

Henno's Notes

6 October 2008 16:16

Looking back over the last few weeks and the results achieved in that time, I am pleased with the progress made so far by what is still, a very new team. In our last six games we have won three and drawn three, although on Saturday our draw with Margate after extra time did lead to us losing on penalties. Having started the match without Sean Eferakho and James Taylor, both of whom were called into the first team squad, we unfortunately lost Danny Baigent at half time who went to hospital with a suspected broken bone in his wrist, then two further players with muscle injuries after an hour. We were already missing Luke Smith who watched the game on crutches as a result of an injury sustained from the week before at Maidstone, so in the circumstances, the players worked hard for the draw, and after two hours of football and I had no complaints afterwards although everyone was obviously disappointed to lose in the manner we did.

Steve and I have discussed at some length our targets for this year and we feel that this season we will be looking to use more players in the squad, and rotate the side more than we did last year, as we are keen to give as many players as possible the opportunity to show if they are capable of playing at this level, and beyond into the first team. This will mean that results will possibly suffer as the team will change from week to week, but we are prepared to sacrifice results in our aim to provide players of the required standard. This has been emphasized to the players and it is up to them to show us that they should be part of our squad and not waste the opportunity that they have been given. As I mentioned earlier, we now have James Taylor and Sean knocking on the first team door, with Deren pushing hard and improving all the time, Danny Baigent having sat on the bench in the F.A. cup, and also Danny Crouch not too far away. Therefore we can show that there are opportunities for those and others to progress from within the club, which is so important to the future success of Dartford FC, as I feel many supporters would love to see home grown talent go on to represent the club at first team level.

Thank you for your continued support.

Henno

15 September 2008 14:23

It would be fair to say that following the success of last years reserve team, it was always going to be a hard act to follow. Having only retained four players from last season, and then to have lost my newly appointed captain Luke May after only one game, has meant that the first few weeks have certainly been tough. However, having looked at what feels like hundreds of players during the summer, I now feel that the current squad are reaching the level and standards required to support and compete for first team opportunities as and when they come.

The biggest difficulty is trying to have a balance between giving young players opportunities, while at the same time having experience and knowledge of how to deal with opponents who are quite happy to put young talent into row Z. This year more young players will be given that opportunity, as was the case last week when two seventeen year olds and one sixteen year old from Andy's under eighteen team played and did very well at Lordswood, a game we won 3- 2. This followed a 1- 1 draw the previous Saturday at home to Maidstone, a result I was especially pleased with as their team was most of the players who we had played last year and were as a result, very strong opponents.

Therefore in summary, I am optimistic that the reserve team will this season progress the young talent currently within the club, and if by giving players that opportunity means that we are maybe not as successful in terms of results as we were last year, I think that this year's success will be measured in many other ways.

Your support towards me and the players since I have been manager has been fantastic and I am most grateful to you all, we all appreciate it and I hope to see as many of you as possible at our games, subject to first team commitments of course.

Best Wishes

Henno