



# touchline

News from League Football Education

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BENTLEY WEARS THE VI-178 SPEED LEGS

UNTIL THEN



VI.08. THE SPEED BOOT



# Progression '09

take the next step



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



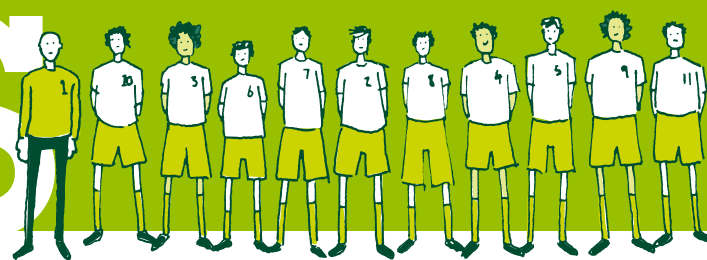
LFE Technical partner Puma



Funded by: LSC



# NEWS



## Puma Youth Alliance Round-Up



Congratulations go to Wrexham (North West), Chesterfield (North East), Swindon Town (South West) and Southend United (South East) as Puma Youth Alliance Champions of their respective Conference divisions and to Grimsby Town as winners of the Puma Youth Alliance Cup.

Despite an early set-back, Neil Woods' Grimsby Town fought back to claim victory in the Youth Alliance Cup ensuring that Queens Park Rangers finished the season empty handed.

Elsewhere, buoyed by an outstanding rearguard effort, the Red Dragons finished the season four points clear of nearest North West rivals Burnley after an outstanding run of form which saw them avoid defeat for over six months.

The Spireites took the North East Conference title with nearest challengers Hull City's final day win at Boston United proving academic.

In the South, Swindon Town and Southend United fought off fierce competition from Plymouth Argyle and QPR respectively to top the Southern Conferences.

The Robins in particular impressed averaging nearly three goals a game in a hugely successful season for Paul Bodin's men.

### PUMA Youth Alliance Honours 2008-09 Season

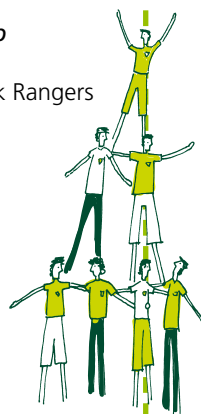
**Puma Youth Alliance Cup**  
WINNERS - Grimsby Town  
RUNNERS UP - Queens Park Rangers

**North West Conference**  
WINNERS - Wrexham  
RUNNERS UP - Burnley

**North East Conference**  
WINNERS - Chesterfield  
RUNNERS UP - Hull City

**South West Conference**  
WINNERS - Swindon Town  
RUNNERS UP - Plymouth Argyle

**South East Conference**  
WINNERS - Southend United  
RUNNERS UP - Queens Park Rangers



## 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)



## Leonardo Project Pre-Season Tours



A big thanks to all Clubs who applied for the Leonardo Pre-Season Tours opportunity, we were extremely encouraged by the hugely positive response we had from Clubs.

The Leonardo Da Vinci mobility project was set up as part of the European Commission's Lifelong Learning Programme, which aims to build a skilled workforce across Europe.

In order to enhance the ASE experience and increase the range of opportunities available for Apprentices, LFE submitted an application and successfully secured funds for a total of three Clubs to undertake a two week pre-season development programme in Sweden.

In total we received 23 applications for the three available spaces giving our panel judges no end of headaches.

After careful consideration the successful Clubs chosen to take part in this year's pre-season tours are:

- Barnsley
- Hartlepool United
- Rotherham United

LFE appreciate that this decision will be disappointing to many Clubs. However, we are continually looking to increase opportunities to Clubs in the future and strengthen our links throughout Europe.



## Bloggers sign off

LFE Bloggers Tim Hopkinson (Nottingham Forest) and Tom Aldred (Carlisle United) signed off for the summer in style with the fantastic news that each has been offered contracts by their respective Clubs.

