

KCC DRAGONS REPORT FOR 2009-10 – Shyam Nainani, Manager

The Dragons have had an interesting season this year finishing fifth in the Yau Yee League. The breakthrough was making the Final of the YYL Cup. Last time KCC appeared in a Final was 9 years ago and 10 since we won. The Final will be played on the 23rd of May. The YYL Sixes Final Day is due to be played on the 30th of May.

Our season started with a bump with us losing in our first league games against the two sides that got promoted from the 2nd division. It was a disappointing start considering we dominated both games but still came out with nothing. We finished the first half of the season of 11 games with 6 wins and 5 defeats for a return of 18 points. The second half of the season we fared slightly better with a return of 21 points. The disappointment of a good second half to the season was losing the penultimate game by a solitary goal and drawing to the Swiss on the last day of the season.

We played the KCC Knights twice in the season. Although the scores were 4-0 and 1-0 to us, that did not show the true story. Credit to the Knights as it took a spectacular long range strike from Luca in the first leg to break the deadlock. Only when Yin turned in a corner at the front post just before the break did it look like we got control of the game. The second game was a tight affair as well and we did well to come out of that with a win.

As the newly assembled Dragons played game after game, we starting notching those wins one by one and only with that the team started to gel. One of the reasons many of us feel why we did not start as well as we should have was not having played enough games together as a unit before the season started. Having a few new players join us at KCC plus some of the old Dragons and some from the old KCC put together was always going to take a bit of time to find that perfect balance.

We have gone through a lot together in this season. I think this will hold us in good stead for the future of the team when I feel we can challenge for the league. The disappointments of losing games, the joy of comeback wins, last minute goals, countless nights out and most of all,

that RBSC tour to Bangkok where we bonded and really became a “TEAM”.

At the moment as our season hasn't finished at the time of writing, top goal scorer of this season is Paul Crompton with 14 goals. Jason Trenberth close behind at 11. They both finished joint on the league goal front on 9 goals each although Paul has been more successful in the Cup. Chris Pickles is on a total of 10 goals with 5 each in the League and the Cup. Luca finished with 7 in the league. Yin finished with a total of 5 in both competitions. Our goals for is the third highest in the league after the top two teams.

Our defence has held their own reasonably well. We finished joint 4th in the 'goals against' column in the final table.

In the Cup competition, we managed to have our best run for a long while, surpassing last year's semi-final defeat of the 'old' Dragons. We were drawn in the Semi Final against the Club Colts. We took the lead only for the Colts to score two. With time ticking away and ten minutes left, John O'Reilly managed to stretch himself with a perfectly timed run to head Paul Crompton's cross into the far corner. There were no goals in extra time. We then prevailed in the ensuing penalty shootout.

Dragons have always been a force to be reckoned with at the annual Yau Yee League Sixes. I hope and trust we will do well as in previous seasons.

Discipline wise, again there is room for improvement. We are currently on 38 points with the Cup Final yet to be played.

I must congratulate the Dragons that made the YYL Select Open team this year for the IP Global HKFC Soccer 7s. Paul Crompton, Richard Young and John O'Reilly. This was the biggest selection from any one team in the YYL as we had three out of ten in the side. Sebastian Guevara was also selected as keeper for the YYL Select Masters team so well done to him. Luca Merlone missed out this year on the YYL Select team but was then given a chance of a lifetime to play for West Ham as one of their players had to pull out on the morning of the tournament.

He capped a weekend to remember off with a goal two minutes after coming on.

I'd like to thank all my fellow Sub-committee members for another great job done this season. Special thanks must go to our Chairman Jon McKinley for a fantastic job done through the year.

I would like to wish good luck to those that will not be continuing on the committee and welcome those that will be coming on board.

I'd like to thank all my players and support team especially Luke Schroder, our coach whose work has been immense. He runs all the sessions on Thursdays and does most of the team preparations before games on Sundays. He has gone many times out of the way in creating that bond between the players and it's one of the main reasons why the players feel so closely knit now. Also, I must mention Paul McGunnigle and Yin that have been helping me out behind the scenes whenever I have needed them. Without these guys, my job would have been just that much more difficult.

Shyam Nainani