

# THE MERTON WAY

MERTON FOOTBALL CLUB ISSUE 9 – 19.11.2015



# CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

# WE ARE PROPER

We are a Charter Standard club and proud of it so I thought that I had better explain what that means. Essentially this is a status that the Football Association bestows on member clubs who are able to demonstrate that they have met certain levels of competence, resource and governance. There are a number of tests that we have to pass annually. They review our Constitution and Policies on all aspects of the club. These relate to our accounting, equality, child protection and many others. They also require us to have qualified coaches within the club and at least two certificated first aiders attached to each team. With the Youth section each team manager has to have at least a Level 1 FA coaching badge.

It is important that we achieve this, not only to demonstrate that we are properly administered and run but both the leagues our teams play in, the Southern Amateur League (SAL) and the Surrey Youth League (SYL) require this of member clubs. Whilst the SYL make it a condition of membership, the SAL makes it prohibitively expensive for non-Charter Standard clubs. Club entry for the SAL is going to be doubled this year for non-Charter Standard, doubled again the next year and so on so that in 3 years it will be £1600.

There other ancillary benefits in free footballs, discounts on courses, England tickets and some free kit but they are of lesser importance. The most important is the current audit of our management and resources to properly run amateur football matches.

## INTRODUCING THE NEW CHILD WELFARE OFFICER

Every Youth football club has to appoint a Child Welfare Officer who is there to ensure that all the essential child protection measures are in place and if any parent raises concerns about any aspect of child welfare they can do so with someone appointed and qualified to deal with it. Steve Dewsbury is the Child Welfare Officer at Merton Football Club and not only runs our youth section football but deals with the qualification of all our coaches ensuring that all have good records, criminal record checks which are mandatory for all persons involved with the children and have first aid and child welfare training.

He can be contacted on [kenzoplumbers@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kenzoplumbers@yahoo.co.uk) or on 07875 275 663

**Max Herbert**



## **DISCIPLINE**

Dear Players,

It gives me great pleasure to come back to Merton FC in my new role as 'Discipline Officer' and importantly be part of a fantastic family club. (My youngest son – Oliver is the Goalkeeper for our U10s).

I joined Merton FC as a player back in 2004 with 6th Team – 2005/6 Manager for 5s where we gained promotion as Champions – I recall this was a very special time for me and all players involved.

Since then I focused on refereeing and been very lucky to have officiated at many senior games within Amateur Football circuit and been blessed with appointments with FA on Vase and FA Cup matches as an Assistant Referee.

For me – refereeing has always been about the players and has allowed me to be involved with the game I love so. I am not saying job is easy – it takes patience and a great deal of discipline to succeed – though I believe that is the case in many aspects of life.

### **How can I help you – Players/Managers (Bread of Merton FC?)**

1. By working together – Call Me if you need to discuss any incidents or have concerns about player/referee.
2. Captains – Make your appointed referee welcome by introducing yourself and asking if they need anything?
3. Captains – Act as true role model/leader on the pitch and work closely with referee to apply conduct and let referee deal with misconduct.
4. Players – Allow your captain to work with referee – no point everyone shouting – show respect and trust me you will get it back from referee.
5. Avoid silly bookings – 'Unsporting Behaviour' - these were largest volume of fines from 2014/15 season. "Walk away – dust yourself up and allow referee to handle the opposition player who has put you up in the air etc."
6. Smile – Smile – we all love the game and so do all officials.

### **How Will Fines be issued to players?**

1. Discipline Officer will be notified by county – AFA through the Online System – Whole Game
2. Fine will be paid immediately to AFA via club.
3. Players – will be notified by email of the fine and breakdown of the incident and costs incurred – Captain & Manager will be cc'd in the email as well.
4. Players will have 14 days from email notification to make payment to Merton FC – details of payment will be shown on email.
5. Player **MUST** Notify 'Discipline Officer' that fine has been paid and by what method and when. (VERY IMPORTANT).
6. Discipline Officer will update Master Tracker Report.
7. Failure to make payment on time could lead to a suspension and should this be case player will be notified and Captain and Manager made fully aware.

### **How can you help?**

Last season 2014/15 Merton FC was issued over 54 fines and 4 of these were for serious related incidents. As a result the club incurs additional penalties and costs when club exceeds different tiers of penalty points (costly to club).

I urge every player to think about how they behave and how they speak to Referee/s – can you improve? Do you think your behaviour is acceptable? Can you be an Ambassador for club and support Merton FC – to win 'Fair Play Award'?

Together I believe we can and will – thank you again for all your support – I am here to help and want to!

### **David Laughton (AFA Senior Referee/FA Coach/Discipline Officer)**

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# RAM'S HEADS UP!



1. Sometimes I wish I was a bird... so I could fly over certain people and shit on their heads
2. Please cancel my subscription to your issues.
3. Life is like a penis. Simple, soft, straight, relaxed and hanging freely. Then women make it hard.
4. It's all shits and giggles until someone giggles and shits.
5. The only reason I'm fat is because a tiny body couldn't store all this personality!

## EDITOR'S WORST KITS EVER

### Newcastle's Away Kit: 2009-10

As worn by: **Andy Carroll**  
Manufacturer: **Adidas**  
Sponsor: **Northern Rock**

Bananas in pyjamas? Or just Newcastle United players in their worst kit ever?

