

# AC Oxfgangs FC Under 15s *Blues* Match Reports Season 2011/12

Malcolm Henderson

Sunday 19 February 2012

South East Region FA D3 League Cup Section B

(Report courtesy of N. Barry)

## The Blues Get Off To a Winning Start

**ACO Blues ... 2 Craigroyston ... 1**

Half-Time 1-0

**Scorers:** Mitchell, Harry

**ACO Man of the Match:** Although the *Blues* were not at their best today there were still some good performances. Matty was secure at the back, Harry won the game with a goal that was all about confidence and composure, Chris the goalie did not put a foot wrong and brought off a great save with the scores level just before the winning goal, but my MOM today was **Jacob** who managed to get forward and even had a shot at goal.

Not a classic match but the *Blues* did just enough to get the points in this League Cup encounter against a physical Craigroyston side.

The opening exchanges were quite muted until Matty burst down the right flank but shot over having beaten two defenders. But after 15 minutes ACO took the lead. Scott won the ball deep in his own half and sent a long ball down the middle to Mitchell who turned the defender and ran on strongly and struck a low shot into the corner of the net, 1- 0.

ACO were unable to build on the lead with too many passes going to the opposition and whilst Craigroyston came more into the game, the *Blues* defence kept them at bay and any shot that did get through was well held by Chris.

### Half-Time 1-0

The second half was initially a similar pattern with Craigroyston coming more into the game and ACO finding it difficult to play on the boggy pitch. However, Jacob was able to find some space down the right and shimmied his way through the oppositions' defence before shooting straight at the keeper. Then from a free kick just inside the opposition half a long ball was sent into the box but Charlie B just failed to get enough contact. Jacob again placed a ball down the right, to Charlie B who turned the defender and sent a through ball through for Harry but the Craigroyston defence played the ball out. From the ensuing corner, Callum's shot deflected out to Charlie C who hit the ball into the net but he was adjudged to be offside.

Craigroyston though were beginning to dominate possession and territory and equalised when ACO failed to clear the ball and it broke to their striker who hit an unstoppable 20yds shot high into the net, giving Chris little chance, 1-1.

Coaches Ken and Malky decided to change tactics and brought Andrew back on in defence and pushed Matty into midfield and moved Harry upfront. Mitchell then had a strong run down the left flank before shooting towards the near post with Harry and Jamie waiting in the middle. Chris then came to ACO's rescue as he dived to his left to deflect a strong shot past the post.

From the corner, the ball was cleared by Jamie who sent a long pass to Harry who dummied and turned his defender and sprinted ahead of the chasing cover and placed ball into the bottom left corner.

### Full-Time 2-1

Though not a convincing victory, two excellent finishes and some inspirational substitutions and tactical changes meant The Blues got off to a great start in their League Cup campaign.

## The Blues Make Hay in the Mud

**Peebles ... 3 ACO Blues ... 5**

Half-Time 3-1

**Scorers:** Harry (2), Mitchel, Jamie, Scott

**ACO Man of the Match:** It was a hard choice this week as everyone played above themselves but this week it must go to **Harry** who scored two vital goals when he played up front for a short spell that brought us victory. He also worked tirelessly in midfield.

It was a relief when the thaw arrived and the *Blues* travelled down to Peebles to play the away game against a team who have only lost three times this season and we had beaten earlier with our best performance so far. The *Blues* had many call offs but still travelled with 12 - Chris filling in as our outfield reserve.

It was Matty's birthday and he was hoping for a large present, but unfortunately it was he who gifted an opener with a clearance into the top corner off the top of his head. There was nothing Ewan could do about it and the lead was doubled following a corner that was not headed clear and appeared to hit Nicky's back before bouncing over the line.

The boys though did not allow their heads to drop and following a poor throw out from the Peebles keeper Mitchel pounced and the *Blues* were back in the game. The jubilation was short lived as Peebles scored again from a corner that was not dealt with properly. At 3-1 down Chris (goalkeeper) was introduced for Nicky at right wing and he moved to right back. This seemed to steady the play and Jamie hit the bar in a good move down the left. Ewan ended the half with a great save low to his left.

### Half-Time 3-1

The second half started brightly for the *Blues* with Jacob reintroduced at left back. Andrew in particular was more determined in the tackle as were Scott, Harry and Jamie in midfield. The chances started to come and Jamie volleyed in to close the gap.

There then followed a period of sustained pressure where Chris came close with a header and sliding in at the far post. Harry had a shot saved well by the Keeper at close range, Scott sent a piledriver just over and just as we were thinking it was going to be Craigroyston all over again, Harry moved up front and helped himself to two quick goals and the *Blues* were ahead.

They pleasingly did not sit back and Scott rounded off a move involving Mikey, Paul and Chris. Andrew, Matty, Jacob and Nicky mopped everything up at the back aided by Ewan who was finding the ball sticking like glue to him and then Chris left the field for a well earned rest.

The *Blues* comfortably saw out the match with Harry moving back to midfield.

### Full-Time 3-5

This was the *Blues* best second half performance and we could easily have scored more. Ewan was solid, Chris did well on the wing and they all gave Matty a great birthday present.

