

## **CAPTAIN'S REPORT FOR 2009-10 – Jon McKinley, Captain & GC Rep, Football Section**

At the beginning of this season I wrote in the club magazine that we were: “looking forward to a breakthrough season in 2009-10, with a stronger group of players and a much greater contingent of KCC members playing for the teams.” We have had some success.

Like other sporting sections, we began the season under pressure to increase the proportion of members playing in KCC teams. Before the start of the season, we even considered having just one team in the Yau Yee League, but in the light of strong arguments from team managers, we agreed to keep two teams and to try to attract more guest players and new recruits to join the KCC as members.

Partly driven by membership concerns, we re-organised the teams with the aim of having at least one team challenging for Yau Yee League honours, whilst the other team could be a platform for newer members or junior players to gain experience – whilst also challenging for the position of top KCC team in its own right.

The team formerly known as KCC therefore became TTFKAK – although we later decided to call them KCC Dragons. The “old” Dragons team (yes, I was as confused as you are by now) was dubbed the KCC Knights following a democratic vote at the pre-season pool party - although late voting irregularities nearly saw them re-named KCC Toon Army.

### *Performance of Yau Yee Teams*

The achievements of the KCC Dragons certainly represented a breakthrough – the team established itself in the top half of the Yau Yee League First Division and reached the Yau Yee Cup Final. These are the best results that a KCC football team has achieved in a decade. Just as importantly, the team management has built up a strong group of players who have shown a great spirit both on and off the pitch. Credit is due to Shyam Nainani, Paul McGunnigle and Coach Luke Schroder for their hard work over the season.

The KCC Knights have not made as much progress as we hoped. Reaching the Yau Yee Cup quarter finals was encouraging, but relegation to the Second Division came as a blow. The fact that it was difficult to keep a consistent squad of players through the season together contributed to a poor run of results, despite some excellent individual performances. Jim Down and Coach Hernan Vaca will need to find more players with a commitment to playing regularly for KCC if the Knights are to make a swift return to the top division.

### *Membership*

Our efforts to increase the number of football members at the KCC have had an encouraging response. This season we have recruited eight new Sporting Subscribers and three Junior Subscribers, whilst two Sporting Subscribers, Frankie Ferreira and Marcel Sosnowski have become full members. Our Yau Yee League teams are now increasingly made up of club members, and in the coming season we will continue to look for slots for the SS and JS applicants that we currently have waitlisted. I would like here to acknowledge the support of other sports sections, namely Squash, Lawn Bowls and Tennis for “loaning” us SS slots to allow us to recruit new members.

### *Junior Football*

Over the past season, the Football Section has given priority to reorganising the two Yau Yee league teams and recruiting new members. But we have also continued to develop the junior programme, building on the work done by Jim Down and the volunteer dads.

For 2009-10, we engaged the Brazilian Soccer Schools to provide coaching services for our Saturday morning programmes, and as reported by Jim, the results have been very satisfactory, both in terms of numbers of players participating and of the results of our teams. Our 1996 team has been very competitive in the HK Junior Football League, finishing in third place and beating all the leading teams along the way. The 1997s have improved steadily in their age group league, and in the HKJFL mini-tournaments we have seen better results at all levels, in particular from our very talented 1998 line-up.

### *Social Football*

Our social team, the KCC Royals had a new Manager this year, Ravi Sujanani, and after getting off to a fine start with a 6-4 demolition of the Royal Bangkok Sports Club in July, the Royals went from strength to strength, playing nearly 30 social matches and also taking part in the annual RBSC 7s in Bangkok. KCC members from other sections regularly play for the Royals – and this year we had cricket, hockey, squash, tennis and even lawn bowls players in the team.

### *Conclusion*

An important aspect of any sports team's success is the performance off the field. We encourage team bonding and loyalty to the KCC through social events – including the Bangkok tour, which this year saw a record participation of over 30 KCC players. It is also important that the club membership as a whole is kept abreast of what our section is doing, and we provide regular write-ups for the KCC Magazine, and post weekly updates of results and fixtures on the notice-board.

The Football Section projects a very positive profile of the KCC through our involvement in the Yau Yee League, the Hong Kong Junior Football League and the HKFC International Soccer 7s, where our players and committee members are recognised as valuable contributors to the success of these organisations and their events. The relationships that our section builds with other sports clubs in Hong Kong and overseas also enhance the reputation of the KCC.

It has been an honour to have held the position of Captain of Football in 2009-10, a position that has been made much easier than it might have been by the excellent support that I have had from my fellow committee members, as well as the General Committee, Robert Blythe and his superb management team and the club membership as a whole. I thank you all for your support, and look forward to another great season for KCC football in 2010-11.

*'Jonny Mac'*