



# touchline

News from League Football Education

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BENTLEY WEARS THE v1-178: SPEED LEGS

UNTIL THEN



v1.08: THE SPEED BOOT



pumafootball.com

# USA! USA! USA!

LFE creates opportunities across the pond pages 6 & 7

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The future's bright for our Apprentices p6 & 7



Dearne Valley and Sheffield Wednesday continue to impress p12



GRADE 2



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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



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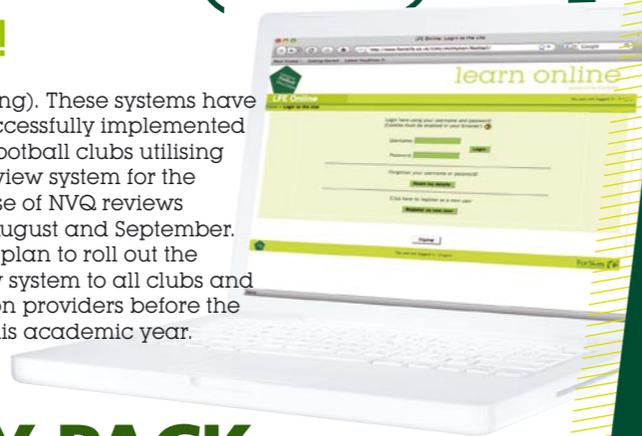
# news

## LFE Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

It's (virtually) here!

Many Apprentices will have accessed the VLE during the first few weeks of their Apprenticeship to undertake the Initial Assessment and Diagnostic tests. The VLE system has been enhanced further in recent months to include electronic individual learning plans (e-ILP), reviews (e-Reviews) and tracking

(e-Tracking). These systems have been successfully implemented with 10 football clubs utilising the e-Review system for the last phase of NVQ reviews during August and September. LFE now plan to roll out the e-Review system to all clubs and education providers before the end of this academic year.



## ASE ACTIVITY PACK



This year LFE have produced an Activity Pack to celebrate the activities of organisations that we are currently proud to support which has now been distributed to Apprentices/Clubs to coincide with the Kick it Out 'Weeks of Action'.

Boots for Africa, CLIC Sargent, Kick it Out and The Sporting

Chance Clinic are organisations that share some common traits in their excellent work throughout the football, educational and community sectors.

The work contained in the Activity booklet should stimulate debate and awareness of issues that face all of these organisations and provide Apprentices

with the opportunity collect evidence that can be used across the qualifications contained in the ASE educational framework.

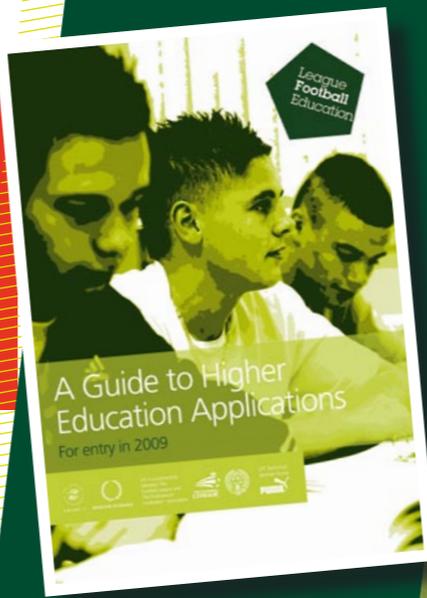
The Activity Pack plus additional resources are now available on the LFE website for all Apprentices/Clubs to utilise so please visit [www.lfe.org.uk](http://www.lfe.org.uk) to make use of these resources.

## Higher Education Guide

LFE's Guide to Higher Education Applications is due to be published in early November 2008 and contains information that is relevant to all Apprentice Footballers who are considering applying for Higher Education courses.

It offers an insight into factors to consider when applying for a Higher Education course, a full guide to the UCAS application process including Clearing and information regarding student finance and support.

The guide will be available to view and download from the LFE website.



## PUMA YOUTH ALLIANCE UPDATE



With the season now in full swing the battle has begun for the regional Conference League titles. Last years League and Cup double

winners Hull City will be looking to defend their crown but there's everything to play for at this early stage of the season. In the Puma Youth Alliance Cup the

South region group matches kicked off in mid September and top of the table Swindon Town are leading group one having won all four of their games so far.