Sunday 5 February 2012  
South East Region FA League Division 3

## The Blues Let Themselves Down

Spartans Blacks ... 6 ACO Blues ... 1

Half-Time 5-0

Scorer: Max

The *Blues* had high hopes going into this game having thrown away the previous match between the sides in a mad last five minutes. Ewan was making a start in goal and the *Blues* started brightly but were shot shy and coupled with some very slack defending turned round 5-0 down.

With Matty returning to defence for the second half the improvement came with Max reducing the deficit and Spartans adding another late on.

A bad day at the office and a hard training session promised for the following week. In fairness we played on the new Astro with the grandstand and it is not at all suitable for Astro trainers that some of our boys were playing with.

Sunday 22 January 2012  
South East Region FA League Division 3

## The Blues Edge Out Haddington in an 8 Goal Thriller

ACO Blues ... 5 Haddington Athletic ... 3

Half-Time 3-1

Scorers: Jamie (3), Scott, Harry

**ACO Man of the Match:** There were some great performances today all over the pitch but my MOM goes to **Andrew** who was a rock at the back.

The game was at 1pm on the Astro to allow those who wanted to go to the Edinburgh game to do so. It is also warmer earlier in the day as the sun greeted us as the game started against a Haddington who we had beaten well before Christmas.

However, despite starting with a strong side, the Blues struggled against a strong Haddington side. Charlie made some progress down the right and Mitchell brought out a good save from the keeper from a great long ball from Andrew as did Matty when clean through. Matty was also tripped just outside the box in the referee's opinion but the shot went wide from Harry.

Then, against our more recent games, Paul and Jamie came on for Harry and Elliot and the effect was immediate as Paul took a close in free-kick which the keeper saved well. In addition to Jamie's rebounded effort, Scott calmly found the net at the 3rd attempt.

The second goal soon arrived as Charlie found Jamie down the right and his cross to the far post flew into the net. Then came a great team goal as the ball moved from Scott to Charlie and his cross was met by Jamie who chipped the keeper and although at the time I thought Max may have got the final touch it was still the third goal and I have been overruled by the adjudication panel.

Just as it looked that we might go in at half-time with a good lead Haddington struck with a great shot from out on the left that flew into the roof of the net giving Chris no chance.

**Half-Time 3-1**

The second half saw the rest of the squad introduced but the fluency was not there as Haddington started to take control and escaped the offside trap to add a second. Just as the team were settling there was a poor pass out of defence straight to a Haddington player who made no mistake and the game was level.

Harry and Elliot were reintroduced but Chris had to pull off two great saves to keep the Blues level. Then Harry and Scott released Matty who broke through the middle and instead of placing his shot straight at the goalie

squared it for Jamie to score. There was a hint that Jamie may have been offside but this made up for the offside goal that was disallowed that wasn't.

Haddington then piled forward and won a corner which was well defended and Mitchell advanced holding the ball up well releasing Jamie whose shot was well saved only for Harry to score the rebound.

There was still time for Scott to shoot narrowly wide that Mitchell just failed to connect with.

### **Full-Time 5-3**

In the end a good win but hard fought and the team showed good character to come back and secure the win. Everyone contributed to what turned out to be good entertainment for the support.

**Sunday 8 January 2012**

**South East Region FA League Division 3**

(Report courtesy of N. Barry)

## **Leith Overcome the Blues**

**ACO Blues ... 2 Leith Athletic '97 ... 5**

Half-Time 1-1

**Scorers:** Scott, Charlie C

**ACO Man of the Match:** There were several good performances today but **Scott** put in a great shift and scored a fabulous goal and so is MOM.

Leith provided the opposition in the first game of the season back in August and on that occasion the *Blues* were caught cold, being down six nil at half-time. However, today the *Blues* were out to make amends and started the game strongly with Paul making a welcome return in midfield. It was Paul who sent a great ball to Charlie B down the right where he won a corner.

A few moments later ACO's positive attitude paid off. Elliot won the ball in midfield and he fed Harry on the left wing and then sent a ball into Scott who, with his back to goal, turned quickly and dispatched a 20 yard drive into the far corner of the net. True skill which was described by coach Ken as "Van Persiesque".

ACO pushed for a second, but against the run of play Leith equalised. A high punt upfield went over the ACO defence and goalie Jamie was unable to get to the ball in time and the onrushing Leith forward ran on and put the ball in the open net.

ACO made further chances before the break with Scott and Mitchell both winning corners after good work down the left and Elliot, having nodded the ball past the last defender, saw his shot just go past the left hand post.

Leith also pushed forward and were unlucky not to score when a shot hit the bar, but in general the opposition forwards were well contained by Matty and Andrew, Jacob and Nicky.

### **Half-Time 1-1**

ACO made a change for the second half with Jamie moving into attack as Paul took over in goal. Hamish and Max replaced Nicky and Jacob.

However, in the space of a few minutes early in the second half ACO lost concentration and let Leith grab three quick goals. Firstly a header from a curling corner kick was nodded in and then a dipping shot deceived Paul as the ball swirled into the net. Then from a long range free kick, a Leith forward took advantage of a free header and nodded the ball past Paul.

