (Huddersfield Town). * England produced some good football in the early group stages. A 1-1 draw with North Korea was followed by a 5-0 victory over New Zealand and 2-1 victory over Brazil cemented their place in the knock out stages. A 3 -1 victory over Syria set up a

mouth watering Quarter Final with Germany but unfortunately the Germans ran out eventual 4 - 1 winners to send our lads home.

A full length interview with England Goalkeeper Alex Smithies (Huddersfield Town) can be viewed at www.lfe.org.uk



Business Development

We are pleased to announce that Paul Urwin, who has supported us as a Regional Officer in the North East, is leaving his "proper job!" as Vice-Principal at Middlesbrough college to join LFE as Business Development Manager.

Paul intends to capitalise on the excellent ALL inspection results and our relationship with football clubs and other bodies to expand the work we undertake. This is designed to help strengthen our relationship with the LSC and safeguard the investment in the apprenticeship programme.

It's your newsletter

Got a story? Want to share news with other LFE partners?

This is your newsletter and we welcome any contributions from all Apprentices, coaches, clubs, parents and partners. If you have a story, email ssutcliffe@lfe.org.uk

Apprentice of The Month

In September LFE launched the 'Apprentice of the Month' award in association with Puma as part of the Celebrating Success agenda.

LFE is keen to celebrate the success of Apprentices that have excelled educationally or in the workplace and have showed commitment to the programme.

Congratulations go to Tommy Smith of Ipswich Town as the September Apprentice of the Month.

Tommy is a 2nd year Apprentice at Ipswich and is an outstanding student doing well in all areas of the ASE programme. He is on course to achieve an overall distinction in the BTEC National Certificate in Sport

and has made excellent progress on the football side. This summer Tommy joined the professional ranks at Ipswich by signing a 3-year contract and then went on to represent England in the U17 World Cup in South Korea. He is currently a reserve team regular but has set his sights on breaking into the Jim Magilton's first team squad.



Pre-season with a twist

Some players think they have it rough! Hartlepool, Watford and Hull apprentices found out the true meaning of the word when they 'went commando' with the Royal Marines for 4 days during pre-season. In an action packed programme, the boys navigated assault courses, went on endurance runs, and even learnt a thing or two about good housekeeping- you've got to love those Marines!

Meanwhile, Brighton & Hove Albion's Youth squad took in a little bit of gallic culture, in Le Havre, France. Paid for out of the LFE Development Fund, the club linked in with the French First Division outfit Le Havre Athletic Club (Le HAC), to build on their pre season work. The Brighton lads proved a hit when coaching local school children and finished off their tour in style with a 3-0 victory over their hosts.



The future looks bright



Guy Whittingham Profile

- Played 317 League games (61 sub) & scored 138 goals
- FA cup: 18 (6 sub) 11 goals
- League Cup: 21 (5 sub) 6 goals

Guy has played for: A.Villa, Portsmouth, Wolves (loan), Sheff Weds, Portsmouth (loan), Watford (loan), Wycombe, Peterborough (loan) Oxford (loan)

He still holds Portsmouth's all-time scoring record of 42 league goals (48 in all competitions) set in the 1992-93 season.

Knowledge is supposed to be the key, so if a club has a player that is technically excellent is it natural or is it something he has been taught?

With one or two notable exceptions you would like to say it is a bit of both. The natural talent is there but what helps develop and harnesses that skill is knowledge.

In my role as PFA Regional Coach for the South West, delivering the 1st 4 Sport Level 2 Certificate in Coaching Football (L2CCF) to Apprentices, I come across many senior and former players who all say they wish they had taken their coaching awards earlier. Their opinion is that it would have improved their knowledge of the game and made them better players, well the L2CCF is a great way for Apprentices to gain knowledge and improve their game technically, which will help them achieve their goal of becoming a professional footballer.

An improved version of the L2CCF was launched on the 1st August 2007 and the PFA Coaching Department was delighted to work with the FA and 1st4Sport in helping develop this qualification.

