



THROUGHOUT THE YEAR WE WERE KEPT APART BUT HAVE STILL "GROWN TOGETHER"

SEE PLAYER INTERVIEWS **PAGE 11**



GAME OF THE SEASON **PAGE 13**

Well, what a season, and what a year! Its been an unprecedented situation this year and we have tried to keep the football as something semi consistent amongst the turmoil for the boys.

Throughout it all they have shown commitment and resolve to keep working on their skills and being positive in regard to their football, and for this they should be commended.

At the start of the season we welcomed some new players into the Avengers, and all have slotted in really well...

THE 100 CLUB **PAGE 7**

This year we have a group of boys becoming members of the Ambleside 100 club, representing the fact that they have been members of the club for 5 years continuously and have played at least 100 competitive league games for the club.

The 7 players receiving this accolade, all started with the club as 'cubs' around the age of 5-6 years old and have remained with the Avengers since that time. The club award each player a 'cap' (made by the same company who produce England's caps) as a token of their appreciation for their...

GROWN TOGETHER EVENTS

03

INTRO

A quick intro on what to expect from the review.

05

VIEW FROM THE SIDELINE

An in-sight to the season, provided by manager Michael Duncan and coach Jo Simpson.

09

GROWN TOGETHER

Throughout the year we were kept apart but we have still GROWN TOGETHER

11

PLAYER INTERVIEWS

A look into what the Avengers have been doing and what they are looking forward to.

07

GAME OF THE SEASON

An in-depth look into our most prestigious game this season.

13

THE 100 CLUB

A celebration of our 7 longest serving players and the journey they have taken.



PROGRAMME

INTRO

THROUGH THE YEAR WE WERE KEPT APART BUT WE HAVE STILL GROWN TOGETHER

Welcome to the 20/21 edition of Ambleside Avengers Junior Football Club end of the season review. At Ambleside we believe that The Avengers are about more than just playing football. But instead, we value being part of a team and growing together. In this year's review, we look back

on the team's journey through a troublesome year! We celebrate the players achievements and get a view from the side lines with the latest from Mike Duncan and Jo Simpson. As well as catch up with all the players to find out how they found this year and what they hope for future.



VIEW FROM THE SIDELINE

VIEW FROM THE SIDELINE

THE MANAGER

Well, what a season, and what a year! Its been an unprecedented situation this year and we have tried to keep the football as something semi consistent amongst the turmoil for the boys. Throughout it all they have shown commitment and resolve to keep working on their skills and being positive in regard to their football, and for this they should be commended. At the start of the season we welcomed some new players into the Avengers, and all have slotted in really well. Samuel Smedley joined us as a dedicated goalkeeper for our Saturday side, and has had a massive impact on us. Sam's bravery has kept us in games this season, often putting his head and body in places where he probably shouldn't, and im always relieved when he gets up after getting in the way of opposition attackers. Charlie

Smith also joined the Saturday side this year. Playing a year up, he has been impressive and dynamic, often slotting in at left back but always being keen to push forward. Our Sunday side also benefitted from two players coming in this season, Daniel Bailey made the step up from training with us to competitive games, playing in defensive he has worked hard and loves a tackle. Likewise,



MIKE DUNCAN

Caine Eales joined us, slotting in predominantly in defence. Another player who likes a tackle, he has shown potential in defence but also turning defence into attack.

The first half of the season, the boys were working well irrespective of whether it was Saturdays or Sundays. Our Saturday team found themselves being drawn against teams in the upper half of the whole league, which represents a recognition

by the league that we are getting better. Many of these games were very tight demonstrating that we are competitive in the league. The Sunday team likewise had some successes and were competitive. I think its also the first time we have scored 14 goals in a single game!

The Second lockdown then put a stop to fixtures, with training changing and us all getting used to football via Zoom! Zoom sessions enabled the boys to keep together virtually whilst still doing work on close skills. As fixtures resumed in March it was good to see the lads itching to get back to it. The psychological effects of Covid and lockdowns cannot be underestimated and the return to football hopefully gave the boys a bit more social interaction and opportunity to be active, and competitive with their peers.