However, ACO showed good commitment and rallied to produce a number of opportunities in the final quarter of the game. Matty was mopping up at the back and Harry worked tirelessly in midfield to push ACO forward and was linking well with Jamie and Charlie C who had returned after a bout of tonsillitis.

It was Charlie C who scored ACO's second goal when Jamie fed him a nice pass down the left and he let fly with a crisp left foot strike that gave the Leith keeper no hope of reaching it. Both coaches agreed that this was definitely a "Van Persiesque" type of goal! It was Charlie's second of the season against Leith.

Tired ACO legs allowed Leith to get a fifth at the very end.

#### **Full-Time 2-5**

The final scoreline somewhat flattered the opposition and didn't fully reflect ACO's contribution as, apart for a 10 minutes spell just after half-time, both teams were pretty evenly matched. Some more training to lose those extra Christmas pounds needed before next week.

**Sunday 4 December 2011**

**South East Region FA League Division 3**

## **Blues Lose Out in a Thriller in the Chiller**

**Craigroyston BC ... 3 ACO Blues ... 2**

Half-Time 3-1

**Scorers:** Mitchell (2)

**ACO Man of the Match:** Hard to say, but **Mitchell** gave his defender all sorts of problems and with his two well taken goals deserves MOM.

Sunday saw snow across Edinburgh and our decision to switch the game was proven to be the correct one.

There were several late call-offs that led to team adjustments and despite this the *Blues* started well and created several chances especially down the left with Mitchell making plenty of space, but no one was able to capitalise.

However the *Blues* found themselves two down after Matty slipped twice and our cover defence was posted missing. A sloppy third from a corner soon followed and Craigroyston were three up from three shots at goal.

The *Blues* kept attacking and Mitchell soon ran in from the half way line and chipped the keeper who was having a fine game.

#### **Half-Time 3-1**

The second half saw a couple of changes with Charlie C and Calum coming on.

The *Blues* did not threaten much but neither did Craigroyston. With 20 to go Matty moved into midfield and Nicky moved to sweeper and the team seemed to get a lift from his direct running and the tempo was raised.

Calum was winning ball and distributing well and Harry and Fraser combined but the shot was well saved and Mitchell netted the rebound.

There then followed a period of sustained pressure where Craigroyston escaped with some tight offsides that on another day could have gone the other way.

First Matty slotted home and then Jamie from a Matty, shot but in the end the Craigroyston goal stayed intact.

#### **Full-Time 3-2**

Unfortunately you cannot give a team a 3 goal start and expect to win. On another day ACO could have won this and we can only look ahead to the return match. The last 20 minutes showed that we can play good football and create good chances.

Sunday 27 November 2011

### South East Region FA League Division 3

(Report courtesy of N. Barry)

#### Haddington Athletic ... 0 ACO Blues ... 6

Half-Time 0-4

**Scorers:** Harry (2), Charlie B (2), Matty, Elliot

**ACO Man of the Match:** With everyone playing well today I have picked a defender who was up and down the pitch and helped us record only our second clean sheet of the season - MOM today is **Max**.

After last week's disappointing result, this was a very positive display by a rejuvenated *Blues* team. ACO dominated the game from start to finish and goalie Jamie was little troubled by a Haddington attack that was nullified by the dominance of the ACO back four.

The *Blues* started the game in blistering form. Within two minutes the *Blues* were leading when, a low hit corner was met by Harry who steered the ball into the net. 1-0.

ACO pushed forward for a second goal with Matty feeding Charlie B a great ball down the right and his cross came off the defender into net. 2-0.

Harry was making some mazy runs through the middle and Elliot was making a significant impact on his return to the team. And it was Elliot who started the move for the next goal with a lovely ball to Charlie B on the right wing who reached the bye line before cutting the ball into the middle of the penalty box for Matty to make a simple tap in. 3-0.

Within minutes ACO were four up when from yet another corner, Harry tapped in.

#### Half-Time 0-4

ACO took a bit of time to get going in the second half and needed Jamie to keep Haddington at bay in one of the rare times he was pressured to make a good parried save.

However, ACO were soon going forward again with Scott and Harry dominating the midfield. Nicky and Andrew were snuffing out any Haddington attack.

The *Blues* looked for another goal and after a nice touch from Charlie B into Matty who fed a ball through to Elliot who strode forward and then placed a shot into the net. 5-0.

Within minutes, ACO were six up when yet another ACO attack resulted in a panicky clearance to Charlie B, who seeing the keeper off his line, slotted home from just outside the "D".

Charlie C then showed some lovely dribbling skill and he was upended in the box with the referee instantly pointing to the spot. Harry was unlucky to see his well-struck penalty crashing off the bar. However, Harry didn't let this bother him and on the re-start, embarked on another mazy run into the penalty area and he was as surprised as the spectators that a penalty was not awarded.

In the dying moments Mitchell put one over the bar as did Jacob in a rare shot at goal.

A very satisfying 6-0 result and probably doesn't totally reflect ACO's dominance and hard working display by the whole team.