Thankfully it was only the away kit for the 2009-2010 season.



## TV OF THE WEEK

The Moaning of Life – Sky 1 \*\*\*

# PLAYER PROFILE



## MARC WILSON

**TEAM:** Handsome (2s)

**POSITION:** Centre Half

**BIRTH DATE:** 28.03.86

**BIRTH PLACE:** Chertsey

**PREVIOUS CLUBS:** Millmead FC, Cobham Cougars

### 1. TELL US WHO IS MARC OUTSIDE OF THE CLUB. WHAT DO YOU DO, HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOURSELF?

Away from the club, I am recently married to Thea. I am a keen runner and generally interested in fitness. I work as a bank manager, the less said about that the better.

### 2. HOW DID YOU END UP AT MERTON FC?

It was Chris Rayners fault.

### 3. WHAT WAS YOUR BEST MOMENT IN YOUR MFC CAREER TILL NOW?

Watching Ben Cook have to drink 6 pints on the bounce for consecutive infractions (6 before 6), also captaining the two's to winning the league and reaching a cup final in the same season.

### 4. CAN YOU REMEMBER YOUR FIRST GAME?

Ha ha, no :-(

### 5. IF YOU COULD PLAY FOR A PROFESSIONAL TEAM, WHICH WOULD BE IT AND WHY?

Leeds United. Only club for me.

### 6. DO YOU HAVE ANY PRE-MATCH RITUALS OR SUPERSTITIONS?

Good solid breakfast, plenty of water and possibly a gingerbread man.

### 7. LASTLY, SHARE US YOUR THOUGHTS FOR THE REST OF THE SEASON.

Difficult start for the 2's this year but we have the makings of a great squad and have started to pick up some good results. Hopefully can continue this into the new year and have a strong season.

## QUICK FIRE

**PLAYER OF THE SEASON SO FAR (PREMIER LEAGUE OR ANY LEAGUE):** Jamie Vardy

**CHILDHOOD TEAM:** Leeds United

**FAVOURITE TEAM OUTSIDE THE UK:** Hawthorne Hawks

**CHILDHOOD HERO:** Tony Yeboah

**FAVOURITE FOOD:** Italian

**FAVOURITE DRINK:** Rum & Ginger

**FAVOURITE BAND:** One Direction

**RECRUITMENT**

# **WE NEED YOU** AT MERTON FC



Just a reminder to everyone that we are still on the lookout for players at all levels to join our club. So please put the word out to friends, family, work colleagues, people you meet at the park, at the bus stop, in the betting shop or in the fruit & veg aisle of your supermarket!

# MATCH REPORTS – 07.11.15

## 3XIs

### ST JAMES OLD BOYS 2 v MERTON 4 (HT: 0-1)

**SCORERS:** Denys, DQ, Dan (2)

**MOTM:** Mike Reed for 2 outstanding assists

**DOTM:** Mike Reed for both an OG and for that foul throw

Merton marked Arturs last game for the club with a come-from-behind victory that showed excellent character and will to win.

With torrential rain hammering down all morning, late withdrawals, and a planned pitch inspection at 12 (rather annoyingly after many of the team had to leave for North London to make it for kick-off), there was considerable uncertainty as to whether the game would be on and what the squad would be. However, with no news re: cancellation combined with DQ and Ryan joining the squad after the 2's were called off (big thanks to those boys), we all arrived more or less on time and with a strong squad of 13.

The pitch had been used for the first team game immediately before ours, and the centre of the pitch was more or less underwater, with hints of grass still showing on the wings. "Get the ball wide" was the obvious cliché bingo call to look out for and was duly covered in our pre match team talk as Merton lined up 4-3-3 in an attempt to take the game to the opposition. Arturs was made captain for the day, and immediately started playing mind games with the oppo - entering into a debate with the team as to which end we should pick despite losing the toss and the oppo choosing to stay as they were. Crafty stuff, and their confusion carried into the first half as Merton dominated.

With the advantage of the wind and an actual warm up, Merton dominated from the outset without really doing themselves justice when it came to finishing and the final ball. Dave Scott flicked over from the near post after good work from Lofty, DQ tested the keeper from distance after a run from fullback, Lofty slightly miskicked when well set and perhaps had more time (although the miskick was almost a perfect cross for Denys). At the back, the back four of DQ, Vin, Mike and Mustard were looking comfortable, well shielded in particular by Neil who patrolled the lake that was CM very effectively. DQ in particular was proving to be an effective out-ball and was linking up play nicely.

As the half continued, Dan forced a good save from the keeper after a nice one-two with Denys, and Tom had a couple of chances to pick out the strikers from the right, only for the final cross to just be above, or behind the attacking players. All very frustrating, and it felt to Mike Reed, the Merton boar personified, to be the one to change the game. Receiving the ball at left back, Mike burst down the line, forcing his way through two opposition tackles and indeed players to reach the byline. His cross was partly deflected, but still had enough to allow Denys to turn the ball home from 6 yards, using his strength impressively to beat both centre back and goalkeeper to the loose ball. 1-0.

Merton hoped this would be the catalyst for more goals, but the remaining 10 minutes of the half failed to yield further reward, the best chance falling to Denys who fired over after Lofty, Dan and DQ all combined in the box. 1-0 at half time.