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As parents, your support this year has been magnificent, getting the lads to/from training, keeping outdoor training going during lockdown and in helping put up/take down nets etc. I am grateful for your support as it enables us to make the lads experiences better. I also have to acknowledge the support we have had from Andy, Jo and Nicole this year. Andy has taken the pressure off most of us by taking up most of the linesman duties for us, as well as providing much needed impetus for the

boys' development during training. Nicole and Jo also stepped up at the start of this season, taking on coaching roles with the Avengers. Again, I am grateful for their support and contribution as without their efforts training wouldn't be as effective as it has been. We now look to next season and the move to fully competitive football and the next stage of football development for the boys. This will represent a new and more demanding challenge for the boys, where football gets a little bit more serious, as the lads progress through the football's development ladder. We are already working on how we can support them to develop next season and grow as individuals and as a team.



VIEW FROM THE SIDELINE

THE COACH

Having spent a good number of seasons as a football mum, this year I decided to throw my hat in the ring and swap sidelines by joining the great Master Duncan's coaching staff. As guardians of the Avengers, we have long held the view that if there was a trophy for being the nicest bunch of lads, ours would walk away with it; now I was keen to find out if our boys had the determination and ability to develop their footballing skills in tandem with their growing personalities.

I've known roughly half of the Avengers for perhaps five or six years, from an age when most of them couldn't tie their own laces or kick a ball, let alone scan, move and play in a triangle. What I think we've started to see over the past season - as parents and as coaches - is a deeper understanding of and hunger for the game from some of the lads. Immersing themselves in football - playing and watching* - definitely helps that process and enables them to grasp the more tricky rules and concepts, from the introduction of the

offside rule this year, through to the increasingly competitive nature of their game and league.

The addition of new squad members has added strength and depth to a number of much-needed positions across the pitch, but just as importantly, has allowed new friendships to blossom, which is great for the lads' overall social development as they move into secondary school. This in turn has fed into a growing sense of camaraderie throughout the team, playing for each other as much as for themselves, which is really lovely to see.

I've also been particularly impressed by the way each and every one of our Avengers has approached what has been an incredibly challenging season with enthusiasm, resilience and humour. They've embraced 'bubble' training, zoom training and Covid-related rules and restrictions but were clearly keen to get back to playing regular league football as soon as restrictions were lifted.

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I can't wait to see how our boys will react to the challenges of next season as we begin to make preparations for 11 a side football and dig deep to nail down our understanding of offside, positioning, passing and move into more competitive football. And if all else fails, we've always got the nicest boys trophy to fall back on ;)



JO SIMPSON

GOOOO
OOOO
AAAA
AAAL

Game of the season

GAME OF THE SEASON

26TH SEPTEMBER 2020

AMBLESIDE AVENGERS

3

VS

POLESWORTH SWIFTS

2

SCORERS

JACK NICHOLSON x2
HAITHAM RAI

This game was chosen as, for me, it represented the best coming together of the boys as a whole team this season. While we always have individuals who play well in different games, as a collective the Avengers worked hard against a combative and physical Polesworth team in this game. As we have witnessed over the last couple of years, the type of football played by Polesworth tends to be overly physical, punctuated by cynical fouls, and with a whole load of ranting on the sideline from their coach. The boys did well to remain composed throughout and stuck to playing passing football in the way we have tried to coach them.

It was predominantly a stop-start game, with the Avengers taking the lead through a well taken Jack Nicholson strike which

was swiftly nullified by a goal from Polesworth, leaving us 1-1 at half time. The second half started with Polesworth on the front foot, putting pressure on the Avengers, resulting in a couple of errors that led to a second goal for Polesworth. Sam Smedley in goal pulled off some quality saves throughout as the pressure mounted and the opposition had several chances to extend their lead until a quick break resulted in a second goal from close quarters for Jack Nicholson, who had worked his socks off throughout the game driving things from midfield. Collectively, the boys continued to work on pass and move football but, with the game tied 2-2, the football became more frenetic as both sides tried to find a winner. Just before full time Haitham Rai popped up from right back hitting a sweet strike to make it 3-2 to the Avengers. The last two minutes of the game were then constant pressure from Polesworth who ramped up the

physicality of their approach, with their coach barking furiously at his players. The boys held out though coming away as victors.