#### Full-Time 0-6

**Coach's Comment:** The new Haddington pitch was excellent and helped us today in the stiff breeze across the pitch. Harry, Scott and Matty dominated midfield, Fraser, Charlie, Mitchell and Elliot caused havoc all day up front. And every defender played well and with Jamie helped us to our only second clean sheet of the season and with that in mind today's MOM is Max who played well at right back, up and down the pitch.

Sunday 20 November 2011

South East Region FA League Division 3

## **Blues Lose To Their Bogey Team Yet Again**

**Edinburgh City Whites ... 7 ACO Blues ... 1**

Half-Time 2-0

**Scorers:** Jamie (78min pen)

It was a gloriously sunny afternoon when the *Blues* arrived at Sighthill which looked bare without the concrete landmarks, recently demolished. We have never beaten this team in the league although we always do well in cups against them. The *Blues* were under strength with 4 of the team who started against Peebles recently, unavailable. The *Whites* looked to be at full strength and looked strong in the early part of the game with Chris making some fine stops

However, the *Blues* failed to control the football, but they did look comfortable at the back until our *Nemesis* managed to score two quick goals with good skill and technique.

### **Half-Time 2-0**

Two goals down at half time brought a couple of changes and although looking better with the ball it was at the expense of poor defending which led to said player adding 2 more and it soon became 6. The *Blues* won a corner with 2 minutes to go and this led to Andrew being pushed for a penalty which Jamie placed well into the side netting.

However, there was still time for the *Whites* to earn their own award courtesy of Mikey's hand ball which led to the last score and the end of the game.

### **Full-Time 7-1**

Not the *Blues* best performance of the season but when you play a top team you need most of the squad available, hopefully we can get back on track this Sunday.

Sunday 13 November 2011

**Federation of Hearts Supporters Clubs' Cup 3<sup>rd</sup> Round**

(Report courtesy of N. Barry)

**Loanhead Miners ... 6 ACO Blues ... 0**

Half-Time 3-0

**ACO Man of the Match:** There were several contenders today - Harry, Scott and Jamie worked their cherry socks off and received good reports from the referee and Loanhead coach. Jacob improves with every game and Chris had his best game in a long time, but both the referee and Loanhead coach gave **Matty MOM**.

After the heavy defeat against Loanhead a few months ago there was an element of nervousness from players and supporters ahead of this game.

However, the boys worked very hard and earned a respectable result against opposition who are near the top of Division 1. The manner of the *Blues'* display shows how they have improved from that earlier game against Loanhead.

From the start Loanhead were on the attack with Chris quickly called into action to make a string of great saves, firstly from a volley and then diving at the feet of the opposition's centre forward. The back four were working very hard but Loanhead made the breakthrough when after a quick one-two, the ball was side footed into the net.

However, it was ACO who went forward with Matty mopping up at the back and sending Mitchell down the left wing but he was unable to beat the covering defence. Loanhead quickly counter attacked and made it 2-0.

ACO then had one of the best moves of the game when after a quick throw in, Charlie got to the bye line and crossed into the centre where Scott hit a volley just wide.

Chris made another good save and the back four put in some strong tackles with the midfield dropping deeper to help but Loanhead made it 3 just before the break.

### Half-Time 3-0

Into the second half and Fraser and Hamish came on for Charlie C and Mikey and ACO continued to show the same hard working spirit to make the first division outfit sweat for their victory. Jamie, Mitchell, Scott and Harry continued to pressurise the Loanhead back four, giving them little time on the ball. From this ACO pressure the Loanhead defence cleared with a long ball down the middle and despite justifiable claims for offside, the No 12 ran on to make it 4.

Loanhead were quickly on the attack again and a cross/ shot from the left saw the ball loop over Chris and into the net. Loanhead pushed for another but Chris then made two great diving saves to defy the Division 1 Championship contenders. Loanhead did make it 6 -0 with 12 minutes to go but the fact that ACO contained them for the rest of game demonstrates the work-rate and commitment the whole team made for the full 80 minutes.

### Full-Time 6-0

**Coach comment** - This game brushed aside the demons from the last game and although second best we defended our corners well, which was our downfall in the last game. We also pressed the ball higher up the pitch and this should give us confidence for next week where we meet an improving Edinburgh City team in a must win league game.

Sunday 6 November 2011

## South East Region FA League Division 3

### The *Blues*' Second-Half Display

#### ACO *Blues* ... 5 Musselburgh Windsor *Colts* ... 1

Half-Time 1-1

**Scorers:** Scott, Harry, Matty, Charlie, Fraser

**ACO Man of the Match:** A lot of contenders but **Nicky** edges it as he played really well in defence. Charlie B again dominated on the right and Matty, Scott and Harry put in a power of work.

The *Blues* had several stalwarts missing today with Elliot injuring himself the day before, but still had a strong line up. Chris was back in goal with Hamish and Max at full backs, Nicky and Matty in the middle. In the midfield Scott Fraser and Harry with Mitchell, Charlie B and Jamie up front.