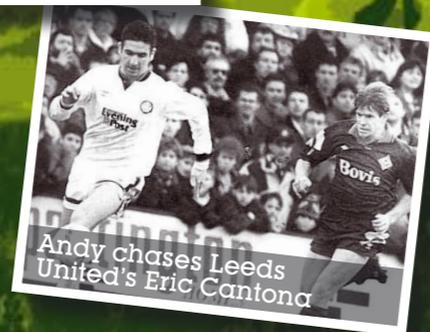
## It's your Newsletter

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](mailto:ssutcliffe@lfe.org.uk)



# “Listen, Learn, Reflect”



## Do you have what it takes to be a successful Professional?

Whether you're 30 years old or have just joined as an Apprentice, the same rules apply. Listen, Learn, Reflect and most importantly understand what you're being taught.

All too often I encounter Apprentices who complain about their club, the coach, the training etc. Well it's actually like that all over the country! It can be mentally, physically and technically demanding. Its not easy!

So how can you make the most of your 2 years? I believe the key aspect is understanding the role of the coach. What are they trying to do for you as an individual and as a part of a team? How do they extract a performance and get you in the right frame of mind to play, to overcome injury, to conquer defeat? What problems do they face in trying to do this?

When we deliver the Level 2 Coaching Award, there are common trends that are apparent, such as players who are predominantly one footed, good at attacking but cannot defend, good goalkeepers but no idea of the game outside the penalty area.

The course highlights weaknesses in you as players but also shows you how to design practices to improve those aspects of your game. But how many players actually go away and spend extra time putting in this practice with their teammates? It can be tough at times dealing with your peers but I did my first coaching qualification at the age of 19 with some well-known internationals. Coaching them was tough but I survived.

The experience made me more confident and helped me understand the role of a coach. The coach's role is to give every individual the maximum opportunity to develop and fulfil his potential. On the Level 2 course we ask you to do that and show us your knowledge of how, why, where and when to do something. We want detail and understanding.

Mourinho expects his players to understand a triangle of positions on the pitch.

Sir Alex, likewise, expects his 'flexible' forwards to use space and exploit space with their fluent attacking system.

This modern approach and the ever-changing formations mean you have to be as savvy as ever. So a key message is – understand your role, the game and your responsibility. Never be afraid to learn and be open to learning. If you don't understand, ASK! Apply yourself 100% in what you do and you'll go far.

Good Luck.

Andy Barlow

# APPRENTICE OF THE MONTH RE-LAUNCH

## Bentley is Back!

This September LFE re-launched the 'Apprentice of the Month' award, in association with PUMA, and this year the prizes are truly outstanding. After his excellent support at Progression08 David Bentley is back to support the monthly award programme.



LFE and PUMA are keen to celebrate the success of Apprentices that have excelled on the ASE programme.

The awards will run from September '08 through to April '09 and each month LFE Regional Officers will be asked to nominate Apprentices that they feel best match some or all of the criteria.

The nominations will then be judged by LFE and the winner will be presented with the cup and the incredible prizes.

This year the coveted prizes for EACH monthly winner will include:

1. An end of season invite to attend a day with David Bentley and PUMA incorporating:
  - Q & A session with the England and Tottenham star
  - A PUMA product presentation
  - A 'Challenge David Bentley' programme
  - A Sports quiz hosted by David Bentley
2. A PUMA Lifestyle products package including clothing and trainers
3. A Marc Ecko watch (by kind donation of Ecko Unlimited)  **\*eckō unltd.**



Each month the winner will be featured on the LFE website so keep visiting to find out who the lucky winners are.

### The criteria for nominating an Apprentice of the Month is outlined below:

- ✓ Excelled at College work
- ✓ Excelled at football
- ✓ Overcame a hardship
- ✓ Showed bravery to raise an issue
- ✓ Showed maturity in a difficult situation
- ✓ Displayed a marked change in behaviour for the better
- ✓ Excelled in other areas that LFE/Club/College are looking to promote e.g.
  - Logged on to the LFE website the most time in the region
  - Showed excellent awareness of Health & Safety and Equality & Diversity
  - Showed excellent drug awareness
  - Showed excellent awareness of Employee Rights & Responsibilities
  - Gave particularly thoughtful/helpful feedback on ASE programme
  - Showed excellent initiative when attending careers fair
  - Excellent team working attributes

# PROGRESSION PARTNERSHIP SIGNS UP STATESIDE



LFE's Progression Partner programme got a boost in October as Major League Soccer Camps were signed up.

