



# Lawford Football Club

## THE EXTRA TIMES

[www.lawfordfc.co.uk](http://www.lawfordfc.co.uk)

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## Ladies Poised for Success

### Game ON!

Following the publication of FA guidelines in mid-July permitting the resumption of competitive football and a detailed risk assessment, fixtures could once again be played at School Lane.



Soon afterwards, on 5 August, the first friendly was played between the First Team and the Reserves. Subsequent games were hosted by teams from across the Club from the U7s to U18s and the senior teams, including Lawford Ladies. In total, over 40 friendlies were played at School Lane since the beginning of August.

Pictured are the U12s in their friendly against Wivenhoe Town  
Image: Joy Oakley Photography

### Newsletter via E-mail

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[lawfordfc@gmail.com](mailto:lawfordfc@gmail.com)

Aaron Finch, Ladies Manager writes "For various reasons, last season was a particularly difficult one for the Ladies and we found ourselves struggling to compete in the Eastern Regions Women League. Following conversations with the Club and players, it was decided that we would look to drop into the Essex Womens League for the 2020/21 season in order to rebuild. Typically, we did manage to finish the season on a high, once again reaching the final of the Essex Womens Trophy. Frustratingly, our final was scheduled to be played 3 days after The FA stopped all grassroots football - a missed opportunity to win some silverware!

The following months provided a good opportunity for us plan for the new season. With the FA giving the green light to return to non-contact training in late June, there was a great uptake from the ladies with good numbers turning out each week. Plenty of fitness work prepared us for when we could progress further. Fortunately we didn't have to wait too long for contact training to return - much needed by this point as the Ladies were chomping at the bit!

Contact training provided further insight into the improvements we had made over the closed season and the areas we knew we needed to work on further. As we moved into our pre-season schedule people certainly started to take note of us, with our hard work showing from our very first game. We proceeded to embark on an unbeaten pre-season campaign, winning all but one of our eight friendlies.

We recently kicked off our League campaign, travelling to Billericay Development, who we had a close fought battle with in pre-season resulting

in our only draw. What transpired was something for me to watch with pride as we brushed them aside with a 4-0 victory to open our League campaign.

We look set for an extremely positive season, having managed to retain a strong core squad supplemented by quality new recruits. The confidence, team spirit and belief is strong and I am extremely excited, proud and privileged to be working with this group. I firmly believe we should be challenging at the top of the table and securing another successful trophy campaign. Most importantly, we will continue to enjoy working together, being out there on that pitch and the pride to be playing for the Lawford badge!

Thanks to the Club for its support to the Ladies (particularly John Duchars and Lloyd Bellett) – for giving us the platform to build what we feel is something special! We really do appreciate it. I hope that everyone is keeping well and following the current guidelines to ensure that we come through this pandemic. Stay safe!"





# Short Corner

## News from around the Club

### Best Essex Football Pitches

At a Zoom ceremony hosted by the Essex Playing Fields Association earlier this month School Lane won the award for the Best Kept Football Pitch. This is a worthy accolade to hard work of Geoff Cone, Dave Atton, Henry Calver, Jason Tilstone, Lloyd Bellett, Lenny Buckle & Steve Rand. On behalf of everyone at the Club, congratulations and thank you for all that you do. The award sponsor, Ernest Doe, have kindly donated a prize of the use of a piece of their machinery (and an operator) for the day.

### The Coffee Shop is Open!



The coffee shop has reopened via the window next to the main pitch. As well as hot and cold drinks, a wide range of snacks is available while it is also rumoured that bacon rolls will be back on the menu. On senior team match days, a bar service is available via the coffee shop. Many thanks to everyone involved at the Club for making this happen, particularly Dave Atton and Dave Meakings. The coffee shop and bar make an important contribution to funding for the Club – thank you to all our customers for your support.