Lofty's half time team talk was frank as he highlighted that we had failed to use the wind and pitch as well as we might have. He also warned that the oppo had played that half very well tactically and urged us to learn from that as we played into the wind. But, with Merton having enjoyed almost all the chances, and the bulk of possession, we were confident we would press on and put the match to bed.

The second half was a totally different proposition. Merton started very flat, with none of the intensity of the first half, and whilst the opposition now enjoyed much more of the ball, the game was drifting a little aimlessly when a defensive mix-up saw Vin step out of defence to win the ball, only to slip, and then collide with Mustard whilst attempting to recover in the slippery conditions. Unfortunately this left the opposition striker clean through. He finished well, dribbling around Arturs and slotting into the net to destroy any hopes of a clean sheet for Arturs in his final game, 1-1. Worse was to follow for Merton.

After being denied a possible penalty when Denys was clipped (it did look accidental but nonetheless it did trip Denys up when clean through), Merton found themselves behind in somewhat unfortunate circumstances. A swift break from St James saw a dangerous cross driven into the box, which Mustard did well to clear to the opposing wing. However, this served only to allow a second, higher, cross to be floated in, which Mustard acrobatically cut out at the near post, diverting the ball instead into the top corner of the net past a despairing Arturs. 1-2.

Lofty reacted, bringing back on DQ and Dan, and sacrificing the hardworking Seb (who had covered the difficult swamp of a CM well) and also himself from midfield in a selfless act of managerial responsibility. Merton changed to 4-4-2 with Denys and DQ now leading the line. Merton began to get back into the game, Tom Benham doing well down the right to put in three or crosses, which couldn't quite fall to the right man in the right place, with a Dave Scott piledriver over the bar from 25 yards the best chance from these centres. However, with 15 minutes to go, the breakthrough came, and once again it was Mike "The Boar" Reed (aka Mustard) that proved the catalyst. Perhaps he was fired up by the own goal, or possibly from the embarrassment of having harassed the ref all game about foul throws before committing one of the worse foul throws ever seen on a football pitch and being pinged for it. Either way, it did the trick!

The goal was almost a carbon copy of the first, Mike surging down the line from his own half, breaking through tackles to reach the byline. Again, the cross came in, this time via a couple of half blocks and deflections, and helped on by Merton players, but a goal was certain as the ball was squared for Tom 2 yards out near the back post to slot home. It had to be a certain goal, except for the massive puddle in the six yard box which stopped the ball dead just short of reaching Tom. The keeper, thanking his lucky stars, dived for the ball, but Tom was able to react to stab the ball back across goal and DQ gleefully smashed it home. Part one of Lofty's tactically masterclass complete.

At 2-2, Merton felt the game was there for the taking. But so did St James, and as the game entered the last 10 minutes, it was the home side that were on top and creating the best chances. The best of these saw some smart interplay put their striker clean through on goal, with the game surely there for the taking. Arturs had other ideas, forcing the striker into a wild blaze over the crossbar and taking a knock for the team in the process. Obviously aware of Arturs toughness, the team resolutely ignored his limping, to stand 50 yards from him just in the opposition half for the resulting goal kick, in full faith his kicking ability would be fine (it was).

Then, as the game entered the final few minutes, Merton struck. After winning a corner following some good play down the right with Tom, Denys, Dave and DQ involved, Neil played in a delightful cross for Dan (of all people) to head (yes head) goalwards. A rare headed goal seemed inevitable, only for the keeper to claw the ball away for another corner. Undeterred the same combination struck again, this time Neil crossing to the back post for Dan to volley home from a tight angle with 3 minutes to go. Cue celebrations, another nod to Lofty's management skills, and another rejig of formation to see the game out, with DQ dropping into midfield to sit in front of the back four.

This worked brilliantly, as the newly defensively minded DQ led a counter attack in injury time, held the ball up in the area and played in Tom to stab a deserved goal past the keeper from 10 yards for a 4-2 win.

So, a great, late comeback on a difficult surface that really showed the character in the team and took us to 3rd in the league and saw Arturs off with a win. We will miss him, and wish him all the very best. Next week, a home game with leaders Nottsborough that will be a real test of where we stand this season.

One final point that needs to be made – the sportsmanship and hospitality of St James, both for the moment at 2-2 when Ryan suddenly stopped with something in his eye, and the opposition striker immediately stopped the game rather than run through on goal, and also for the sharing of their own food back at the pub when they saw we had more players than them. Both actions really appreciated and great to see a new club join the SAL.



**ECONOMICALS 7 v MERTON 0 (HT: 6-0)****SCORERS:****MOTM:** Chris Outred

Courtesy of their sole victory of the season, Merton were through to the first round proper of the AFA Cup, and Saturday's assignment was to make that count against the New Malden-based Economicals.

Yet the venue of this away fixture had been very much up in the air owing to poor weather in the week, and on Friday it was decided the game would be played on a 3G pitch at the Kings Sports Ground in Chiswick. Just for some added irony, the pitch was literally next door to the scene of the previous week's surrender of a three-goal lead. It was also the scene of some great football prior to that though, and the men from the Hood were hoping to draw from it. Insider information hinted that the Economicals were going to be a tough proposition, but having seen the efforts of Salford City in the FA Cup the night before, anything was possible.