After such a good game last week the *Blues* were slow starters and were losing out in the midfield to a taller, stronger side. Jamie and Mitchell had chances but the shots were placed wide. Chris saved well to his left before ushering out an attacker wide to give time for the defence to reorganise. From the corner Hamish saved well on the line but could not stop the rebound going in and it was no more than Musselburgh deserved and could easily have added to their lead.

Jamie made way for Charlie C just before half-time and a good pass from Charlie B and Mitchell allowed Scott to level the scores on the stroke of half-time.

### Half-Time 1-1

The second-half saw the introduction of Jacob at full back and Calum (trialist) defensive midfield.

The changes allowed the game to flow more down the flanks and the ball was no longer in the air. Charlie B won a corner and Harry got in front of the defender and flicked the ball into the net.

Two became three following a free-kick which Matty took and dipped under the bar from a long way out. Charlie B added a 4th into the far top corner from well out on the right. Fraser finished the scoring with a low drive into the corner.

Mitchell, Charlie C and Jacob all had efforts but the *Blues* closed out this match without difficulty as everyone played their part. The referee commented, 'I never saw that coming at half-time.'

**Full-Time 5-1** A good win!

Sunday 30 October 2011

## South East Region FA League Division 3

(Report courtesy of N. Barry)

### Blue Skies and a *Blues* Win

**ACO Blues ... 2 Peebles FC ... 1**

Half-Time 2-0

**Scorers:** Elliot, Mitchell

**ACO Man of the Match:** The coaches were impressed with everyone today, but one player in particular had his best game of the season, impressive with the ball at his feet and in defence - **Charlie B.**

This was the *Blues*' best display of the season and the final score doesn't reflect the team's domination of the game.

With Craig having moved to pastures new, it was Jamie who played in goal and Elliot returned as center forward. Both their contributions to the game were immediate. Jamie met a through ball from Peebles with a quick clearance out to Charlie B on the right wing who controlled it beautifully before dispatching a quick pass through to the on rushing Elliot who sent the ball into the net. 1-0.

ACO pushed forward straight from the re-start with Scott going into the box and hitting a shot over. The *Blues* pushed forward again and won a corner, which Paul took and the ball broke to Scott who shot low into the keeper's arms. It had been all ACO up to now but Peebles came into to the game and won a corner. However, ACO again turned defence in devastating attack. Paul neatly hooked an overhead clearance to Charlie who again controlled the ball on the deck and then sent a quick pass into Elliot who flicked it on to Mitchell as he sped towards the box and then dispatched a wonderful left footed curling ball into the far side of the goal. 2-0.

Peebles tried to quickly recover from ACO's dominant start but their powerful forward line were well marshalled by the *Blues*' back four of Mikey, Matty, Nicky and Jacob. Fraser came on for the injured Paul and it was ACO who tried to extend their advantage with Elliot going close again and Harry shooting over from a free kick.

#### Half-Time 2-0

ACO introduced Max for Mikey at left-back at the start of the second-half. Almost immediately Elliot was again through the middle and was unlucky not to score as the Peebles keeper saved with his legs. ACO kept up the dominance of the game with first Harry bursting through the middle and bringing a save from the keeper.

Mitchell then broke down the left and sent the ball into Elliot who flicked it into Scott who shot just over. ACO remained dominant and Peebles' limited attacks were dealt with comfortably by the defence who were playing with a new-found confidence, helped by Jamie's prominence in goal.

At the other end it was business as usual as ACO pushed forward again and Charlie charged down the right and cut the ball back but Elliot's shot was deflected out of play by a Peebles defender.

From the subsequent corner Peebles quickly cleared the ball and with most of the ACO defence up in attack, their striker managed to get ahead of Nicky's pass back to Jamie and slot the ball home against the run of play.

On previous occasions the *Blues* may have reacted poorly to this set back but the team have improved greatly in recent months and went straight up the field to ensure victory. Firstly Mitchell had a lovely mazy run down the left before shooting just over. Then it was Scott's turn for a strong run and then sending a ball into Elliot who held it up well before cutting it back to Harry who hit a rasping shot against the base of the post.

In the last 5 minutes Charlie C came on for Elliot and ACO continued to dominate and never looked threatened.

#### Full-Time 2-1

Special thanks also goes to the unused subs, Hamish and Chris for their team spirit and support.

Sunday 23 October 2011

### South East Region FA League Division 3

**ACO Blues ... 4 Loanhead Miners YFC Colts ... 1**

Half-Time 2-0

**Scorers:** Harry, Jamie, Matty, Mitchell

**ACO Man of the Match:** A difficult one to determine as we did not play particularly well but had plenty of chances especially at the back post - but my MOM this week was **Mitchell** who caused havoc down the left.

It was a nice day as we welcomed back Loanhead to Meggetland who had lost out on penalties last time we played and although their recent results have not been great we knew they could score. They were hampered by the non-appearance of a player and their good striker had to play in goal and I must say played a blinder as a sweeper and keeper. Elliot, Jacob, Mikey, Chris and Max were unavailable but we still had a strong team.