The organisation is in its 11th year as the official camp and clinic of Major League Soccer and boasts some impressive statistics. Founded in 1969 MLS camps operate across 1,200 locations in 44 states with offices in 15 cities across the USA while the headquarters remain in Mystic, Connecticut.

The camps provide football coaching for more than 270,000 players annually across a wide variety of ages, from Under 4's to Under 18's and at various levels from recreational/competitive to advanced levels. MLS Camps say they are currently the only youth soccer education provider in the world that offers

Strengths-Based Coaching, where talent is identified and maximised in order to increase performance and productivity.

Now that MLS Camps are official LFE Progression Partners, these statistics translate in to real opportunities for ex-Apprentices who have undertaken and achieved

their full ASE Framework that includes the level 2 coaching qualification delivered by The PFA. MLS Camps have an annual requirement for 450 coaches, 300 of whom will come from the UK, to fill 3 month (June – August), 6 month (June – November) and 9 month (March – November) coaching posts.

Their partner association to the MLS League, America's premier league and specifically the L.A. Galaxy, Chicago Fire and Real Salt Lake also gives Apprentices the opportunity to stay in touch with the pinnacle of the American game.

Those who completed the ASE programme in 2007 and 2008 have already been contacted by LFE through our tracking and monitoring programme. The programme aims to track the destinations of Apprentices and then offer opportunities to those released from their Clubs.

Many were interested in the MLS opportunity and their details have been passed on to MLS Camps UK Development Manager Chris Andrew in order for them to attend one of the up coming recruitment days in the UK.



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THE OFFICIAL CAMP AND CLINIC OF MAJOR LEAGUE SOCCER



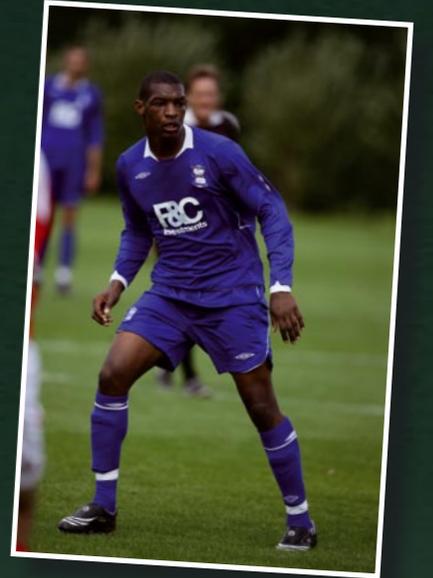
If you think this may be an area of interest to you in the future look out for their stand at the Progression Careers Events coming up in early 2009, visit [www.mlscamps.com](http://www.mlscamps.com) or contact Chris Andrew at [chris.andrew@mlscamps.com](mailto:chris.andrew@mlscamps.com)

# Krystian

# Pearce



*"Krystian was unbelievably dedicated to his work particularly while he was away on loan at other clubs."*



Krystian Pearce joined Birmingham City as an Apprentice in the summer of 2006 and successfully completed the ASE programme this summer despite fitting in loan spells at both Notts County and Port Vale last season and a World Cup U-17 campaign with England, where the young defender was earmarked as one for the future by national team manager Brian Eastwick.

Having joined the Blues as a 9 year old Pearce has risen through the ranks and following his progression on to the ASE programme was singled out by Academy manager Terry Westley as, "the one name that does stand out in terms of what he has achieved on the pitch as well as with his education" when he was chosen as Academy Player of the Season for 2006–07.

During the first year of his Apprenticeship, Pearce captained City's U-18 side and featured frequently in a Reserve team, which won their division of the Pontin's Holidays Reserve League. Rewarded by a call up to the England U-17 squad for the 2007 FIFA U-17 World Cup in South Korea, he became a mainstay of the side that reached the quarter finals.

Last season Pearce enjoyed loan spells at both Notts County and Port Vale

and despite his ever increasing football commitments he was able to maintain his progress on the educational aspects of ASE.

Birmingham City's Football Education Officer Richard Beale was always on hand to assist Pearce but believes the success of the player is down to his commitment and hard work:

"Krystian displayed the necessary dedication to his work particularly while he was away on loan at other clubs. He would often return to St Andrews to catch up on his BTEC work by himself to ensure that he gained the qualification. In addition he would come across to the Academy at night and coach some of the 9 – 16 age groups to pass on his knowledge to the youngsters while at the same time completing the portfolio for the Coaching Certificate. To do this when

you've started playing regular league football shows tremendous dedication and he can only be commended for his efforts".