It is now specifically focused on the development of playing ability through technique, skill and small-sided practices. Tasks have been reduced to just 16, logged coaching hours to a minimum of 12, with two assessments on initial

Certificate in Coaching Football is a great way for scholars to gain knowledge and improve their game technically, which will help them achieve their goal of becoming a professional footballer.

training and one final assessment. As coach educators, we understand that these young players want to become professional footballers, yet it is also important that they get a good education to help them in the future. The new qualification helps them achieve both these goals by offering them a pathway for the future and the knowledge for

the present, with the added benefit of more time on the training ground.

The future looks bright for all concerned but we shouldn't forget the great results from the 2005 cohort of Apprentices

who recently completed the L2CCF. 2006 and 2007 Apprentices have a lot to live up to.

With the continued support of all those involved in the delivery of the ASE Programme I am positive they will hopefully achieve their ultimate goal of becoming a professional football player.

LFE Online Blogs

Catch up with a day in the life of an Apprentice Footballer Coach by visiting www.blog.lfe.org.uk

LFE's blogs are designed to bring to life the views and experiences of current and ex-Apprentices and Coaches at Football League Clubs. A collaborative space, it is hoped that the ground-breaking LFE Blog will connect Apprentices and the wider Football Community unlike ever before, offering the audience the ability to leave comments in an interactive format.

Launched in July the Bloggers are 1st year Apprentice Jack Cudworth of Preston North End, 2nd year Apprentice Mark Grocott of Stoke City, Academy Manager of Sheffield Wednesday Sean McAuley



and ex-Chesterfield Apprentice Gary Challinor now turned soccer scholarship student at Lees-McRae College in North Carolina in the USA.

LFE's bloggers have so far given us an insight in to pre-season training regimes, match preparation, time spent on the treatment table, time in the classroom and the psyche of an athlete, so don't be shy give it a try and log on today!

The interactive nature of the blogs allows readers to make comments and share content with others anywhere in the world via social networks or community sites. 'Digg' or 'Facebook' any of our blogs and spread the word!!!!

Meet The Bloggers



Mark Grocott: Stoke City
Mark is currently a second year Apprentice at Stoke City. After a good first season at the club, midfielder Mark now has his sights set on making the all important breakthrough from the youth ranks to the senior squads. Follow Mark through his trials and tribulations this season as he battles to secure the prize of a Professional Contract.



Jack Cudworth: Preston North End
Jack is a first year Apprentice at Preston North End. Having just left school a serious life change is about to occur for Jack, join him this season as he reveals all about the transition from education to full time football training and life at the Lancashire based club.



Gary Challinor: Lees-McRae College, North Carolina
After Gary was released by Chesterfield at the end of last season, he was offered the unique chance to attend an American University on a Soccer Scholarship. Follow Gary's progress as he settles in to life in North Carolina at Lees-McRae College.



Sean McAuley: Academy Manager, Sheffield Wednesday
Sean became Sheffield Wednesday's Academy Manager in 2006, stepping up from his previous role as Assistant Manager for the Club's 9-16s age groups. A vastly experienced professional, Sean's 14 year career included spells at Man Utd, St Johnstone, Hartlepool Utd, Scunthorpe Utd & Rochdale. Sean will offer us an true insight into the life of an Academy Coach as he works to develop young players.

ASE is the word!

October saw the Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence (ASE) programme grabbing headlines and filling airtime the length and breadth of the country.



Chris Powell

With the majority of coverage focusing on clubs in the Football League, BBC Radio 4 and BBC Radio Sheffield interviewed Alan Sykes, LFE Chief Executive and John Thorpe of Skills Active whilst ASE graduates, Ross Montague (Brentford) Joe Thompson (Rochdale), Lauris Coggins and Charles Ademeno (Southend Utd) and Richard Tuandry (Walsall) all featured in the local press.

However, the coverage didn't stop there!

