



SPRING 2005

# HARROW RECORD

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM HARROW SCHOOL



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## OHAFC ON COURSE FOR SECOND LEAGUE TITLE

Having become only the second side in OHAFC history to capture the Arthurian League Championship, the squad assembled for the 2004/5 season with dual objectives: to retain the League title they won in style last year and to mount a determined assault on a trophy that has so far eluded the club during its history: the Arthur Dunn Cup.

There was also much work to do for the 2nd XI, with promotion from Division Five a necessity if the club is to continue to grow as a whole and to aid the promotion of younger players into the senior team.

Preparation for the 1st XI was far from ideal unfortunately. As reigning champions of the Arthurian League, the club was given the dubious honour of entry into the Greenland Cup – akin to the Champions League for clubs affiliated to the Amateur Football Association. Drawn in a group of four, alongside three clubs who have no restrictions on where they obtain their playing members from, Harrow struggled in the hot August sunshine and succumbed to three defeats, the last of which also saw Tim Dalton (*Newlands 1992*) and Paul Molloy (*The Park 1991*) sent off in a particularly ill-tempered affair. It was hoped that the subsequent suspensions would not prove costly.

Harrow began their league campaign in late September with the visit of Westminster to the Hill. In a hard-fought encounter, Harrow had to wait until the second half to translate their superiority into goals, Rupert Hoffen (*Rendalls 1988*) scoring twice in a 4-0 victory.

The following week saw two League debuts for the side with both Simon Henson (*The Park 1988*) and Freddy Brunt (*The Head Master's 1999*) taking their bows in the away fixture at Shrewsbury. Simon played at left-back, with Freddy ahead of him on the wing. Both players did well in another tight game: having taken a 2-0 half-time lead, Shrewsbury pegged the champions back to 2-2 with half an hour remaining, before goals from Molloy and Brunt sealed the win. Nick Warner (*The Head Master's 1984*) continued his excellent early season form with another fine display at right-back.

With confidence high following two excellent wins, the next two games brought the side back to earth with a bump. The suspension of Tim Dalton for the visit of Brentwood cost the side dear as a series of individual errors allowed the away side to claim a 2-0 lead. Harrow fought back in the second half, desperate to preserve their proud unbeaten record at the Philathletic Ground,

but as they pushed for goals, they left themselves exposed at the back and the 0-4 scoreline at the final whistle did not flatter the Essex side.

Needing a quick recovery, the home game against newly-promoted Winchester the following week should have provided an ideal opportunity to capture three points and replenish the goal difference. It didn't go to plan though. After an excellent opener from David Lederman (*Newlands 1988*), Harrow conceded two goals through sloppy back-passes and were suddenly faced with a second consecutive defeat. Thankfully, Paul Molloy came up trumps with time running out and a 2-2 draw was gained.

The Champions now found themselves under a modicum of pressure with five points dropped from the first four games. The response was tremendous, however, and six consecutive wins in the run-up to Christmas ensured that the team ended 2004 in a familiar spot: sitting proudly at the top of the Arthurian League.

Lancing were destroyed 8-1 on the Hill as the side rediscovered their form in spectacular fashion, Harry Hoffen (*Rendalls 1990*) suddenly finding his scoring boots and firing home four great goals. Charterhouse were then beaten 2-1 away from home in an excellent performance. Rupert Hoffen rounded off a superb team goal and, having conceded a quick equaliser, Harrow grabbed the winner when Nick Warner raced down the wing and delivered a perfect cross for Piers Bourke (*The Grove 1992*) to head home.

The next two games were bound to have a significant impact on the destination of the League with the visit of third-placed Forest to the Hill preceded by the trip to second-placed Eton.

The Eton game turned out to be a titanic struggle on the somewhat uneven playing surfaces at the School. Having had the better of the opening exchanges, Harrow conceded a soft goal when a long ball over the top allowed the star Eton striker to run through unchallenged and plant the ball past the evergreen Bert Worthy (*The Grove 1968*). The ten minutes after half-time saw the dark blues regain control however: Quentin Baker (*Moretons 1989*) headed a goal while unmarked from a corner and, with Eton still bemoaning their luck, Paul Molloy struck a stunning half-volley into the top corner from 25 yards out. Harrow clung on to their lead and indeed could have won more convincingly – Freddy Brunt struck the inside of the post after a memorable run late on.



Left: Battling hard – the quarter-final of the Dunn Cup against Old Foresters



Old Foresters were despatched rather more easily the following week. A 2-0 lead was gained through good combination play between the two Hoffen brothers up front and Piers Bourke on the left. Despite Old Foresters getting one back with half an hour to go, Harrow closed out the game in style, scoring three further goals through Quentin Baker and Harry Hoffen (2) and playing some truly delicious football.

The two final League games before Christmas were also comfortably won thanks to fine team performances. Jamie Waugh (*The Park 1987*<sup>3</sup>) was the star of the 5-2 win at Repton – his energetic display in central midfield allowed the more creative members of the team to wreak havoc on the bottom side and the following week, a dreadful first half against Westminster's was soon forgotten as a Harry Hoffen hat-trick inspired Harrow to a 6-2 win in Chiswick. Harrow ended 2004 with eight wins and a draw from ten games and a comfortable lead at the top of the Premier Division.

In the Arthur Dunn Cup, a sizeable crowd turned up on the Hill the week before

Christmas to cheer the side on to victory over the Old Cholmelians. Despite rarely finding top gear, Harrow ran out comfortable 5-0 winners to face Old Foresters in the quarter-finals on February 12th.

Unfortunately, Old Foresters coped better with the strong winds at Harrow on Founder's Day and ended Harrow's hopes for a League and Cup double by defeating them 3-0.

A number of new players this season has added further strength to the squad: Freddy Brunt, Ed Poulter (*Newlands 1995*<sup>3</sup>), Dave Mutter (*The Head Master's 1994*<sup>3</sup>), and Ben Hypolite (*Newlands 1996*<sup>3</sup>) have all appeared for the 1st XI and should serve the club well in the coming seasons.

Meanwhile, the Second XI have enjoyed a mixed first half of the season in their bid to climb out of Division Five. Despite the influx of a number of new young players and some enthusiastic captaincy from Arjun Chopra (*Newlands 1997*<sup>3</sup>), the team still requires a strong run-in if it is to finish in the top two places. A record of four wins and five defeats from nine games finds them in second place in the table, but the teams behind them

have games in hand. Two wins from their final three games is likely to be the minimum required in the remainder of the season.

New Harrow coach Ricky Gill, an FA qualified instructor, has been of huge benefit to the squads, with his Tuesday night sessions in Ladbroke Grove testing players on all aspects of their performance; the introduction of brightly-coloured bibs, following a decade of campaigning by certain members of the team, has proved especially well received.

The social side of the club has also not been neglected, with Harry Hoffen organising a wonderful Christmas banquet to celebrate the 2004 Championship and also signing an unofficial agreement with Raffles (aka Truffles) nightclub to host all post-match celebrations on Saturday nights. The Easter Tour is also bound to be a success thanks to the superb organisational skills of Charlie Tweddle (*Elmfield 1991*<sup>3</sup>). DAVID LEDERMAN

**For further information on the club, including match reports from all the 1st XI and some 2nd XI games, please visit the OHAFC website at [www.ohafc.com](http://www.ohafc.com)**