The starting line-up had Dulanie and Dom upfront, with the midfield loaded up with Mike Elgar and Jake in the middle, along with Chris Outred and Dodd on either side. The back four was made up of Glen, Saffer Mike, gaffer Ed and the returning John Gridley. A strong XI, but not as strong as the elements, a lost coin toss pitted them against the wind. After a minute's silence, the game was underway, and it immediately became clear what a slog it would be with such a potent headwind. Clearances were coming back like boomerangs, passes were coming to a standstill, and the Economicals, well... they simply swarmed the Yellows.

Merton are a determined bunch, and for all the intense pressure they faced, they kept a lid on things for the first 10 minutes. In fact, the first real chance of the game was carved out by Dom, whose thunderous shot from just outside the box looked in for all money, before being tipped onto the bar. But that was when the tide really turned, and, my goodness, was it grizzly. Around 15 minutes in, an innocuous through ball from the left caused a bit of miscommunication in defence, and the Economicals striker was clean through. His finish was clinical and they had the breakthrough. Close your eyes for a minute, the open them, 3-0. That was how it felt for a hapless Merton, although the two goals that followed were of the highest order. One, a left-footed curler nestling in the top corner, and the other a bullet from outside the box.

Merton were shattered, but the encouragement levels went up. They knew they'd have the wind at their backs for the second period, but they couldn't let this slip anymore. The tackles flew in, the passes were kept along the deck, and, for a brief passage of play, they looked a better side. Still, they just couldn't escape their half of the field in the face of both the relentless breeze and the relentless opponents, and the fourth carried an air of inevitability about it and it came to pass too, a speculative shot catching Sam out of position. Then, a minute later, came the fifth, the result of a poor back pass by Saffer Mike. And then came the sixth – again, a sublime finish.

It was the stuff of horrors, and there were still 10 minutes to go until the break. Luckily, Merton held out without further damage, but 6-0 meant it was a quiet half-time chat.

A couple of changes were made, but the most significant of all was a change in strategy. It was decided that a high line would be the best approach for the second half, and almost straight away, it was vindicated as the Economicals speedy number seven was caught offside looking to make a break for it.

It was actually to be the theme for much of the second period. An increasingly confident Merton defence squeezed up as one, and time after time the referee obliged, with the home side seemingly unable to adapt the timing of their runs. It was brilliant to watch, and had the added advantage of minimising the gap between the Yellow defensive line and the midfield.

Yet even with this new disciplined shape, there was to be little on attack. It wasn't anything like the backs-to-the-wall stuff in the first half, but, despite the change in sides, there was still only one team who looked like scoring. Glen cleared one off the line, as did Chris Outred, and there were a couple of good tackles in the box.

Most notably though, Sam was absolutely superb. Not only was he making inspired saves, but his work as a sweeper was excellent, as he commandingly came off his line to claim any nagging through balls. All in all, it was a collective exhibition by the defence, and the greatest compliment that could be paid was that a team who were 6-0 up had become genuinely frustrated. It was thus a bit harsh on them when the seventh goal eventually did go in; a well-worked move which was nicely finished off. For the remaining 10 minutes, Merton were solid once again and at the other end substitute Alex did ever so well to create a chance for himself which just snuck past the right-hand post.

It was a spurring end to what had had the potential to be a crushing afternoon. By the time the final whistle blew, Merton were actually in the ascendancy, and thus marched off the pitch with their heads held high. Yes, it had been a mauling. But once again, there were genuine positives to be taken, and with the league now the only order of business remaining, the belief will be there that these can be translated into points.

**STARTING LINE-UP: SAM SINGER-RIPLEY(GK), JOHN GRIDLEY, MIKE TODT, GLEN PORTER, EDWARD PLAISTOW, MICHAEL ELGAR (ALEX CARVER), CHRIS DODD, JAKE HEWITT, CHRIS OUTRED, DOM PLUMRIDGE, DULANIE RICHARDS.**

## **BANK OF ENGLAND 3 v MERTON 3 (HT: 2-1)**

**SCORERS:** Kevin Locke, Mark Chappell, Martin Quinlan

**MOTM:** Martin Quinlan

A rare home game for the Mighty Merton Sixes on a soggy Hood outfield for a game against top of the league Bank of England.

The players arrived and got changed in the dark as the lights wasn't working in the lovely Hood changing rooms, although electricity wasn't issue in the first team dressing judging from the noise of the crap music being pumped out – although I think it was to rub it in!

Once the team was changed, it was down to the now infamous 5 minute quick stretch and warm up routine, this time led by Matty.

Starting line-up was as follows: Merton's new number 1, Dazza in goal, centre half pairing of Kev (Gaffer) and Chappell, full backs of George and Quinlan. Holding midfielder was John and Ty with Matty at the top of the diamond. Ram and Mario were on the wings with Pete up top. Impact subs were Kyle, Dan and new boy Mo (no not Simon!).

Smithy gave the team talk and outlined the well thought out pre-match plans to the troops and off we went.

So now to the game, The first ten minutes was a cagey affair, with both teams trying to suss out the opposition (although to be fair, we were under the cosh!). Merton defended well without causing too much attacking threat, although we looked dangerous for set pieces (more to come later!).

