

THE FINAL WHISTLE BULLETIN



THE HOME OF
**FEMALE
FOOTBALL**
IN NORTH HERTS

A message from the chairman...

Happy New Year everyone! I hope you are all well rested and have enjoyed the festivities, and those of you that have had plans disrupted by Covid are recovering.

It's been a great first few months of the season, for the most part with no Covid disruption. Our pitches at the Priory have also held up well which means a lot of football has been played with the promise of much more in 2022. The good news is that as we stand while the FA updated their Covid guidance for grassroots football in December, there was very little impact on the game as a whole. While the round of fixtures on 18th December were cancelled by the league, we understand this was just a precautionary measure with Christmas so close and we expect training and matches to be carrying on as normal in January. As has seemed so often to be the case, it's an uncertain world and we'll keep you up to date if anything does change.

In this Newsletter you'll find some updates on fundraising, the committee, and plans for the site at the Priory, as well as some team updates from the first part of the season and more!

Looking forward to seeing you all in 2022.

Simon White – Hitchin Belles Chairman

Club news

A few bite sized bits of news to keep you updated on various things:

Club website: This has recently been updated and rebranded and you can find it [here](#) – it contains news, team information, and the club shop, which brings us on to...

The Club shop: Not just where you pay your subs, but also where you can buy a range of club kit, plus a limited supply of club branded hats, water bottles, pens and masks! Click [here](#) to find out more. Once ordered, you will deal direct with our suppliers, MVI, reducing turnaround times. When it is confirmed that your order is ready, pick up is from their shop in Lower Stondon.

Goalkeeper training: We are delighted to have become a partner club with Just4Keepers. This partnership provides goalkeeper specific training for the current or budding keepers in the club. Hopefully those interested are already aware and have been able to make one of the sessions held to date – if not please do get in touch your team manager who will be able to send you the details.

Priory developments: As you will have seen from match days, the build of the 3G is well underway and currently on schedule – still expecting to be finished in March 2022.

We will also be meeting with the School later this month to discuss exciting new plans to improve the pitch quality, expand the number of available pitches and even build a new club house and changing room facilities...watch this space!



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Fundraising and events

U12s Christmas tournament:

On Friday December 17th, instead of our normal training sessions our U12 group (now consisting of 4 teams) took part in an intra-squad tournament. Eight teams battled it out for victory, with (against all odds..) Everton coming out as victors. The event also raised nearly £300 for our club charity, Refuge.



Santa run:

Tom Rance, our U8s coach, has recently completed a 25 day Santa run challenge, raising money for Stand-by-me Bereavement Support. This involved replacing his daily advent calendar chocolate with a 2.5km run. The U8s gave Tom some moral support and joined him for one of the runs at a training session! Tom has raised over £1,500 and you can still donate to the cause at his [Just Giving page](#).



Belles Christmas Sixes:

Just before Christmas we ran a club Christmas event at the Herts FA. Girls from our U8s up to our U14s were all involved, playing a series of matches against each other. The U8s were undeniably the stars of the show, with the older girls all wanting to play with them! It was great so see so many girls from different teams and age groups playing and enjoying their football together.

Thanks to all the coaches who volunteered to run the 90 minute event, which we now plan to run every Christmas! Next year we will be able to host it on the 3G at our Priory home ☺



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Committee update

Committee member news:

We'd like to thank Lindsey Shirley from the U13 Whites for volunteering to join the Safeguarding team headed up by Lisa to become CWO assistant.

Committee Vacancies:

There are still a few vacant roles on the committee - if you are interested in any of these and wish to find out further details, please speak to Simon White or Jason Slade:

- Social media officer
- Development officer, for ages 12-18
- Fundraising co-ordinator

Club contacts

Contact details for all the committee members and team managers are on our website (along with lots of other useful documents including our club ethos, safeguarding policy and code of conduct).

Some of the contacts are also set out below:

Simon White
Chair
07804 635569

Jason Slade
Secretary
07976 671631

Lisa Tollervey
Welfare Officer
07884 261475

John Martin
Newsletter Editor
07591 571498

Meet the volunteer



Name: Simon White

Club role: U12 Blues Coach & Club Chair

Why did you volunteer? initially helping out occasionally refereeing for my eldest daughter's team. At the end of the season there was a large group of girls needing coaches to start teams and I haven't looked back since!

Favourite football moment: Euro 96 tournament

Worst footballing moment: 2010 World Cup against Germany

What are you outside of the Belles? Contract Manager for an engineering company

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Season summaries

In this section we have some brief summaries of the season so far from some of our teams.