Throughout the season Tom has kept us up to speed with the Cumbrian's Youth campaign and his own personal experiences as the Youth team skipper, but now the close season is upon us Tom's last blog reflected on an eventful few months full of awards, international call-ups and the battle to earn the top spot in the Youth Alliance League.

Tim, also an award winner at Forest this term, led us through the Red's campaign in the Premier Academy League concluding his blog with Forest's five goal demolition of Wolves in the final game of the Academy season along with the news that he had secured a professional contract at the City Ground.

You can read all of Tim and Tom's blogs at [www.blog.lfe.org.uk](http://www.blog.lfe.org.uk) and look out for new bloggers next season.



## ASE Framework

LFE hopes to be able to be in a position to reward Apprentices and Clubs for successful achievement of ASE earlier than ever before.

With results streaming in it is hoped that co-operation from Colleges and Education Providers in returning BTEC and Key Skills certificates to

LFE Head Office will speed up this process. This will allow Frameworks to be registered with SkillsActive (The Sector Skills Council for active leisure

and learning) on a much earlier basis which should reduce the waiting time for bonus payments to be made.



# “La bella partita” at FC Internazionale 1908



With achievement rates at record levels The PFA continue to pursue excellence in their delivery of the Level 2 Certificate in Coaching with Department staff enhancing their experience with trips around the globe.



Recent trips have included South Africa, Egypt and China, while Jim Hicks and his team also plan to spend time in Gothenburg this summer at the U21 European Championships.

One recent expedition however catches the eye with Phil Church, The PFA's Regional Coach in the South East returning from a fact finding visit to Inter Milan's Youth Academy the "Interello."

It offered Phil a unique insight into the structure, organisation and methods of one of Italy's most successful clubs and one that he is sure will make him a better coach.

He says: "I would recommend it to any coach as it was really useful on a number of levels. As an individual it increased my knowledge of youth football in

Italy tremendously. I wanted to foster a good relationship with the club so that the PFA Coaching Department could benefit in the future but more importantly I looked upon it as a way of sharing best practice with Inter, of sharing ideas with their coaches."

Internazionale (Inter) spend around £6-7million per year on their Academy, working with players aged 8 years old and upwards. Interestingly for Phil, Inter also has 54 affiliated clubs of varying non league standard across the country who mimic the club's coaching programme:

"The benefits to Inter are enormous. It has access to and first refusal on thousands of young players throughout Italy. It gives them a very effective recruitment process while

affiliated clubs benefit from the arrangement, as Inter provide regular coaching clinics for club coaches as well as assisting with the delivery of coaching sessions to players."

He continued: "I saw a variety of sessions delivered throughout the age ranges at the Academy. The sessions the coaches at Inter delivered were very dynamic, very progressive but not too dissimilar to what I see in Academies in my Region. What was interesting was the emphasis on coaching in game related situations. There was a real shift away from doing technical work in isolation to delivering sessions that replicated a game situation."

What was pleasing for Phil was the number of full-time coaches involved at Inter's Academy

which numbered more than 20: "There was a real commitment shown to youth coaches at Inter. All the coaches taking teams from under 13 upwards were full time and it was apparent that the Academy maintains a good continuity of coaching staff, something that could only benefit the development of their young players."

For Phil, visits to Academies such as Inter Milan's are vital: "Young players are very keen to develop their knowledge and education of the game. It's important to give back what we have learnt on our visits as players want to know what's happening in the world of coaching."

It seems that apprentices in Phil's region could well be learning all about "la bella partita" next season.



## LFE & Apprentices find Community spirit

**During the 2008/09 season LFE has been pleased to highlight the work of charity partners Boots for Africa, CLIC Sargent, Kick it Out and The Sporting Chance Clinic.**

The production of the ASE Activity pack which celebrated the activities of these organisations was launched to coincide with Kick it Out's, 'Weeks of Action' and has been utilised by a number of Clubs and Apprentices involving themselves in equality presentations, coaching sessions, school visits and the donation of used football boots.