The Times Educational Supplement (TES) also known as 'The Education and Teaching professions Bible', with an estimated circulation of approximately 100,000 and a website attracting close to 1.5 million visits a month, featured ex-Leicester City Apprentice now turned undergraduate student Matt Goodwin.

Matt whose career was cut short by injury enrolled on a sports and exercise sciences degree at Loughborough University on completion of his ASE programme and believes that benefits of ASE

are clearly visible for all to see: "The apprenticeship can be used as a passport to a better career, from a personal perspective I decided that I wanted to stay in sport after injury had effectively finished my playing career. It seemed logical to use the qualifications I gained while at Leicester City to help me move on to a new exciting career path"

The TES coverage of ASE is testimony to the excellent work that is currently being undertaken by all Staff and Apprentices at Football League Clubs. Chris Powell, (Charlton Athletic & Chairman of The PFA) added: "The scheme is a breakthrough for the industry. I'm coming towards the end of my career as a professional, so I'm considering future options. I commend any programme that provides the skillset to maintain a career in football and then enable a smooth transition out of it".

Another shining example of the success on ASE came on the South East coast at Southend Utd. The Club delivered 100% Full Framework Achievement for the

cohort of Apprentices completing their Apprenticeships in the summer of 2007. Lauris Coggins and Charles Ademeno took the time out to share their differing experiences of ASE with Touchline.

On completing his Apprenticeship, Lauris found out that he would not be offered a professional contract at Southend, but armed with the qualifications he gained on ASE, he found that he had the opportunity to move into Higher Education. Lauris managed to secure a place at the University of Bath, a reknowned sporting University, whose football team currently compete in the British Gas Southern Football League Premier Division. The campus boasts



L-R : Lauris Coggin, Ricky Duncan, Charles Ademeno

world class sporting facilities in an environment containing outstanding performers from other sports.

Making the move away from Football and back into Education was first explored in consultation with Ricky Duncan (Head of Youth at Southend) who ensured that scouts from Bath University took the time out to view Lauris' skills. Following his attendance at the LFE and The PFA Assessment Trials at Bisham Abbey Bath University cemented their interest by offering him a trial at the University.

He promptly impressed at the trial and has now enrolled on a three year Foundation Degree in Sport (FdSc Sports Performance). To supplement his income Lauris coaches Team Bath's under 10's side, using the coaching qualification he obtained while on ASE.

Still keen to remain in football, Lauris believes that his time at Bath will prove rewarding: "I am still playing and competing at a high standard yet at the same time I'm earning a degree. It's a great opportunity that has been given to me by ASE"

Charles Ademeno was offered a 2 year professional contract upon completion of his Apprenticeship. When asked about the highlights of the ASE programme Charles responded by saying: "The highlights for me were the chance to become a professional footballer through training and living the life of a pro footballer. To gain an insight in to the life and the attitude of a professional and also a



Joe Thompson

chance to gain an education" Both Lauris and Charles were quick to praise Ricky Duncan and the Club for their commitment and support: "Ricky never lets you slack, if you're not going to college then you're not allowed to play." It is this attitude and commitment from both Club and Apprentice that has meant both Lauris and Charles have benefited so fully from their experience of the ASE programme.

including tennis, rugby union, swimming, golf and cricket" LFE will be continuing to track and monitor the progress of Lauris and Charles for an extended five year period, a commitment illustrating that LFE are already responding to some of the recommendations offered in the Lewis report; "Clubs and the Leagues education bodies (LFE and PLL) should explore appropriate education and training pathways for all players being

ASE really does show what can be achieved when we work to develop people's skills.

Alan Sykes, LFE Chief Executive states: "ASE really does show what can be achieved when we work to develop people's skills. Apprentices in Football have a wide range of skills, which are developed to help them make the most of their talent and realise their fullest career potential."

John Thorpe of the Sector Skills Council, Skills Active commented: "ASE was originally piloted in the football industry, and it's proved so successful that it is now being rolled out to a range of sports,

released from the Football Scholarship programme and monitor their movements".

A partnership programme with Universities such as Bath is also being negotiated in conjunction with The PFA. This will ensure transition in to these establishments is smooth.