Unfortunately, John made a clumsy tackle on the edge of the area and the ref gave a penalty, it was tight but I think it was the right call. Up stepped Banks player to score and we were 1-0 down.

Merton struggled to get anything going, and Bank was causing problems with their midfield runners, although they were limited to half chances the Merton defence stood tall!

Eventually the pressure told and Bank scored a powerful 30 yard screamer through a crowd of players, which Darren let through his hands (sorry Darren), although no blame was attached to the stand in keeper Merton pulled there socks up and got on with it!

Then a small miracle occurred, as I said Merton looked dangerous from set pieces, a corner was floated in and John failed to connect to a header, the ball was powerfully poked home from Smithy from a yard out. The ball just crept over the line and with goal line technology and a beep of the refs watch the goal was awarded. It was a worldy of a goal and only left Smithy with another 9 to get to overturn a drunken bet made with Steve.

Half time came and went and the second half started, with a few changes. On came Mo and Kyle for Mario and Ram.

Merton started well with a few tough challenges being made and started to pass the ball well, we felt the tide was turning in the game. Unfortunately with roughly 20 mins to go Bank scored again with another long range effort from the right back and we were staring defeat in the face.

With the minutes ticking by, however the new Merton sixes kept their heads up and kept on going, which is becoming a great regular occurrence! With 10 mins left and after sustained pressure from great deliveries in the box, Chappell pocked home from a scramble and made it 3-2 – GAME ON!!

Merton looked the better team and kept pushing and every player giving 100%, which was great to see! With a couple of minutes left Merton had another corner and a great delivery found the head/body of Quinlan at the near post and the ball crept in! 3-3 amazing scenes and Merton fans went wild!

With the opposition now shell shocked, Merton even had time to create another couple of chances which went so close from Kyle and could have won the game.

Full time blew and the final score was 3-3, a great come back! It was nice to see the heads not dropping and everyone put a shift in!

Special mention to the ref, Razor Ruddock who was very good, I thought.

### **MVP:**

George had a great game and played his best game in a Merton shirt and grew in confidence.

The three defenders getting on the score sheet and showing the strikers how its done was pleasing!

This week, though I am going to give it to Mr Merton... Martin Quinlan! He had a great game and was on the scoresheet for the equaliser and left everything on the pitch! Well played!

Next week, away to our bogey side Old Wilsonians 8 let's hope we can keep the undefeated league run going!

**STARTING LINE-UP: DARREN AVEY (GK), GEORGE HALL, MARK CHAPPELL, KEVIN LOCKE, MARTIN QUINLAN, JOHN OSTOMBER, TY, MATT HASWELL, RAM MAHBUBANI, MARIO, PETER OBENG-ADU. SUBS: MO, DAN & KYLE SMITH**

# MATCH REPORTS – 14.11.15

## 3XIs

### POLYTECHNIC 3 v MERTON 0 (HT: 1-0)

#### SCORERS:

#### MOTM:

It was a pretty miserable day all round what with the dreadful news from Paris and the weather forecast but I thought it better to get out and get wet rather than just mope around. So off to Chiswick and pretty dreadful weather but their pitch is pretty good and held up well. It rained the whole game.

We started pretty well with a good shape and pressed the ball well. They are a good side but we looked to play aswell, we were a little unfortunate to go 1-0 down. The ref gave them a rather generous free kick when Weasel was too strong for their man and edged him out of the way. We did not clear their free kick well and after a bit of knockabout it hit the back of the net. The rest of the half was pretty even and we had as much of the ball as them but they were more dangerous in the final third.

Second half More rain and we started slowly and they pressed hard and made it 2-0 from a slightly fortuitous mis- strike which wrong footed our keeper and dribbled into the opposite corner. We rallied and created chances but they scored a really good goal to make it 3-0 with a move down our left cross and good finish. That was the end of the scoring and it got wetter not better.

Poly are a good side and we played better than the score line would suggest. We battled to the end and played some pleasing football along the way.

The ref, Tom Cannon had a good game with a sprinkling of slightly odd decisions. Not booking one of their players for calling him a retard and not booking one of their players for a bad foul right at the end.

Proud of our team's attitude and behaviour and overall performance Highlight for me was an excellent cup of tea at half-time with biscuits and on reflection moping around at home should not be dismissed quite so lightly as an



## MERTON 1 v NOTTSBOROUGH 2 (HT: 0-1)

**SCORERS:** Dave Scott

**MOTM:** Lofty narrowly earned the award from Neal, who competed ferociously throughout. The rest of the defence should also get a special mention for some committed defending that kept us in the game second half.

**DOTM:** An (allegedly) tough call between the Jennings strop and the "Outrageous" Dan Dive (it wasn't a dive!), before Neal made some post-match whatsapp comments which resulted in his temporary exclusion from the group for "disrespecting the boar." Obviously this can't be re-published, but the symbols of a boar and a weapon were present in what can only be described as in an incendiary sequential order. As the writer is one of the nominees, and it wasn't a dive, and because Neal's comments were post-match, the DOTM winner this week is Mr Pete Jennings, who will probably take this in good grace, but it would be infinitely more amusing if he got in a strop about it.