Indeed it seems that nothing can go wrong for the talented defender, loaned out to Scunthorpe in August by Blues boss Alex Mcleish, his arrival at Glanford Park coincided with a remarkable winning streak that has seen the Irons climb to the summit of League One and Pearce is happy with his progress this term;

"I've had a really eventful two years as first an Apprentice and then a Pro and I feel well prepared from the grounding I've had to hopefully do well while I'm on loan here at Scunthorpe and in doing that be able to impress Alex Mcleish enough to get myself in the first team picture at St Andrews".

# LFE BLOGS ONLINE

Catch up with a day in the life of LFE's footballing bloggers by visiting LFE Onlines official Blogs [www.blog.lfe.org.uk](http://www.blog.lfe.org.uk)

This season, current Bloggers include Toby Davis of Umea FC and Tim Hopkinson of Nottingham Forest FC. While former West Bromwich Albion Apprentice Rhys Darg has also captured a three month spell with Ange IF in Sweden on the official online Blog.

To date the lads have kept us up to speed with Swedish training regimes while our newest recruit Tim has offered an insight into life at Forest's Academy.

The interactive nature of the blogs allows readers to post 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



**Toby Davis, Umea FC**

Recently released by Plymouth Argyle, Toby Davis is continuing his football career at Swedish club Umea FC. The former Argyle man was part of the Clubs successful Youth Cup campaign last season and arrived in Scandinavia this summer. Follow Toby's progress as he settles into life at Umea FC.



**Rhys Darg, Ange IF**

At the end of last season, former West Bromwich Albion Apprentice Rhys Darg was offered the opportunity to play for Swedish Club Ange IF. Follow his blogs as he reveals all about making the transition to a foreign Club and his time in Scandinavia.



**Tim Hopkinson, Nottingham Forest**

Tim is currently a second year Apprentice at Nottingham Forest. Hailing from Nottingham, the centre-forward will be hoping to make an impact this season at the City Ground. Follow Tim's progress as he strives to be awarded with professional contract at the Championship club.



# DEVELOPMENT FUND

Set up in 2006 to provide clubs with an opportunity to invest in the delivery and support of the ASE programme the fund will once again be in operation during the 2008 – 09 season.

Last year LFE made payments to clubs totalling £175,000 and 67 of the 68 clubs engaging with LFE utilised this fund and reinvested in the ASE scheme.

Overall LFE were satisfied that the funds has been used in ways that have improved the ASE experience and we are confident that clubs will continue this trend during 2008 – 09.

The deadline for the Development Fund for the 2008 – 09 season will

be 31st May 2009 so please ensure that you submit your applications before this date to maximise the funding available.

If you need any further help or advice in relation to the Development Fund or have any ideas on how the scheme could be developed in future years please do not hesitate to contact Alan Sykes on 0870 458 9250 or e-mail [asykes@lfe.org.uk](mailto:asykes@lfe.org.uk)

# Bright Future



# for Young Bairn

Ashley Young's football career has quickly gained momentum following his time on the ASE programme.



The 18 year old signed a professional contract at Scottish Premier League side Falkirk FC, in the summer following his release by League Two Bury.

The Manchester born midfielder completed the first year of his Apprenticeship with Burnley before completing his second year at Bury before the Bairns swooped to take him north of the border.

Falkirk's Head of Youth Eddie May, has been happy with what he's seen so far from the Mancunian youngster:

"He is tidy on the ball and reads the game well; I have been impressed with the game maturity that he has shown and think he could have a bright future here"

Despite the attractiveness of a potential career in the game Ashley was also able to achieve a full Apprenticeship framework while on ASE and believes that his BTEC

National Certificate in Sport, NVQ and Level 2 Coaching certificate would have provided him with the perfect back up had he not secured a contract at Falkirk.

"When I was at Bury I actually received Bury College's Outstanding Student of the Month Award which I think shows exactly what I think of education and how it might support me in the future. I've been incredibly lucky in that I've managed to get a contract but I realise that playing football won't always be my full-time career, therefore it's vital to have a contingency plan in place. The qualifications I gained as an Apprentice will be carried forward and used when I need them."

"Not everyone makes it as a footballer and there is still a risk of a career ending injury for those lucky enough to play for a living - ensuring you plan for a life beyond the pitch is hugely important."