Finally, LFE would like to thank all Clubs and Apprentices who made their time available to be part in the campaign.



Meet Keith Waldon

Regional Officer

A former Assistant Manager at Portsmouth and Reserve Team Manager at Spurs Keith is now in his ninth year as a Regional Officer working with a number of Clubs and Apprentices across London and the South East.



Born in London in 1950 his early childhood years were spent amongst the bombed out ruins of Islington and it was here that his love of football was fostered although suprisingly Keith elected to divide his footballing loyalties between Arsenal and Stan Cullis' successful Wolverhampton Wanderers side.

His playing experience in the game took in an Apprenticeship and a year Pro at Millwall before he made a move overseas to play for South African side Berea Park FC. A versatile player who operated across the back four or in midfield, his career in the professional game was cut short by injury and he retired following medical advice still in his early twenties.

However his passion and enthusiasm for coaching and teaching had been ignited. Determined to stay in sport Keith worked in a school sports coaching environment later becoming Head of PE at Ravensbourne School in Kent.

He went on to successfully gain a number of qualifications including a Certificate in Education from Goldsmiths College London and a Masters Degree in Sports Performance, Enhancement and Maintenance from the University of Portsmouth.

He also managed to later go on and confound the medics in his late twenties by appearing for non league Sutton FC who provided him with his most memorable moment as a player when he turned out in the 1981 FA

Trophy at the old Wembley in front of the famous Twin Towers.

Also an FA 'A' Licence Coaching Badge holder and qualified Physiotherapist Keith found himself a route back into the game when he was asked to become the Youth Team Coach at Spurs in the mid eighties

"Give football your very best shot. Do not leave the profession rueing the lost opportunity."

before being appointed Reserve Team Manager under former England boss Terry Venables. El Tel's departure also led to pastures new for Keith and he was appointed as Assistant Manager at Portsmouth working with both Terry Fenwick and Alan Ball in his time down on the south coast.

On leaving Portsmouth in 1999 Keith was appointed in the Regional Officer role he still fulfils today, as he explains the job seemed tailor made: "It seemed perfect for me given my experience and qualifications, the job itself involves helping apprentices to successfully complete their apprenticeship with meaningful qualifications in their locker. Seeing the young men with whom I have worked progress in life whether in or outside of football is without a

doubt the best part of my job" As a Football Fan Keith's heroes range from Ron Flowers (Wolves & England), "who looked so commanding yet effortless in his play" to Fabregas (Arsenal and Spain) and Flamini (Arsenal & France) "who are very exciting to watch as they have flair, vision and good technique"

Away from Football Keith is a keen sportsman; he plays squash, in his words "badly" and likes most other sports. He also has a very sporting family, and with 5 children and wife Mandy, most of his spare time revolves around them. As far as burning ambitions go, Keith would like to leave a "sporting legacy".

He has already fulfilled one ambition by co-writing and producing the first degree in Sports Therapy. There are now 14 universities offering the degree course and over 700 students enrolled, plus 4 MSc degrees in the same subject. While keeping his other ambitions close to his chest he does offer one final piece of advice to all Apprentices:

"Give football your very best shot. Do not leave the profession rueing the lost opportunity. I have been quite lucky in that I've had a whole lifetime involved in football. Had I not been so lucky, I think I would have developed my physiotherapy career. My philosophy is to enjoy the work that I do. I have managed to do that and I feel very privileged to have worked in our industry for forty one years"



Seven Up Saddlers

While many clubs splashed the cash over the summer Walsall invested in youth, signing all seven of last years second year Apprentice group on professional contracts.

The group formed the nucleus of the Saddlers youth squad who sampled League and Midlands Youth Cup success last term and mirrored their achievements on the pitch in the classroom with all seven achieving full frameworks.

Now on the fringes of the first team, right full back Richard Taundry believes that the ASE programme has provided the platform

for him and his peers to make a start in the professional game: "Being an Apprentice brought me on quite a bit with having to come in and work at the club on a daily basis surrounded by the other lads and the Pro's. The two years have given me and the other lads a lot more confidence and you could literally see your teammates growing in stature throughout the two years.