Despite a valiant effort Merton came up short in their 3rd vs 1st showdown with Nottsborough, with the visitors leaving with the 3 points.

With the rain pouring down on Saturday morning, a second week in a row with a pitch inspection threatened to leave Merton without a game. However, somewhat miraculously the swamp we affectionately (or maybe just factually) call the Hood managed to withstand the deluge and the game was called on. This may be the first time a home game has passed a pitch inspection, at least to this writer's knowledge!

Merton lined up 5-2-3, with the aim of containing a free-scoring Nottsborough side and using the front 3 to pressurise the opposition back four. Paul Ellis returned in goal for the now departed Arturs, Ricardo returned from his ban to start at right wing back, and Pete Jennings from injury to come into the centre midfield alongside Neal in a "dogs of war" combination. After an excellent game coming on as a substitute last week, Tom lined up as part of the front three. To complete proceedings the injured Ryan was accompanied by the long lost Walshy (Walshy!) for a season high home crowd of 2, despite the pouring rain.

Merton were fully up for the game with the reward of top spot up for grabs and started well, forcing Nottsborough back into their half without quite creating anything. That changed as Dan was played in by Tom with a neat throughball, only to be barged off the ball just outside the edge of the area. From the resulting free-kick, Lofty bent the ball in and Pete Jennings salmoneque (but without needing to really leap, so we'll go with lean) lean steered a good chance just wide of the post. A good chance missed, and unfortunately Merton were soon behind.

The visitors had started to get back into the game somewhat, with their talented right winger seeing a lot of the ball vs Ricardo, but the first goal was still something of a surprise. A Nottsborough free kick from just under 30 yards was curled over the wall and dipped over Paul Ellis, who despite wearing a non-regulation sixth stud was unable to leap out of the sizeable goal mouth puddle sufficiently to reach the ball. 0-1.

Undeterred, Merton rallied. The front free of Dave, Tom and Dan led from the front, pressing the opposition back, with Neal in particular relishing the battle in the middle of the pitch, as the majority of the play was now in the Nottsborough half. In particular one crunching and entirely fair tackle from Neal really showed the level of intensity (and was rewarded with a retaliatory tackle that earned the opposing player the first yellow card of the game).

Merton continued to press. Vin played a delightful through ball in to Dan, who should have done better with the chance from the corner of the box - more composure needed! However, the home side levelled as the building pressure and succession of free kicks finally paid off. A somewhat mysterious/contraversial indirect free kick award for handball saw Lofty lift the ball into the box. The ball was only half cleared, and Dave Scott reacted fastest to stab the ball back towards goal. Although slightly mishit due to the lack of reaction time the slight bounce was enough to beat the goalkeeper's despairing dive and the ball nestled into the corner. 1-1.

Nottsborough responded well, playing their way down the line and crossing for a great chance to go back ahead, only to put the ball over the bar, before Merton reasserted themselves, and ended the half back in the ascendancy. At half time having got the goal back, and being the dominant team for the last 15 minutes of the half, the team really felt that they could go on and win the game. Lofty made one change with the soaking wet Dan (having ended up in the goalmouth puddle just before halftime) replaced with Yomi upfront.

Unfortunately, the second half didn't quite start in the same manner that the first half ended. Nottsborough raised their level, and Merton just lost a little of the intensity they had in the first half, struggling to clear their lines and get into the opposition half. When they did finally create a great chance on the counter, with Tom released down the right, the referee rather frustratingly brought play back to award a freekick to Merton. Seb came on for the hamstrung Vin, slotting in at full back as Mustard moved inside. This did little to halt the Nottsborough charge, and they took the lead again - some sharp passing drawing first Mustard and then the covering Lofty out of position before a cross into the box fell to the feet of a



Nottsborough forward to guide home through a crowd of players. 1-2.

Merton were looking tired now, with gaps appearing for the opposition to exploit, and a tired tackle from a Pete Jennings desperate to come off saw him booked. Indeed, such was his desperation to reach the rest promised by the touchline, he had a full-on hissy fit as the ref tried to talk to him and take his details. In his own words, "he just wanted to come off." Unfortunately, Ricardo also was feeling the effects of a first game back after a few weeks out, and wanted to come off as well. With Vin injured, Dan came on for Pete and Ricardo was told to soldier on, perhaps taking that a little too literally when he followed Pete into the referee's book with a forceful lunging tackle that dumped the opposition winger to the floor.

The change did little to alter the flow of the game, with the visitors continuing to dominate and moving the ball very well to exploit the tired legs. Some manful and even borderline heroic (but without the desperation the word implies) defending from the back three of Lofty, Mike, and Mike - or as Mustard put it, "Sniffing out danger or SOD" kept Merton in the game. When even that wasn't enough, Paul Ellis was there, with one particularly outstanding point-blank save from a shot that no-one could quite believe hadn't gone in.

At the other end, Merton couldn't quite fashion an equaliser on the rare occasions they could get forward. Dan robbed the centre back momentarily on the edge of the box only for a recovering tackle / "outrageous dive" (depending on who saw it, but it should be noted those in the "dive" camp were generally furthest away!) to snuff out the danger. A late rally forced a number of corners and free-kicks but nothing clear cut and the game ended with Nottsborough ultimately as deserved winners.