The *Blues* started well, Charlie and Mitchell both crossing well but the chances were squandered at the back post. Harry Scott and Fraser were in control of the midfield with Matty back sweeping alongside Andrew. Hamish and Nicky were full backs and Craig in goal. As the chances came and went with Paul and Jamie being given offside frequently, shortly before half-time the opening goal arrived with a cross back in by Mitchell from a corner and Harry, still sitting on the ground, hooking the ball into the net.

The score was soon doubled by Jamie after a great passing move with Charlie, Scott and Fraser. A good team goal. Half-time arrived and the *Blues* were in a comfortable lead.

#### Half-Time 2-0

Half time saw Charlie C coming on and Nicky moving to centre-half for Matty who moved into the middle - and the lead soon increased as he ran onto a pass from Jamie and for a change placed the ball into the corner of the goals.

Jamie then passed up a couple of chances at the far post before Loanhead were back in the game following some slack play at the back. Andrew was forced off with a broken toe and Matty returned to defence. Harry had time to attempt to lob the keeper before Mitchell coolly finished to seal the win.

Just before the end Loanhead were reduced to 9 players after an unsavoury incident and the game ended.

#### Full-Time 4-1

It was not the best game we have played, however a comfortable win is still 3 league points and it was our first competitive game for a month.

Sunday 11 September 2011

### Scottish Cup 1<sup>st</sup> Round

(Report courtesy of Nigel)

## Pride Restored But the *Blues* Still Lose

**ACO Blues ... 2 Dunbar United Colts ... 4**

Half-Time 2-2

**Scorers:** Harry, Scott

This was a gritty display by ACO in very blustery conditions against a team from a higher division.

ACO started the match with Paul in goal, Max as captain at right back and utility player Nicky in the centre of midfield working hard with play maker Harry.

However, ACO were on the back foot almost immediately. A corner curled in from the left bounced awkwardly and Max was unlucky to have adjudged to have handled. Penalty. 1-0 Dunbar.

Almost from the re-start Dunbar forced another corner. The subsequent curling cross was touched on to the post by Paul but the ball rebounded out, hitting the onrushing Matty and finally nesting in the corner of the net. 2-0 Dunbar.

This early set back inspired ACO to its best period in the match. ACO pushed forward with Mitchell playing in Scott for an opportunity and then from a corner from Charlie B, Matty played the ball back to Andrew who shot over.

Harry, was beginning to get some space in midfield and began playing some lovely balls over the defence to Elliot who was giving the Dunbar defence some major problems with the keeper having to make a number of saves. Scott was taking a few tough tackles in midfield but managed to make space and struck three successive shots which cannoned off the defence and Dunbar keeper before being finally cleared. This passage of play buoyed ACO and Charlie C who had been out through injury for three weeks came on a sub and curled a nice shot just over the bar. ACO pushed forward again through Nicky and Harry in midfield and won a free kick 25 yards from goal. Harry lined up the ball and hit a sweetly struck shot into the far corner, giving the keeper no chance. The usually unflappable Harry celebrated with a cartwheel. 1-2.

ACO now had the momentum and rocked Dunbar with the equaliser. Scott took advantage of the Dunbar defence failing to clear another through ball from Harry and slotted past the advancing keeper.

### **Half-Time 2-2**

For the second half, Craig took over in goal and Paul moved upfront, taking over from the hard working Elliot. However, after the excitement of the first half, the second half was harder work for ACO and had to combat not just a more physical Dunbar team but a stiffening gale. Fraser came on for Charlie B and had some good runs down the right. Dunbar pushed forward and forced a number of corners with Andrew and Matty doing well to combat the pressure and Jacob getting in some crucial tackles. Max worked hard to combat the attacking threat from Dunbar's right side but one cross made it across the penalty box and was blatantly knocked into the net by the Dunbar strikers' hand. His name went straight into the referees book for his misdemeanour.

Andrew had to endure another physical challenge as Dunbar continued to push forward. Finally Dunbar got the break through with a snap shot from the No 10 which went between the ACO defence into Craig's left hand corner, giving him little chance. 2-3 Dunbar.

ACO brought Elliot and Mitchell back on to replace Charlie C and Paul in a bid to get the equaliser as the hard working and vocal Max was replaced by Hamish.

Fraser worked a good move down the right but was again the victim of some tough tackling with another Dunbar player also entering the referee's book after an unfriendly gesticulation towards the official.

It was Dunbar though who closed out the game with another goal when a swirling shot was well parried by Craig but the ball fell to the onrushing Dunbar striker who slotted home.

### **Full-Time 2-4**

This was a much improved performance against a good Second Division side. Everyone gave their all for the team and if we play again like that we have a chance against Edinburgh City this weekend to progress to the 3rd round of the Hearts Supporters Clubs' Cup.

## **Sunday 4 September 2011**

### **South East Region Cup 1<sup>st</sup> Round**

#### **ACO Blues ... 0 Loanhead Miners ... 9+**

Half-Time 0-3

Having beaten Loanhead's 3rd division side this season it was our turn to play Loanhead's 1st Division side who had only lost once to Hutchison Vale. The weather was glorious but unfortunately the *Blues* weren't.