"The programme has really evolved over the last few years and everything now is geared into making the lads successful both on and off the park."



The education side helped us all become up to date with the advances in sports science, nutrition & professionalism and again just gave us a bit more to think about in terms of the lifestyle and behaviour of a professional footballer"

Seven Professional Contracts and seven frameworks is undoubtedly a spectacular success for the boys from the Bescot,

and Head of Youth Mick Halsall believes that the ASE programme paved the way for delivering such results: "The programme has really evolved over the last few years, and everything now is geared into making the lads successful both on and off the park. From the Induction folder to the Logbook, the resources and learning materials produced by LFE have been first class and allowed me a lot more flexibility and variation as a coach when I sit down with the lads to discuss their progress. The good thing about the programme now is that there is a lot more ownership and a bigger forum for discussion between both players and coaches. I've used a lot of the materials produced to re-emphasise to players exactly what is required to make it to the top"

Youth Liaison Officer Bill Jones believes that the NVQ combined with the in-house delivery of the BTEC qualifications, ensures that Apprentices are prepared off the pitch for life on it, while also effectively preparing a back up plan if things don't work out in football: "All the qualifications the Apprentices undertake from the NVQ and BTEC, to the Coaching Certificate, provide a breadth of knowledge about the football and sports industry, which is enormously beneficial to each player.

We use all our materials and relate them to the football training and find that the lads are receptive to learn and often refer back to areas to broaden their own knowledge"

Dan Gosling joined Plymouth Argyle as an Apprentice aged 16 in the summer of 2006. He quickly came to prominence making his first team debut for the Pilgrims, (aged 16 years and 310 days) on December 9, 2006 against Hull City when coming on as a first-half substitute for injured Captain Paul Wotton.

In the process, he became the fourth youngest player to ever appear for Argyle. He has since gone on to sign professional forms and confirm his status as one to watch for the future by playing a starring role in England's recent Under 17s World Cup campaign in South Korea. Touchline managed to track down "Gos" at Home Park for his views on his Apprenticeship, The Under 17s World Cup and his time so far with the Pilgrims.

On his Apprenticeship:
 "I feel that I have developed over the past year and being in the club on a full time basis and working with the Coaching staff here and other players has helped me immensely. My education work has complimented my football brilliantly and been a contributory factor in my success as it has provided me with the theory behind the practical side of getting out on the park."



Dan's the man at Argyle

Dan Gosling joined Plymouth Argyle as an Apprentice aged 16 in the summer of 2006 and quickly came to prominence making his first team debut for the Pilgrims, (aged 16 years and 310 days) on December 9, 2006 against Hull City when coming on as a first-half substitute for injured Captain Paul Wotton.

While Dan owes much to the tutelage of the Argyle Coaching staff he is also keen to do as much as he can himself to further his education and development as a player. At the recent U17s World Cup he found

that he was able to build upon the principles instilled in him at Home Park to fully appreciate things such as tactical awareness, positional play, different formations and styles of play and diet and nutrition.

"Half the experience really was witnessing the totally different style of play of teams from around the globe, just seeing some of the players around your age category and how good they were and the coaches



"I think the Under 17s World Cup has helped me to develop my game and I feel that I am more mature as a player as a result."

trying to make you as good as them, if not better I mean playing in a different climate and everything. I will just never forget the experience; it was a once in a lifetime opportunity.

I think it has helped me to develop my game and I feel that I am more mature as a player as a result.

The tournament itself didn't end as we'd have liked, going out to Germany in the quarter finals, but the high was definitely beating Brazil. I think after that game all the lads in the squad were just buzzing and we all thought we were going to go on and win the tournament. Sadly it wasn't to be!

Life as a Pilgrim

"Now I'm back at Plymouth enjoying it and I honestly love every minute of it here.