On the whole, this was a great team performance against an opposition that we never enjoy playing against. The boys worked as a whole unit and stuck to their game plan in terms of playing from the back and passing football. When we win in those circumstances, against teams that try to win in a more direct and physical manner it always feels like a bigger win overall, and for that reason this was my game of the season.



**THROUGHOUT THE YEAR WE WERE
KEPT APART BUT WE HAVE STILL**

**GROWN
TOGETHER**

PLAYER INTERVIEWS



The Avengers were asked a few questions about what they have been up to lately, what they miss and what they are looking forward to. In this section we have their responses.



DANIEL BAILEY

Best thing about playing for Ambleside?

Everybody is really friendly and the team is good.

What did you miss the most from Ambleside during lockdown?

Not seeing all my friends at football.

What did you do to replace training during lockdown?

I went football training with my dad and brother.

What are you most looking forward to next season?

Playing matches and hopefully getting some wins in the games.

CHARLIE BRAY

Best thing about playing for Ambleside?

All of my team mates, it's really fun and great coaching.

What did you miss the most from Ambleside during lockdown?

All my team mates.

What did you do to replace training during lockdown?

I went to Sandon and did some training with my dad.

What are you most looking forward to next season?

Playing more football, especially matches!



JIMMY CLEMENTS

Best thing about playing for Ambleside?

Working as a team and always having each other's back.

What did you miss the most from Ambleside during lockdown?

Having a laugh and trying to become a better player.

What did you do to replace training during lockdown?

Zoom training, couch to 5k runs and practising in the garden.

What are you most looking forward to next season?

Getting back to what I love most, regular league football.



MATTHEW DUNCAN

Best thing about playing for Ambleside?

Playing games with my friends and scoring goals.

What did you miss the most from Ambleside during lockdown?

Playing games.

What did you do to replace training during lockdown?

Training with my dad.

What are you most looking forward to next season?

The games against other teams.

MICHAEL EMERY

Best thing about playing for Ambleside?

It's always loads of fun and I enjoy being with my mates, playing football.

What did you miss the most from Ambleside during lockdown?

Not being able to get together with all my friends and play.

What did you do to replace training during lockdown?

I have goals in my garden, I would go out and practice when I could. I did the zoom training with Mike which was good fun too.

What are you most looking forward to next season?

Hopefully being able to play the full season.



HARRY FRAIN

Best thing about playing for Ambleside?

The best thing about playing for Ambleside is scoring goals.

What did you miss the most from Ambleside during lockdown?

Missed playing football with my friends the most during lockdown.

What did you do to replace training during lockdown?

Practised skills in the garden to replace Ambleside football whilst in lockdown.

What are you most looking forward to next season?

I'm most looking forward to matches next season.



FRAIN

RHYS PAYNE

Best thing about playing for Ambleside?

The other boys in the team.

What did you miss the most from Ambleside during lockdown?

Playing with the others and seeing them.

What did you do to replace training during lockdown?

Going for walks with my family and playing football in the garden.

What are you most looking forward to next season?

Getting back to training properly.



PAYNE



NEWBURY

EVAN NEWBURY

Best thing about playing for Ambleside?

The fun and how friendly it is.

What did you miss the most from Ambleside during lockdown?

My friends and playing football together.

What did you do to replace training during lockdown?

Zoom training and playing football with my family.

What are you most looking forward to next season?

Being able to play matches again and see what the new challenges are.



PETO

DYLAN PETO

Best thing about playing for Ambleside?

The coaches and the players.

What did you miss the most from Ambleside during lockdown?