The efforts of Apprentices and Club staff at the likes of Leicester City, Mansfield Town, Norwich City, Rochdale, Shrewsbury Town, Stockport County, Swindon Town and Tranmere Rovers amongst others has not gone unnoticed.

In addition, scores of Apprentices have acted as role models for hundreds of young children throughout the season by assisting their Clubs community trust departments aims to promote social inclusion and use the power of football to enhance learning. Notable mentions must go to those at Charlton Athletic, Grimsby Town, Northampton Town and Southampton however, Apprentices at Brentford, Preston North End & Nottingham Forest have been exemplars in this area.

Brentford's Apprentices, led by League Two Apprentice of the Year nominee, Robin Nichols, worked on a rota basis throughout last season to lend a hand with activities at the Club's Learning Zone. Players took part in mock press conferences, interviews and reading clubs to help children with learning difficulties from local schools with their literacy.

Forest's Apprentices have also been busy at the City Ground's study support centre to rally round similar projects while North End's Youth squad used their spare time last term to support pupils at the Club's Playing for Success Centre (PFS).

Apprentices worked alongside PFS staff to support pupils in

activities such as animation production, filmed interviews and team building games to help raise achievement levels in literacy, numeracy and ICT while aiming to develop self-esteem, motivation and independent learning skills.

With over 300 Apprentices engaging in charity or community based activities last season Dean Ramsdale, PNE Director of Youth, summed up nicely when saying; "It is important that young players become involved in participating in community or charity projects as it helps their personal development and gives them an understanding of how much in the public eye they are and what a major benefit and impact they can have on others".



**PRO  
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2009**

# Progression 09 – Take the next step

It's now over two months since more than 800 footballers and other elite athletes came through the doors of Progression09 – The Careers Events. Held at the Sheffield Arena and Reading FC's Madejski Stadium they were a great success.

Fantastic support came from the likes of Chris Powell (PFA Chairman), Sheffield Wednesday's defensive quartet of Richard Wood, Richard Hinds, Mark Beevers and Tommy Spurr; Reading and Ireland midfielder Stephen Hunt, Leyton Orient Striker Scott McGleish, current World Bob Skeleton silver medallist Adam Pengilly and not to mention Olympic Gold medallist Darren Campbell.

Along with these ambassadors came graduates of the 2008 Pitch2Podium testing programme in the shape of James Hoad (Ex-Watford), Alex Jennings (Ex-Leyton Orient) and Matt Elder (Ex-Everton) all of whom are now continuing assessment or have commenced funded training programmes in Olympic sports with the very real possibility of representing Great Britain in the 2012 Olympics.

This level of attendance, support and success attracted TV media coverage on the BBC, ITV and Setanta Sports with many local and national newspapers and radio stations running features.

This year also brought with it further engagement from other sportspeople. Rugby players, Swimmers and Jockeys all enjoyed the opportunity to think

about their futures and talk to organisations keen to employ those with a successful sporting background.

Although from different sports they came with familiar stories of just missing out, injury and illness cutting short promising careers or a recognition that their career would one day be over and that it was best to be prepared for that day.

They all recognised Progression09 – The Careers Events were the place to be to kick start alternative or complementary career arrangements. The events however are just the beginning...

Now is the time to take the next step and fulfil your potential by calling LFE on 0845 074 0561 and telling us what you are interested in so we can make that next step happen. You could be off to the US to coach with MLS Camps or Challenger Sports, you could be getting a gym qualification with YMCAfit or Lifetime and working at FitnessFirst, you could be running your own business or you could even be training as Royal Marine.

Check out [www.progression09.com](http://www.progression09.com) to view all the Progression Partners LFE are working with then call us so we can help you take your next step.

It has also been just over one month since Progression09 - The Assessment Trials.

Brentford's Griffin Park, Walsall's Banks' Stadium and Bradford City's Valley Parade played host to the regionally held events which saw over 250 released

2nd Year Apprentices and 1st Year Professional players from Premier League and Football League Clubs display their talents in front of a multitude of scouts.