I suppose it is too much to ask for perfect weather and a perfect performance. I must confess to having been away golfing that weekend and so only caught the game with the score already at 7-0. Sadly, I had not missed all the goals but I believe we had only one shot on target. Loanhead were a good side who were outstanding on the day, but that is why they are near the top of Division 1 and we are in Division 3.

I have not named any players in the report and if they train as well as they did the following Thursday their anonymity is assured. Not all the *Blues* were available for this fixture.

No scorers and no MOM this week ... roll on next week.

Thursday 1 September 2011

### South East Region FA League Division 3

**Liberton United ... 3 ACO Blues ... 6**

Half-Time 0-3

**Scorers:** Jamie (2), Matty (2), Fraser, Charlie

This was a night when the starting line up was those who were there on time. The *Blues* started well and controlled the game without looking threatening. Matty was introduced to the midfield and his first contribution was to release Charlie down the right, he in turn delivered a great cross which Jamie tapped in for the opening goal. This was the width we required and it was evident again as Jamie added the second and just as half time approached the *Blues* won a corner that was not cleared. Matty made the tackle in the box and placed the ball into the net to leave the *Blues* three to the good before half time. Craig kept a clean sheet having made a crucial save at 0-0.

The second half saw the ball break wide and Charlie finished well from outside the box. Liberton then pulled 2 goals back in quick succession. The *Blues* steadied themselves and good attacking play between Harry, Scott and Mitchell ended with Fraser putting his shot past the diving keeper. Liberton pulled another goal back before Matty repeated his first-half goal from a corner.

Although still not at our best we are picking up league points and are improving with every league game.

MOM: on a night when the travelling support were looking for width it was provided by Charlie who was my MOM.

Sunday 28 August 2011

### South East Region FA League Division 3

## Back to Black (and Voltage Cherry)

**ACO Blues ... 2 Beechwood Panthers ... 0**

Half-Time 0-0

**Scorer:** Paul (2)

The *Blues* returned to Meggetland after Saturday night's disappointment to play Beechwood which should have been on paper an easier game. The team had a new formation with two forwards. There was a strong breeze blowing across the pitch and a little rain in the air. To the assembled touchline it seemed more like winter than summer.

The *Blues* started brightly and created a few chances through Mitchell and Elliot but the shots were taken too early and posed no difficulties to the keeper. Next up was Harry who failed to connect properly in front of goal and the ball went out for a corner. The *Blues* were not playing well and Craig pulled off a good save to keep us in the game. After that the defence was relatively untroubled and half-time came with the scores level.

The second half started and the *Blues* burst forward and Harry played Paul through the middle and he shot well into the roof of the net to open the scoring. This goal took the pressure off the *Blues* and they were able to take control of the game but the conditions were still difficult. Mitchell and Fraser won a corner on the left and Paul took the corner and using the wind was able to find the top of the net at the near post. This should have settled the *Blues* but their play was still erratic, maybe the wind was more of a leveller than we thought. Harry was felled just outside the box but the free kick went straight into the wall. Next was Nicky to be felled out on the right and this time Paul struck a great free-kick that came off the bar and away to safety. The *Blues* then saw out the game without much difficulty to get back in the winning way.

Chris and Craig both kept clean sheets in this game and the *Blues* moved up the table with a hard fought win in difficult conditions.

MOM: Paul as he was the only player looking likely to score a goal in the difficult conditions.

Thursday 25 August 2011

### South East Region FA League Division 3

ACO Blues ... 2 Spartans Blacks ... 3

Half-Time 0-0

Scorer: Harry (2)

The *Blues* returned to their traditional blue/black strips to avoid a clash with Spartans who were wearing red shorts and socks. This change seemed to knock the team off their stride at the start of the match against a team that were from the *Land of the Giants*. I have never seen such a large side and the *Blues* were certainly up against it.

Andrew and Chris were still missing but the *Blues* had a strong line up nonetheless. Craig in goals, Mikey and Matty were at the heart of defence with Jacob and Max at full back. Scott, Harry and Paul were in midfield with Fraser on the left, Nicky on the right and Mitchell up top.

The game was very tight and in the first half there were few chances as both defences dominated. Mitchell and Jamie both had half-chances, but Spartans had a few of their own but neither keeper was troubled in the first half.

#### Half time 0-0

The second half saw all the AC Oxfangs substitutions and their play improved as Fraser released Harry who glided through and scored. The lead was short-lived as Spartans equalised. Again, Harry picked up the ball off Scott and Paul and latched onto the pass to slide the ball past the keeper.

The game then went tight like the first half as Spartans started to dominate the midfield. Their taller players won all the headers and it looked like the *Blues* might hold out when Craig handled a short back pass outside his area and the free kick was sent into the roof of the net.

Just as it looked as if the game would end in a draw, Spartans won the game with an excellent strike with almost the last kick of the game.

Although not at their best this was a game we should have won but we should improve as the season progresses.