Playing matches and seeing my team mates.

What did you do to replace training during lockdown?

Play football in the garden and practice drills.

What are you most looking forward to next season?

Playing lots of matches and improving my football.

JACK NICHOLSON

Best thing about playing for Ambleside?

The best thing about playing for Ambleside is that everyone is kind.

What did you miss the most from Ambleside during lockdown?

What I missed most during lockdown was seeing my friends and being able to play football "in person".

What did you do to replace training during lockdown?

Played some football with my brother at the park and joined in the trainings on Zoom on Tuesdays.

What are you most looking forward to next season?

I'm looking forward to going up a year so the teams may be more challenging.



NICHOLSON

ALFIE TALBOT

Best thing about playing for Ambleside?

Playing with my team mates and learning new things every session.

What did you miss the most from Ambleside during lockdown?

Getting out on the pitch and playing football with my team mates.

What did you do to replace training during lockdown?

Watched training drills from my coach, played football outside and played fifa.

What are you most looking forward to next season?

Playing more matches and improving my skills.



TALBOT

HAITHAM RAI

Best thing about playing for Ambleside?

I have a lot of friends in the team, everybody is kind and there are rarely any arguments; people don't shout and scream.

What did you miss the most from Ambleside during lockdown?

Football matches.

What did you do to replace training during lockdown?

I placed items on the floor at home and in the garden and dribbled trying to avoid them. I also played a lot of football with my brother.

What are you most looking forward to next season?

I'm looking forward to playing against more difficult teams so I can improve.



CHARLIE SMITH

Best thing about playing for Ambleside?

The coaches!

What did you miss the most from Ambleside during lockdown?

Playing football with team mates.

What did you do to replace training during lockdown?

Played football in garden and Ambleside bingo.

What are you most looking forward to next season?

Playing lots of football games.



ELLIOTT RUSHTON

Best thing about playing for Ambleside?

Having fun with my friends.

What did you miss the most from Ambleside during lockdown?

My friends.

What did you do to replace training during lockdown?

Zoom training, early morning walks, had a kick about at the park.

What are you most looking forward to next season?

Having proper training sessions, hopefully.



FABIAN KRUMHOLZ

Best thing about playing for Ambleside?

Friendships and Coach.

What did you miss the most from Ambleside during lockdown?

Regular trainings and matches.

What did you do to replace training during lockdown?

Training with dad and brother daily.

What are you most looking forward to next season?

Routine, regular training and matches.

SAM SMEDLEY

Best thing about playing for Ambleside?

It's fun.

What did you miss the most from Ambleside during lockdown?

Not seeing my friends.

What did you do to replace training during lockdown?

Played xbox.

What are you most looking forward to next season?

Playing in a league for points.



CAINE EALES

Best thing about playing for Ambleside?

The coach is really good and I like to play football and learn new skills.

What did you miss the most from Ambleside during lockdown?

Not being able to play football with my team mates.

What did you do to replace training during lockdown?

Played football in the park with my brother.

What are you most looking forward to next season?

Learning new skills and playing lots of games.



**MORE
THAN**

FOOTBALL

**PASSION.
IDENTITY.
COMMUNITY.**



THE 100 CLUB

CELEBRATION

This year we have a group of boys becoming members of the Ambleside 100 club, representing the fact that they have been members of the club for 5 years continuously and have played at least 100 competitive league games for the club.

The 7 players receiving this accolade, all started with the club as 'cubs' around the age of 5-6 years old and have remained with the Avengers since that time.

The club award each player a 'cap' (made by the same company who produce England's caps) as a token of their appreciation for their commitment to Ambleside JFC.

A big well done to the boys receiving this accolade this year and they should be proud of wearing the green and white through thick and thin, and being Ambleside through and through.



JACK NICHOLSON



ELLIOTT RUSHTON



MATTHEW DUNCAN



RHYS PAYNE



MICHAEL EMERY



JIMMY CLEMENTS



EVAN NEWBURY



THANK YOU FOR HELPING US GROW.