### Safety our Top Priority

After a five month break it was tremendous to see competitive play back at School Lane in August. However, there remain challenges to be navigated. Following the UK Government's announcement on 22 September, all Covid-secure guidelines are now legal obligations, to which everyone must adhere. It is essential that all participants – players, coaches, officials and spectators - comply with the FA Guidelines and the Club's protocols. Key elements of the guidance include regular hand washing or use of hand sanitiser, maintaining social distancing and following the NHS Test and Trace protocols. The Club will continue to monitor these and assess whether any modifications are required.

Further work has allowed the coffee shop to reopen although the changing rooms are likely to remain closed for some time. Entry to the clubhouse is restricted to accessing the toilets and it is recommended that a face mask is worn when doing so. More information about the Club's covid-19 procedures, including the FA guidance, can be found at [www.lawfordfc.co.uk/documents](http://www.lawfordfc.co.uk/documents)



Lloyd navigates a covid secure clubhouse

### Strong Start for Reserves

Having been promoted to the Second Division of the Essex & Suffolk Border League, Lawford Reserves have made a good start to the season. Unbeaten in seven games, they currently stand fourth in the Division with all to play for.

### U13s Thriving

The U13s have had a fantastic start to the season. Competing in Division B they are currently unbeaten with 4 wins and a draw in the 5 games played. Manager, David Gray feels that the team have made a "brilliant adjustment to the 11 a side format. Fitness has been key with our U13s fitter and stronger than nearly all the other teams in the division."

### Football Foundation Success



The Club is delighted to have been successful with two recent grant applications to the Football Foundation.



A grant from the Pitch Preparation Fund to help ensure that our pitches are match-fit, now that it is safe to play football again. The Club has also been awarded a grant from the Foundation's Club Preparation Fund to prepare to safely reopen in line with Government guidance around hygiene and social distancing.

John Duchars, Club Chairman writes "We really welcome support from the Football Foundation. Our revenue from normal streams such as the bar and coffee shop are under pressure with covid-19, so the grants will make a real difference in these challenging conditions."

The Football Foundation is a charity funded by the Premier League, The FA and the Government, through Sport England that exists to help provide quality infrastructure at the lower levels of the game. The Foundation has been a good friend to the Club over the years, including providing funding for our first class clubhouse.

### Cup Progress for U18s

The U18s have progressed to the next round of both the Essex County Cup and the League Cup. Having suffered a defeat to Division A leaders, Cornard Dynamos, earlier in the season, the League Cup fixture provided an opportunity for the U18s to demonstrate their resolve and determination. Despite an early 2 goal deficit, the team fought back levelling the score to 2-2 at full time. With no further goals in extra time, Lawford finally prevailed winning 4-3 on penalties. An exhilarating Sunday morning game for players and spectators alike. Well done lads.



Heads Up



The FA and Heads Together are working together to spark the biggest conversation ever around mental health. The Heads Up campaign encourages people to talk about mental health, and for people to treat mental health the same way they approach their physical fitness. However, if you need more urgent support, the Crisis Messenger text service provides free, 24/7 crisis support across the UK. To get help with a range of issues, you text **HeadsUp** to 85258. [www.thefa.com/about-football-association/heads-up](http://www.thefa.com/about-football-association/heads-up)

### Junior & Youth 2020 - 2021 Membership Fees

A huge thank you to everyone who has paid (or made arrangements to pay) the Club membership fee for the current season. Where these are outstanding please could you ensure that payment is made ASAP via bank transfer. If you have any questions or would like to discuss any issue related to membership fees, please contact your team manager or e-mail [lawfordfc@gmail.com](mailto:lawfordfc@gmail.com)

# Our Club Welfare Officer

Jonathan Sly writes "Hello. I hope you are all well and enjoying the new season albeit under strange circumstances. It will take a bit of time to adjust but we will get there. I just wanted to take this opportunity to (re)introduce myself. Some of you will be new to the club, some will have been part of our community for a while now.

Until recently, I was a coach for the club and a parent of a player here. My daughter also does a stint in the coffee bar. Lawford FC is a fantastic club and I hope that you, your son or daughter are enjoying being part of it too. I am now a referee. This has made me realise the range of people involved in making a local football club work and the responsibilities we all have.