## Meet Paul Bartlett Regional Officer

Born in Grimsby in 1960 Paul aspired to be a Professional Footballer from an early age and when aged 15 he left school to sign for Derby County as an Apprentice.

Working his way through the Rams Youth and Reserve sides he made his first team debut in 1977 aged 17 against Coventry City. He continued to feature in a squad that contained star names such as Colin Todd, Roy McPharland and Leighton James, until injury curtailed his career in 1982. Still with fond memories of his time at the Baseball Ground, Paul believes it nurtured his love of the game:

"There were so many great characters at the club that made being at Derby such a special time for me. The camaraderie and the ties I made with fellow players, staff and fans was unbelievable."

Out of football and in his early twenties Paul quickly turned his attention back to education realising that he would need to succeed academically to enhance his career away

from football. After spending 2 years undertaking A Level qualifications he moved into the leisure industry eventually heading up a marketing and project development initiative.

During this time Paul continued his professional development and gained a degree in Economics which led him down a new career pathway into mainstream education. He went on to spend six years lecturing in the Business School at The Grimsby Institute when an opportunity arose to take up a position at Ipswich Town as the club's Head of Education. Four years later and Paul was on the move again, joining LFE as a Regional officer. As a Regional Officer Paul engages with Apprentices to ensure that they achieve a successful outcome from their time at the club, whether that is a pro contract, employment or university place.

**"It's hugely rewarding to go into a club and see the boys laughing and enjoying themselves, understanding what it means to them to be part of a club."**

Paul encourages all his Apprentices to work hard and maximise the opportunities available to them, taking great satisfaction in seeing them do well be it playing for the 1st team or pursuing secondary aims away from football.

"I firmly believe that creating a mind set of pushing yourself in whatever you do will help in the quest for a professional contract and achieving academic success. The two years go by in the blink of an eye so apply full effort from day one."

Paul believes that there are some great role models within the game that apprentices should look up to and cites Steven Gerrard and Paul Scholes as being shining examples.

Outside of football Paul's interests lie with other sporting activities including golf and tennis, while his children William (14) and Eleanor (12) keep him on his toes.

*"Ensuring you plan for a life beyond the pitch is hugely important."*





# Sheffield Wednesday & Dearne Valley College



Sheffield Wednesday's partnership with Dearne Valley College continues to provide impressive results, following their perfect 100% framework success in 2007. The Owls look set to go close to that figure again when framework results are released for the 2008 cohort.

Wednesday's Mark Beever's picked up last season's Championship Apprentice of the Year Gong which reflects not only excellence on the pitch but also academic aptitude and hard work while fellow ASE graduate Tommy Spurr has also progressed to become an integral part of the first team at Hillsborough. With the education and football programme working in tandem to produce better players and well rounded young men, the club has also moved to develop a programme for their 14-16 year old players with their year 10 and 11 cohort of students undertaking a BTEC 1st Diploma in Sport.

The course, delivered at the Clubs Middlewood Road training complex

offers the youngsters the opportunity to gain a qualification, which is equivalent to 4 GCSE's (grades A\* to C).

This prepares Wednesday's youngsters for their potential transition on to the ASE programme, which is welcomed by Academy Manager Sean McAuley who believes this initiative provides the Owls with a win-win scenario.

"The benefits are there for all to see; we are able to bring the lads into the body of the club so that when they join us as full time Apprentices they immediately feel at ease and fully integrated into the ways of the club.

We get the opportunity to work with the players on a Tuesday evening and on a Wednesday during the day obviously helping us to improve them as players. We also start to engrain the education and football balance and commitment that we'll expect from them when they sign as Apprentices and by doing this we're hopeful that we'll continue to produce players of the calibre of Mark Beever's."

This sentiment is echoed by Dearne Valleys' Claire Thomas who states "Our relationship with Sheffield Wednesday is based on a solid structure of quality assurance and support from staff who work within an Oisted grade one department at the college. Our success is also based on delivery within the vocational context of a football club which is possible due to strong relationships that have been formed between the college and club."



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# www.lfe.org.uk

### What we feature

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- Apprentice Success Stories • Apprentice Well Being • Feedback Reports
- Exit and Progression Information • Information about the ASE Programme
- Online Questionnaires • Progression 08 • Prize Draws • On-line Polls

Coming Soon : The Virtual Learning Environment • Staff Download pages