MOM: This was a difficult decision as the *Blues* were under par tonight. But with his hard work and tackling the MOM is Harry

Sunday 21 August 2011

### Federation of Hearts Supporters Clubs' Cup R1

ACO Blues ... 5 Loanhead Miners Colts ... 5 (after extra-time)

Blues won 4-3 on penalties

Half-Time 3-3

Scorers: Paul (2), Mitchell, Jamie, Harry

After winning comfortably against this side on Friday night away, the *Blues*, still kitted out in their eye catching away kit, were in confident mood for the cup game on the Astro at Meggetland. Elliot and Jacob were missing from Friday night and the *Blues* lined up in their normal formation with Mitchell leading the attack, a strong central midfield of Paul, Harry and Scott; Charlie and Fraser on the flanks. Mikey partnered Matty in the centre of defence, with Hamish and Max at full back and Craig in goal.

The *Blues* could not have had a better start with Mitchell opening the scoring after two minutes from a ball from Fraser. The lead was short-lived as Loanhead equalised after some poor defending, but Paul put the *Blues* in front again from a well worked goal. Once again Loanhead equalised before the *Blues* regained the lead with a well constructed team goal after a good passing move involving Matty, Mikey, Charlie and Scott. Anyone who watched this team often knew that Loanhead would soon equalise and they did so on the stroke of Half Time (3-3).

The second half saw the introduction of Jamie with Andrew and Charlie C both injured. The second half was tighter and the *Blues* again took the lead with the strike of the season from Paul who roofed his shot from 25 yards. This should have been the cue for the *Blues* to close out the game but in their desire for more goals were exposed at the back and Loanhead were awarded a soft penalty to tie the scores with little time remaining.

Turning round for the first period the *Blues* went behind for the first time and as they chased the game they were left exposed at the back and Craig pulled off three great saves to keep them in the tie. Just as time was slipping away Harry was upended in the box and although another soft decision was welcomed by the home support and Jamie who, unlike the Celtic team this year, put it well past the keeper and into the net.

The referee blew the whistle to end the game and the *Blues* first penalty shoot out ensued. Loanhead scored their first 3 Paul, Jamie and Fraser replied before Craig saved Loanhead's 4th and Harry scored. With Mitchell next to take he was relieved to see Craig tip Loanhead's kick over the bar.

An exciting game and a credit to both sides . Loanhead were much better than on Friday but the main thing is the *Blues* are in the next round to meet another 3rd division side. There were good performances all over the pitch but Craig gets the MOM for three great saves in extra-time and saving the last two penalties.

**Friday 19 August 2011**

**South East Region FA League Division 3**

**Loanhead Miners Colts ... 2 ACO Blues ... 6**

Half-Time 2-3

**Scorers:** Scott (2), Mitchell (2), Nicky, Paul

After last Sundays terrible start it was the *Blues* who were first to arrive at the ground and they warmed up well before the kick-off. The team were looking smart in their new kit and we were a bit short with only 13 players. Craig was in goal, Hamish left-back, Max right, Matty and Mikey in the middle. Scott, Harry and Elliot were the powerhouse in midfield with Nicky wide-right, Fraser wide-left and Mitchell up front. The emphasis was on width and it was not long before that policy paid off with Max, Mitchell and Elliot releasing Nicky down the right and he coolly opened the scoring. Loanhead equalised after a defensive mix-up, but Mitchell broke clear to put the *Blues* back in front. With bad defending still rearing its ugly head, Loanhead equalised again. Just before half-time Fraser, (formally known as F\*\*\*\*), played Scott in who finished off the move well. The second-half saw Paul and Jacob come on and with the wind now in their favour took the game to Loanhead. Mitchell added another before Paul broke well through the middle and smashed the ball high into the net . There was still time for the *Blues* to do something that Spurs failed to and add a sixth when Scott played a lovely one-two with Mitchell. The *Blues* comfortably saw out the second-half with Hamish showing one of his tricks out on the wing, going past the opposition player with ease. Paul also showed some good skill, as did Harry who ran all over the pitch with Elliot. Craig made a couple of good saves second half and the *Blues* ran out worthy winners to get their first 3 league points. My MOM this week was a tough call between the central midfield players who all controlled the game, but **Elliot** just edges it for the tireless effort he put in.

**Sunday 14 August 2011**

**South East Region FA League Division 3**

**Leith Athletic ... 6 ACO Blues ... 1**

Half-Time 6-0

**Scorer:** Charlie C.

Starting our League season down at Leith against the runaway Division 4 winners was always going to be a hard task, especially as the Leith 1st Division team had folded a couple of weeks before. With holidays keeping the boys away there had been no time for a training session and we had to be up for the start. Unfortunately, heavy traffic caused half the team to arrive late. It was our first outing in our new 'voltage cherry kit'.

The starting line-up had two newcomers making their debut, Harry and Paul, but we started badly conceding a soft penalty early on and with the defence asleep we were soon two goals down. Things did not improve in the first half and were 6 goals down by half time.

I wasn't aware of saying too much at half-time, but we made several changes, both positional and personnel, and we looked better. Harry switched to central midfield and was able to work the ball wide where both Charlie's delivered the ball into the Leith box and we started to create chances and looked secure at the back.

Charlie C. pulled a goal back but despite the team's best efforts they could not grab another. The game ended 6-1 . Although we were terrible in the first-half the team showed character to come back and win the second half.