I have been the Club Welfare Officer (CWO) for Lawford FC for a number of years now. My focus in this role is to make sure both young people and adults within our club feel safe and happy. For most people this will be through playing or coaching football. As a club, we make sure the right policies are in place and that our various codes of conduct are being adhered to (these are available via our club website). Again, we all have a part to play.

Occasionally, however, things may not go so well or you may have a concern about something you have heard or seen. That's when it may be worth contacting me to share what's troubling you or troubling the young person you are responsible for. That's what the CWO is there for.



I will be popping along to training sessions and match days when I can to say hello but if you do need to contact me please do so via email or via my mobile number below."

[jonathan.sly@icloud.com](mailto:jonathan.sly@icloud.com) / 07428 717919

## Knock-Out Cup Final Beckons

Many congratulations to the First Team for reaching the final of Essex & Suffolk Border League 2019/20 Knock-Out Cup. Having been postponed for a number of months because of Covid-19, Lawford met local rivals Dedham Old Boys in the semi-final on Saturday 12 September at the Drift. Macauley Watson's goal on the

half time whistle secured a victory for the Lads. Manager Andy Young expressed his delight with the result in what he described as a "typical cup game". Lawford will face Earls Colne in the final on 10 November (7.30pm KO), which will be played at Little Oakley. Please come along and show your support to the Lads.





# The School Lane Profile

## Aaron Finch, Ladies Manager

**How did you first become involved in the Club?**  
A good friend, previously involved with the Ladies, asked me to come over and work alongside him. Due to a change in circumstances, his involvement with the Ladies ceased at the start of 2020 and I assumed the Manager's role

**Who is your football hero?**

Karl Duguid – As a Colchester United fan and having watched him weekly growing up, he showed me what it meant feel passion for the beautiful game!

**Do you have a football nickname?**

It's always been Finchy...although gaffer is now often heard and has a nice ring to it!

**Other than Lawford FC, which team do you support?** Colchester United

**What has been the highlight of your time at the Club so far?** Due to the curtailment of last season, we were robbed of potentially my most memorable moment - the chance to win the Essex Womens Trophy! So instead I'd say the 3-3 semi-final draw to put us in the final and grind out the win on penalties in terrible weather!

**Outside of football how do you spend your time?** There isn't an outside of football for me. Always watching, playing, planning, coaching!

**What is the best advice you've been given?**

Believe in yourself – if you don't how can you expect others to believe in you?

**What is your all time football highlight?**

Being a Colchester United fan highlights are somewhat hard to come by, so I would definitely say the promotion to the Championship in 2005-2006 and the first season in the Championship that followed! In terms of my involvement, it would be setting up, playing for and being chairman of my own team. We reached 2 finals in our first season (both played at Lawford) and starting my coaching career with Lawford Ladies!

**What was your favourite children's TV programme?** Kenan & Kel!

**How many pairs of football boots you own?**

Only two

**If you could change one thing about the game what would it be?** VAR

**If you could choose one piece of music to be played as you come on to the pitch what would it be?** Anything but Simply the Best by Tina Turner – I'll always remember Paul Lambert choosing that as the entrance music for Colchester United and it is honestly one of the weirdest things I have ever seen!

**Half-time oranges - good idea? Too healthy for me – crack open the jaffa cakes!**

Thank you, Aaron

Aaron Finch

### Supporting Community Participation

Our five-year football development plan sees more teams playing at School Lane drawn from a more diverse background than today. To make this happen we will need more capacity and, specifically, an all-weather playing facility. This is an ambitious project that will need support across the Club to make it happen.

While our charitable status means that donations to the Club and sponsored events can be eligible for gift aid, making these particularly effective, there are also many other ways to support the Club from volunteering to online shopping. Stay tuned for a further update; in the meantime more information can be found at [www.lawfordfc.co.uk/community](http://www.lawfordfc.co.uk/community)

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