Interest has now been registered in 76% of the players which spans across a variety of different types of footballing opportunity ranging from those at UK universities and colleges that run good standard football programmes such as Progression Partners Northumbria and Hartpury to US Universities offering scholarships and of course Professional Clubs from The Football League, The Scottish Premier League and semi professional clubs.

The trials also attracted European interest and via the Leonardo Player Placement Programme LFE will fully fund 18 players on a four month programme with Clubs up to the second tier of the Swedish football pyramid.

E-Scout, another of our Progression Partners can facilitate (free of charge) all of these footballing opportunities if you can provide them with footage of you playing over to them. They have already posted analysed Assessment trial footage on their web-based video streaming facility. Contact Chris Barton at E-Scout on 07813 623668 or [chris@e-scout.co.uk](mailto:chris@e-scout.co.uk) to place yourself in a shop window to the world.

Wherever you want to be Progression09 can help you take the next step. Call 0845 074 0561 or visit [www.progression09.com](http://www.progression09.com)



**“They all recognised Progression 09 - The Careers Events were the place to be to kick start alternative or complementary career arrangements.”**





# 100% Success for the eagles

**Crystal Palace appear to have struck the right balance when combining the football and education components of the Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence programme during the 2008/09 season.**

On the verge of 100% framework achievement on ASE, for the first time since the programme's inception, the club has maintained improved results in each of the last three seasons. While closing in on academic success the club has also preserved an excellent production line of players for Manager Neil Warnock's disposal.

Commenting on Palace's success Dave Muir (Education & Welfare Officer) says; "This year's full house is a culmination of the hard work of both Apprentices and Club staff and is even more remarkable given the obvious football distractions that many of the Apprentices have faced over the course of the season via first team commitments."

Boasting the 2009 Championship Apprentice of the Year (Sean Scannell) amongst their cohort, the Eagles also blooded five other Apprentices last season - Keiron Cadogan, Nathaniel Clyne, James Comley, Keiran Djlali and Nathaniel Pinney.

All five are tipped to enjoy bright futures in the game and will be hoping to emulate the achievements of their fellow ASE graduate Scannell.

The teenage forward cum wide man has proved a smash hit at Selhurst Park since forcing his way into Manager Neil Warnock's first eleven. Now a regular name on the team-sheet the youngster has also enhanced his football CV when representing the Republic of Ireland at U18, U21 & B levels and enjoyed an end of season trip to the Algarve with Giovanni Trapattoni's senior squad last year.

Manager Neil Warnock was happy to offer this eulogy about his young forward; "I just feel that he has achieved everything he possibly could, he shows his dedication and willingness to learn, he has got that freshness about him. I have been delighted with the contribution he has made to my squad."

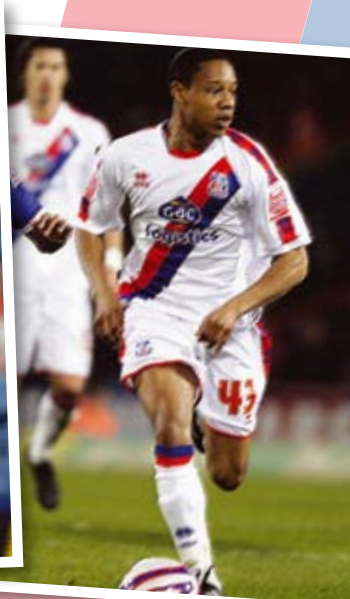
At the other end of the spectrum the club have been quick to support released players, Graeme Edwards and Kieran Thorp.

A natural academic, Edwards was persuaded to follow the route of topping up his BTEC National Certificate into the Diploma to provide himself with more UCAS points for University entry. Having achieved 15 distinctions to date he has been accepted on his first choice course, Strength and Conditioning Science (BSc) at St Mary's, University College, Twickenham.

He says: "I started thinking about my options when I was injured last season and the club have been fantastic with their support. Without the support of people like Dave Muir or LFE who made sure I progressed on to the Diploma I wouldn't be in a position now where I could go to university."