Despite the defeat, Merton can take great heart from the first half performance, the overall commitment level and the knowledge that they gave the league leaders a proper game. All of which isn't actually that heartening vs some actual points, but with some players still missing and some still short of match fitness, Merton can certainly expect to improve before we play the return fixture. Next up, an away game at Old Blues and a chance to bounce straight back from this defeat with a win.

### MERTON 0 v ACTONIANS ASSOCIATION 4 (HT: 0-1)

#### SCORERS:

**MOTM:** Sam Singer-Ripley

After the disappointing drubbing we received from Economicals in the AFA Cup last week (we that is best forgotten), it was back to the league campaign and the home tie against Actonians Association. Having defeating us on their home turf already this season, we knew we were in for a tough day.

There was concern that we were going to be without a referee until on the stroke of KO he finally arrived being accompanied by a brolly due to the standard British weather at this time of the year. Following a minutes silence to pay respect to the families that lost loved ones following the attacks that took place in Paris, the game was finally ready to get underway.

We lined up slightly different this week. It was clear during last weeks' game, and other previous performances for that matter, that we were getting over-powered in the midfield and also struggling with support defensively. We decided to play a 5-3-2 formation with myself and John Gridley playing as wing backs. A number of our regulars were unavailable so we welcomes Aaron back into the mix along with Sevan Mutafyan who decided that he had spent enough time away from the game! Steve Burchell also helped us out and thanks needs to go to Clive (5s Manager) for allowing us to use him.

We starting brightly and kept out shape for the majority of the first half. We were compact and creating enough chances to stay in the game. Actonians had the better opportunity however Sam was at his best to prevent them from taking an early lead. His impressive form continued throughout the first-half. The one goal that we did concede was on the counter-attack after a goal kick was intercepted, with Actonians taking a 0-1 lead at half time.

The second period was one that the referee, and me personally, would like the forget quickly. We found ourselves 3-0 down following some good play by the visitors however we were made to finish the game of with a man less following my sending off for two bookable offences. The first was for an aerial challenge where I 'apparently' caught their number 17 with my studs on my way down. Following a number of incidents where this particular player over reacted it was clear that there was nothing in it however following a conversation between the player and the ref, I was brandished with my first yellow card as a result of the player saying that I caught him... ridiculous!

My second yellow was a stupid one, the referee might have well been wearing blue and white as nothing was going our way. We were getting punished for every challenge that we made but the visitors got away with it. This included one player raising his hands to Ryan and another for taking Sam out when claiming a loose ball. Back to my second yellow that resulted in my dismissal – a decision was given against us for a silly tackle and out of frustration I kicked the ball away. The ref claimed that I kicked it 'miles away' however five second later the player had the ball in his hand ready to place the free kick.

The game finished 4-0 however with a little more work on the 5-3-2 formation I think the wins will start to come. Next week we travel to Dulwich to take on Alleyn Old Boys where nothing but a win is

**STARTING LINE-UP: SAM SINGER-RIPLEY (GK), JOHN GRIDLEY, GLEN PORTER, STEVE BURCHELL, EDWARD PLAISTOW, , CHRIS DODD (SONNY KENNEDY), AARON ACKERMANN (RYAN BURCHELL), JOE PLUMRIDGE, CHRIS OUTRED (SEVAN MUTAFYAN), DOM PLUMRIDGE, DULANIE RICHARDS.**

### OLD WILSONIANS 1 v MERTON 2 (HT: 0-1)

**SCORERS:** Peter Obeng-Adu, Kyle Smith

**MOTM:** Kevin 'Smithy' Locke

The 6th XI took their unbeaten league record to an away day in Hayes and came back victorious with another strong team display.

Wilsons will likely wonder how they didn't at least get a point out of this match, given they probably had 60/70% of possession. But Merton 6s have a fighting spirit and a team togetherness that will not be beaten, and we carry enough of a threat up front that we take our chances when they come. We were much more clinical in attack... well, that is apart from Matt Haswell, who again filled his shorts rather than the back of the net when through 1 on 1.

The pitch was in surprising good nick given the weather, and with Matt Paxton newly leading the line, and Chris Spencer back in defence I knew somehow that we'd come out victorious. Kevin did his usual inspiring team talk, making sure everyone knew our keeper was a liability and not criticize him too much. Thankfully Quinlan wasn't listening and had a really solid game in the net and was unlucky to concede at the end.

The 1st half ebbed and flowed, errors abound by both sides as they got to grips with the conditions, but it was clear Merton were more willing to put bodies on the line – many last ditch tackles and strong play in midfield/defence kept Wilsons at bay, and at the other end first Dan Plaistow, then Peter and finally Matt all should have done better and at least tested the keeper – before a good interchange between Matt and Peter put the latter in and he finished well. As much as we deserved.

At half time the elements went against us and suddenly it was blowing a gale in our faces, with Wilsons going slightly down hill we knew it was going to be a tough test. Early on in the half however we got the 2nd goal that proved crucial, Matt Haswell playing a superb ball down the line to Matt Paxton who crossed accurately to Kyle Smith who finished well.