I look forward to getting up in the morning and going training. I just don't really want to leave the place, I could train all day down there.

The gaffer and the coaching staff are superb and I just hope I can cement my place in the first team and help us do well this season, every team wants to make the play offs so it would be great if I could help them to achieve that."

get kitted out

Replace worn out boots with a new pair or simply stock up on your leisure wear and get a 30% discount by shopping through LFE.

Also you can now show the world (or maybe just impress the girls!) that you're an apprentice footballer with the limited edition PUMA Apprentice 07 fashion t-shirt. Only 200 will ever be made so order now to avoid disappointment.

Why not combine your order and save on postage and packing? All orders over £100 feature free p&p.

Log on, choose your items, get to the checkout and enter the discount code that your regional officer will provide you with, and receive your 30% discount.

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SAVE UP TO 30%



Kick it Out

LFE is pleased to confirm that a number of Clubs and Apprentices have been actively embracing the values of the Kick it Out Week of Action.



Prior to the Week LFE provided all Apprentice Footballers and Clubs with packs containing

information, activities and Kick it Out T-shirts for them to utilise during the Week. The format represented the opportunity to incorporate Equality and Diversity awareness work into the qualifications already contained within the ASE framework.

The importance of educating our young players who are potential stars of the future on Equality and Diversity issues cannot be understated and LFE are

delighted to endorse the work done by Kick It Out while providing Apprentices and Clubs with opportunities to stimulate debate and help break down barriers of exclusion. Clubs such



as, Colchester Utd, Southampton (below) and Stoke City (above) arranged their Apprentice activities in conjunction with their Football Clubs Community Scheme. Stoke City's Apprentices



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ran a diversity awareness quiz with local schoolchildren before passing on some tricks of the trade in a coaching session while Southampton's Apprentices met with local children from a cross section of the community who were using the Saints Study support centre to improve their basic skills in English, maths and IT and gain confidence in themselves.

With the majority of clubs now recognising the value of this work it is hoped that clubs continue to work through the packs they have been provided with during the course of the season.



Challinor follows Beckham, stateside.



At the end of his Apprenticeship at Chesterfield, Gary Challinor was offered the chance to attend Lees-McRae College in North Carolina, USA, on a soccer scholarship.

Touchline caught up with Gary to gather his thoughts on life on the other side of the Atlantic. Since moving to the US Gary has been writing a daily blog for LFE Online, offering an insight into life at Lees-McRae College (LMC) and Gary's experiences playing for the college team.

"Life is very good over here at the moment. Since my first day the boys and everyone at LMC have been superb and really helped me fit in. I think it helps that there are so many English lads in the team, so everyone is in the same boat when it comes to living away from home. At the moment there are five or six English lads in the team and we also have an English coach."

Surrounded by forest and mountains the 'Bobcats' train daily and have had fantastic campaign thus far chalking up 19 victories from their opening 21 fixtures. "All the lads get on really well and it's a great atmosphere and team spirit in the squad which is why I think we are doing so well. We had an amazing start to the season and hopefully it will continue and win the Conference and go on to the Nationals."

Gary found his Apprenticeship at Chesterfield prepared him for the physical and educational challenges of his US scholarship. "I loved my time with Chesterfield especially my first year as we did so well in winning the league. I feel I

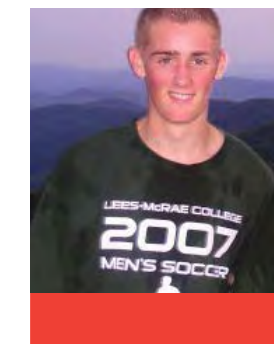
grew up as a player and I learned how to play a more physical game. As a person I think I became more sociable, I made friends with some great lads there. Academically I did very well which helped me get to where I am now studying for a degree. The education element of the programme was very useful."

"Training here in the mountains at this altitude helps improve your fitness a lot. I wouldn't say I'm a physical type of player but I like to get stuck in. The refs give fouls for nearly every bit of contact so



the game over here is less physical in that respect but it's more demanding because the players are all athletic and very fast."