Meanwhile Kieran Thorp looks set to take up an offer of a US scholarship at The Rio Grande University, Ohio that may provide him with a pathway to studying at the prominent St Johns University, New York.

**"I just feel that he has achieved everything he possibly could, he shows his dedication and willingness to learn, he has got that freshness about him."**







# Development Fund

Set up in 2006 over £600,000 has now been made available to football clubs through the LFE development fund to provide clubs with an opportunity to invest in the delivery and support of the ASE programme.

During the last 3 years clubs have used the fund in a variety of ways to enhance their programmes and the Apprentice journey, with expenditure including the purchase of laptops, video camera's and performance analysis equipment, heart rate monitors, smart boards, outward bound days and even a club minibus.

The Development Fund will once again be in operation next season and should you require 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)

# Giving Apprentices a Sporting Chance

As announced at LFE's Club Regional Meetings Sporting Chance will this year be working hand in hand with LFE to offer Clubs and Apprentices access to a Preventative Education Programme which looks at destructive behaviour patterns, lifestyle and ways of avoiding any pitfalls that the Apprentices may face.

The unique programme will offer information on addictions, the effects of the drug of choice on mind and body and the ramifications of prolonged use. For most, the simple knowledge they will acquire through listening to the seminar could prevent their use of substances from progressing to addictive levels. However, there are a minority of about 5-9% of the population, who for various reasons will be pre-disposed to such addiction issues.

By relating personal experience, Sporting Chance's team led by Peter Kay and Chris Mordue (pictured right), give the opportunity for participants to identify certain behavioural traits and discuss their feelings and thoughts around the issue. It is not about passing judgement, rather an informative and honest look at the facts and risks.

Inspired by his own battle and triumph over alcohol, the Sporting Chance Clinic was founded in 2000 and is the brainchild of the former Arsenal and England captain, Tony Adams MBE.

It has quickly developed into one of the world's most innovative centres for the treatment of behavioural problems among professional sports people, and has become an integral tool for a number of football clubs and other sporting organisations.

Today, Sporting Chance works closely with all the games governing bodies, offering a variety of individually-tailored programmes, from one-day anger management workshops, to an intensive four-week residential course.

*"It has quickly developed into one of the world's most innovative centres for the treatment of behavioural problems among professional sports people"*







# Progression success for Chris Hanna

Chris Hanna is one of the first of a batch of ex-apprentices to take full advantage of LFE's Progression Partner programme. Successful completion of a gym instructor qualification has seen the Midlands based youngster enjoy a new lease of life outside the game.

Chris's footballing life began when he joined Walsall at the tender age of 11, his stay at the Banks' Stadium was to last a further 8 years in a spell that included an Apprenticeship and a year as a Professional.

Released at the end of the 2007/08 season after failing to make the breakthrough at first team level Chris currently plies his trade at British Gas Premier Division side Rushall Olympic but has been quick to enhance his CV away from football and re-train for the future.

With this in mind he was quick to jump on board LFE's Progression programme which has partnered with YMCAfit and Fitness First.

Chris states, "After leaving pro football my next step was always going to be entering the fitness industry it's always been an ambition of mine."

So the scheme designed by LFE, YMCAfit and Fitness First and supported by The PFA provided an ideal opportunity for Chris to pursue his ambition and enter the fitness industry.

The partnership enables Apprentice & Professional players/elite athletes that wish to retrain in the fitness industry to be assessed by Fitness First as prospective employees before they undertake a Level 2 Gym Instructor qualification delivered by YMCAfit.

Attending an assessment day in London, Chris was one of many to be put through their paces in an intensive practical session followed by an introductory session on the fitness industry designed to give candidates the opportunity to show what they had to offer as potential employees.

Sailing through the day with flying colours he then attended a 10-day intensive course held at the Fitness First's Chesterfield residential facility, where he undertook the Level 2 Gym Instructor qualification delivered by YMCAfit.