From this point on it was pretty one way traffic, Merton struggling to get out of our half in the conditions but managing to repel all of Wilsons attacks. The back 4 played superbly again, and with John "the Beast" Katandika and Ty providing a shield in front we never looked in danger of conceding... there was more chance of us coming down with pneumonia. . When we did concede there was a touch of misfortune, the Wilsons cross looping over Martin off the skiddy turf and straight to the head of the wilsons midfielder.

That was 3 minutes to go and it was a nervy 3 minutes but we held firm and celebrated the 3 points in the warm bar!

Another game when any number of the squad could have a shout at man of the match. Mentions go to Matt Paxton who led the line well in his first game (two assists) and to John, who was told by the ref when conceding a foul for what looked like a perfectly good tackle that he 'too hard'... but MOM for me goes to Kev 'Smithy' Locke – who made a number of excellent tackles and one goal saving header.

A big thanks to El Presidente Terry Baker for supporting us on the sideline



# YOUTH SECTION – 14.11.15

## U12s PICTURE GALLERY



## U13s PICTURE GALLERY





# UPCOMING FIXTURES – 21.11.15

## **1XIs**

Old Salesians v Merton  
(League)

## **2XIs**

Honourable Artillery Company v Merton  
(AFA Cup)

## **3XIs**

Old Blues v Merton  
(League)

## **4XIs**

Alleyn Old Boys v Merton  
(League)

## **5XIs**

IBIS Eagles v Merton  
(League)

## **6XIs**

Merton v Polytechnic  
(League)

# UPCOMING EVENTS

# QUIZ NIGHT

Merton Football Club will be holding '**That's The Merton Quiz**'  
– it's first major event of the season on

**SATURDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2015**

The quiz will start promptly at 7pm and be finished by 9.45pm  
(including a break for dinner/curry at 8pm)

As always it is £10 per person (curry included) and teams of 5!  
to be reserved directly with myself or Max (dad).





























































**ALL TEAMS** should be represented and I think perhaps a  
committee team too, who would ever like to captain that??

Please spread the word and help get some teams booked in for an excellent night.....

Book at the bar or email: [max.herbert@btinternet.com](mailto:max.herbert@btinternet.com)

*Man City v Liverpool in bar from 5pm!*

# TOP GOALSCORERS 2015/16

| Player             | Key:  |   |  League Goals |  Cup Goals |   |   |
|--------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dulanie Richards   |    |    |                |              |  |  |
| David Quainton     |    |    |                |              |  |  |
| David Donovan      |    |    |                |              |  |   |
| Denys Zhurbiy      |    |    |                |              |  |   |
| Richards Gibbs     |    |    |                |              |  |   |
| Nick Papanastatiou |   |   |               |             |   |   |
| Oli Ross           |  |  |              |            |   |   |
| Darcy Yates        |  |  |              |   |   |   |
| Yomi Aladade       |  |  |   |   |   |   |
| Dan Gridley        |  |  |   |   |   |   |
| Richard Gibbs      |  |  |   |   |   |   |
| Malcolm Kandulu    |  |  |   |   |   |   |
| Matt Paxton        |  |  |   |   |   |   |
| Dom Plumridge      |  |  |   |   |   |   |
| Mark Chappell      |  |  |   |   |   |   |
| Pete Obeng-Adu     |  |  |   |   |   |   |
| James Tilley       |  |  |   |   |   |   |
| Lewis Ackermann    |  |  |   |   |   |   |
| Kelvin Aboidyn     |  |  |   |   |   |   |
| Arnold Collier     |  |   |   |   |   |   |

| Player             | Key: |  League Goals |  Cup Goals |
|--------------------|------|--|--|
| Alex Gladkow       |      |               |  |
| Ivan Gladkow       |      |               |  |
| Matt Haswell       |      |               |  |
| Dan Kelly          |      |               |  |
| Kevin Locke        |      |               |  |
| Chris Outred       |      |               |  |
| Elliot Phipps      |      |               |  |
| Tony Postlethwaite |      |               |  |
| Martin Quinlan     |      |               |  |
| Mike Reed          |      |               |  |
| Tom Rowe           |      |              |  |
| David Scott        |      |             |  |
| Kyle Smith         |      |             |  |
| Reece Smith        |      |             |  |
| Marc Wilson        |      |             |  |
| Dwayne Bedford     |      |  |           |
| Chris Dodd         |      |  |           |
| Vincent Driver     |      |  |           |
| Alex Perrin        |      |  |           |
| Glen Porter        |      |  |           |
| Liam Stevens       |      |  |           |
| Ryan Stevens       |      |  |           |



# TOP GOALKEEPERS 2015/16

| Player           | Total Points | 1st Team | 2nd Team | 3rd Team | 4th Team | 5th Team | 6th Team |
|------------------|--------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Arturs Ivanovs   | 5            | 0-1-1    |          | 0-0-1    |          |          |          |
| Alex Herbert     | 6            | 1-0-0    | 0-0-3    |          |          |          |          |
| Dharmesh Vaghela | 1            |          |          |          |          |          | 0-0-1    |
| Sam Ripley       | 1            |          |          |          | 0-0-1    |          |          |
| Total            | 13           | 3-3-1    | 0-0-3    | 0-0-1    | 0-0-1    | 0-0-0    | 0-0-1    |

## Key:



Clean sheets



Penalty saves



1 Goal conceded

# MERTON FC CLUB SHOP

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