U16 Blues



The Blues sit third in their division, having suffered a mid-season dip before ending the year with two wins. The Blues started the season brightly with four straight wins, scoring plenty of goals. The winning run ended against a strong Ruislip side who were equally undefeated with the Blues suffering a 3-0 loss. The Blues picked themselves up, winning the next two games, before a run of only 1 point in 3 games. A tight tussle against Sandy Tigers started the rot and missed chances cost the girls against Berkhamsted and Toddington.

However, the Blues then got themselves off the ropes, travelled to league leaders Ruislip and won 2-1, becoming the first team to beat them in competitive play this season (equalling the same feat from last season!). A final win against Garston keeps the pressure on Ruislip and Sandy who have both been beaten by the Blues this season. Hannah Baynham and Aria Clarke are pushing each other in the scoring stakes with 7 apiece. A tight end to the season awaits!

U14 Whites



As we moved up to 11-a-side the 'new Whites' were formed by a merger of the previous u13 Whites and Reds teams, with the new Whites starting life in U14 Division 4. The new team has thrived - a fantastic team ethic being rewarded with a series of good results. The team currently sit 2nd in the division with it all to play for with 7 league games to go.

U14 Sapphires



A great first half of the season for the U14 sapphires. They've played 10 league games, won 7 lost 3 and currently sitting top with 6 games to go. They reached the quarter finals of the Herts county cup which is fantastic considering all the players are playing up a year. They now look to the new year where they head into the league shield. Well done girls keep up the great work.

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U13 Whites



The first half of the season has been a successful one for the “re-modelled” U13 Whites. After a change around of teams in the age group, all part of the club’s development plan, the new team started fast with a 100% record after 5 games scoring 24 goals in the process. The next 6 game have seen 1 draw and 2 defeats among 3 wins, leaving the team sitting in second at the Christmas break.

Stand out performances were a 2-0 win against Goffs Oak, with late goals sealing the win after a great team defensive effort, and a thrilling 4-2 loss to Meninas, the division’s dominant team. A tremendous performance saw a fight back from 2-0 down, only to fall to a couple of late goals. Roll on 2022!

U12 Blues



U12 Blues have had a very tough first half of the season. Moving up to 9-a side and into division 1 the girls have found positive results hard to come by. Despite this the effort, application and improvement has been brilliant to see with all of the girls stepping up to the challenge and getting better and better each week. They head into a well-deserved Christmas break looking forward to the league cup competition in January. Thanks to all the parents for the support and many early Saturday mornings all around Hertfordshire.

U12 Whites



The U12 Whites welcomed four new players this season as they made the move up to competitive 9-a-side football. The girls have had a tough start in the league but their unfailing enthusiasm and love of playing has kept them going through thick and thin. Coaches Chris and Simon couldn’t be more proud of their perseverance and positive attitudes. They are working hard towards getting some wins under their belts post-Christmas in the league shield.

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U11 Whites



U11 Whites are one of the newest Hitchin Belles teams. We started training together only a few months ago and have quickly built up a squad big enough to start league games in January 2022. What has impressed me the most about this group, is the speed in which they have become a team. Their strong spirit, coupled with great ability, means that after only a short amount of time together, they're ready for action. It's going to be an exciting 2022 for the U11 Whites and I'm proud to be part of the team.

U10 Blues



The U10s Blues have had a really good first part of the season, back when the sun was shining in September we entered our first

tournament which was in St Albans, the team narrowly missed out on a semi-final place with 2 wins and 2 draws in our five games. The performances in all the matches gave the team a lot of confidence going into the league matches.

The league started and the team's form and skill has been improving steadily. With many close wins and only two defeats the team have been showing great teamwork and commitment. The passing has been coming on immensely as has the understanding of how to defend and overall positional sense. The side have been really quick to understand the differences between 5 and 7 a side.

All the girls should be really proud of their contribution to date, we all really look forward to the second half of the season.

U9s

Our U9s Belles are largely Development level and have continued to focus on enhancing core skills during training sessions with more ball possession and running forward against opponents. We have seen improved teamwork with confidence having greatly improved. This is the second season these girls have played together, forming friendships and a foundation for the future.

Whilst the beginning of this season was challenging, the girls are bringing into matches their training ground skills and lovely appetite to play. We do not focus on the final score, but the progress of core skills and allowing the girls to play in different positions which will continue during part 2 of the season. The award for the Most Improved Player looks set to be hotly contested..!