"After leaving pro football I found it tough to figure out my next steps but with the help of LFE and YMCAFit/Fitness First

they made it as simple as possible and encouraged me every step of the way."

After a successful interview with Fitness First Chris is now working as a gym instructor in his local club and is enjoying every minute of his new career, "The best part of my job is being fortunate enough to be in a position of good health and fitness to help others achieve similar or their individual goals and seeing them walk out knowing they have achieved something and bettered themselves. I would advise all young lads in a similar position to what I was in to look into the possibility of going on these courses to achieve a very good qualification."

HR Director for Fitness First Neil Tune commented that, "This programme really does represent a true partnership offer of massive benefit to the organisations involved but more importantly to the individuals who take advantage of it."



# Meet Darren Bloodworth

Born in 1967 the year after England's greatest football triumph, LFE Regional Officer Darren Bloodworth was raised in a small market town in Lincolnshire, where he quickly developed a love of the game. Listing John Charles as a boyhood hero and a keen Liverpool and Juventus fan, Darren was a promising youth player trialling at both Peterborough United and Leicester City.

Working as a painter and decorator Darren made the breakthrough as a player at Conference club Kettering Town. After a successful spell at 'The Poppies' Darren was approached by Chinese side Kui Tan where following a 6 week trial he embarked upon a two year oriental adventure with highlights including appearances against the Chinese and Norwegian national teams in exhibition matches.

On his return to England he signed a new 1 year deal with Boston United before leaving The Pilgrims to join Kings Lynn where he was to finish his non-league career courtesy of a knee injury aged just 27. Despite continuing his involvement with Kings Lynn in a coaching and management capacity, Darren's new vocation became teaching and he then spent 5 years at West Anglia College delivering the BTEC qualification.

His return to football in a full time capacity came in 2005 when he joined Cambridge United before moving on to Norwich City as the Education and Welfare Officer. With a wide ranging remit DB's responsibilities included coaching and mentoring the clubs younger players and it was through this work he became involved with LFE.

Now a Regional Officer in the South East he is responsible for over 150 apprentices as he dips in and out of nine football clubs to ensure the smooth operation of the ASE programme.

Darren's advice for the new intake of apprentices is: "Take every opportunity that is given to you over your 2 years on the programme to gain skills and knowledge that will help you in your future life."

Outside of football Darren is a keen golfer and family man who enjoys spending time with his family, and young sons Isaac and Finlay.



**"Take every opportunity that is given to you"**



# Peter Kennedy



*As a graduate of the ASE programme on Tranmere Rovers' successful Youth Development scheme, Peter Kennedy has understood the importance of planning for the future whatever it may bring.*

Having recently received the news that he will not be offered a professional contract by the club the Mersey based Keeper has taken up an offer to enrol at Edge Hill University in September as he looks to re-train as a PE Teacher.

Having attended Progression 08 & 09 "The Careers Events" the 18-year-old had already gained an insight into options available away from football. Committed to his Apprenticeship Peter achieved all elements and went a step further with his coaching qualification by achieving the Level 3 UEFA B qualification.

He says: "The ASE programme helped me plan for all eventualities so that when I knew that there was a possibility that I could be released I was in the position to successfully apply for University."

"I can't encourage lads enough to make sure they commit to all elements of the Apprenticeship managed by LFE. Both my LFE Regional Officer, Claire Wilberforce

and the coaches at my Club offered me so much support and flexibility to be able to succeed in the programme."

"The tutors were excellent, but so were my coaches, particularly John Achterberg who was a huge motivator to work hard and go for every opportunity the programme and the Club offered me during my time with Tranmere. I can't stress enough how important my qualifications were in opening doors for me."

Winner of LFE's Apprentice of the Month Award in November after a successful loan spell at Welsh minnows Colwyn Bay FC, Peter has kept his position as assistant goalkeeping coach at the Merseyside Club he started his Apprenticeship with in 2007, commended by the Club for assisting their long serving goalkeeping player/coach and Centre of Excellence coach John Achterberg, in taking sessions twice a week at the Centre.



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