The demands of classes and study time mean the team training sessions are held in the evenings. "I will admit that you don't have much time to yourself over here. We usually have classes all day and we're given plenty of homework which I tend to do at night. At the moment I am doing general classes which include Biology, Maths, English and Psychology."



Gary also finds time to write a daily blog for LFE which offers a unique perspective of life in America. "I enjoy writing the blog for LFE because I can go back and read them to see what I have done; in years to come I can look back on it and remember my time here."

As far as this season goes, Gary is confident the team is strong and will do well. They have already twice broken the College record for the highest national ranking and has no doubt that they are capable of reaching the top. "If we are successful this season we could



have an even better team next year. This season I would like to gain some personal recognition and hopefully get into the All-American team or Conference first team which I feel my performances would definitely deserve. I would also like to decide what career path I'm going to take and I need to consider this when I choose my major to study. I'm hoping to do either Sports Management or Physical Education and then go on and become a PE teacher either in the States or back home."

Dad, Kevin, feels his son made the right choice when opting to move to the States, "Four months on and Gary has settled in at Lees-McRae. On the football pitch he is enjoying his football, scoring on his debut, and the team are flying high top of the Carolinas League."

Overall, Gary has made a great start but there are some things you just can't do without. "I get tea bags sent over and I really miss English food. I've loved every minute of it and have definitely made the right decision to come here. I want to carry on enjoying everything I do, win as much as I can and be successful at the end of my time here."

Follow Gary's progress at www.blog.lfe.org.uk



Kevin Nugent

Youth Team Coach Leyton Orient FC

Having began his career as an Apprentice at Leyton Orient Kevin Nugent's career has now turned full circle with the popular Londoner returning to O's for a second time last summer as Youth Team Coach.

As a bustling centre forward, Nugent amassed over 500 appearances in all competitions over 19 years finding the back the net on 143 occasions in spells at Orient (twice), Plymouth Argyle, Bristol City, Cardiff City, and Swansea City.



A one time Cardiff City player of the year and Assistant Manager to Kenny Jacket, when the pair masterminded Swansea's promotion to League One in 2005 it seems a certainty that he will be fondly remembered by both sets of fans in the Valleys.



LFE caught up with Kevin to find out how he's settling back in to life at Brisbane Road, this time as a coach: "It's going great and I'm really enjoying being back at Leyton Orient. After the job I'd done at Swansea it was really important to me to find a job that allowed me to be out on the training ground working with players on a day to day basis. When the opportunity arose to move back here in the summer it seemed like an ideal

Developing players is something that we do well as a club and I'm hopeful that a few of the lads I've got here can progress through to the first team.

opportunity for me to return to London and to the Club where I started my career. While many would find the transition from working with established professionals of all ages to working with youth players strange, Nugent has found that his new role is both satisfying and challenging:

" The job itself is very rewarding and one I enjoy. I've got a good group of players and a good group of lads which is really important. I've found that the role differs from being with a first team in that I probably now do more one to one coaching rather than tactical sessions with players.

Developing players is something that we do well as a club and I'm hopeful that a few of the lads I've got here can progress through to the first team. At the minute, seven of the first team squad are home grown players and at a club like Orient it is essential that we continue to produce our own players because the budget is simply not available to go out and

splash out in the transfer market. The Manager here, Martin Ling and his Assistant Dean Smith, have both previously occupied the Youth Team Coach position here and they are incredibly supportive and take a keen interest in the youth programme at the club by attending youth and schoolboy fixtures as often as they can."

While Nugent hopes that a number of his young charges can make the grade, he realises that not all of his group will forge a career in the game and sees the importance that the educational part of the ASE programme offers: "Education wise, we have a moral and financial obligation to all of our players to push them to learn off the pitch as well as on it. Since I've been here I've done a lot of double sessions with the lads on the training park that have fitted around the education programme. It's essential that lads fully participate on courses like the Btec's, Coaching and NVQ because ultimately it prepares them for future life".



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