



Thorley Manor FC founder Greg Sambridge with his sons Noah and Jack and volunteer coaches Cheryl Codlin and Luke Weston

Picture: TMFC

Thorley Manor are on the up thanks to a flexible approach

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Thorley Manor are going from strength to strength as they offer youngsters the chance to develop their skills in a flexible environment. Greg Sambridge started the club in September 2016 as he wanted to offer more choice to young footballers in the area.

He began by running an under-nine team, but being asked by parents if he was thinking about setting up sides for other age groups means he now caters for children from reception age up to under-10s.

The FA-qualified coach, who played for the likes of Takeley and Wormley, is helped out by volunteer coaches Cheryl Codlin and Luke Weston.

There are around 65 children

attending training sessions, with an under-seven team, two under-10 teams and a soon-to-start under-eight team playing matches in the West Essex and East Herts Leagues.

Competing in the matches is not compulsory, however, with Sambridge focusing on providing fun sessions that keep everyone active and engaged.

"The emphasis is on it being football for all and I wanted there to be flexibility for the children and the parents," said Sambridge.

"Football can keep children active and get them out in the elements, and it gives them all that in a safe environment."

"All abilities are welcome and sessions are tailored so that all of the players are engaged."

Training takes place at Manor Fields Primary School on Saturdays during the winter, with Years 4 and 5 in action from 10.30am, Years 2 and 3 getting out at 11.30am and Year 1 and reception taking to the field at 12.15pm.

There are also evening sessions at Sawbridgeworth's Leventhorpe School on Fridays between 7pm and 8pm.

And some new sessions are to be launched soon, with the time at Leventhorpe being extended to begin at 6pm, while Hockerill Anglo-European College will be the venue on Wednesdays between 6pm and 7pm.

An initial taster session is free for new players and sessions are then priced at £5 after that, with a discount offered if more than one training

session is attended in the same week.

Parents can pay monthly if they prefer, rather than weekly, while there are some extra fees for players who choose to play in the competitive league matches. There is no obligation to attend training regularly.

"I'm very proud of it," said Sambridge. "The fact we're growing during the winter period is great, and it's great to see the kids developing and progressing."

The club have also been boosted by receiving recent sponsorship from Savills and Price Bailey, with donations of £250 and £500 respectively going towards new goals, uniform and other equipment.

Email greg.sambridge@thorleymanorfc.co.uk, visit www.thorleymanorfc.co.uk or search for the club on Facebook to find out more.

Athletic see off Rovers to claim BSCFC derby spoils

Athletic were 2-1 winners over Rovers in the Bishop's Stortford Community Football Club under-14 derby.

It was Athletic who took an early lead after 10 minutes, but Rovers fought back and kept their opponents pegged back.

They produced a period of sustained pressure, the highlight of which was a dazzling run and cross by Charlie Fisher which Rio Russell drilled against the post.

It seemed an equaliser was inevitable and Finn Aylott broke through and emphatically buried a shot to make it all square.

Rovers continued to turn the screw, playing some lovely flowing football on a heavy and rutted surface. However, it was Athletic who struck next as they caught the Rovers defence out with a ball over the top and neat finish.

In the second half, Rovers continued to keep Athletic in their own half for long periods and man of the match Cameron Street battled hard in midfield to keep his team on the front foot.

But the closest Rovers came to an equaliser was a long-range strike from Josh O'Connor which rattled the bar.

Swifts eyeing better times after defeat

Bishop's Stortford Swifts under-16s went down 3-1 at Fairlands as they suffered their third straight Royston Crow League defeat.

The Stevenage-based hosts took advantage of an eighth-minute corner to go ahead, before doubling their lead in the 26th minute.

Swifts, once again, had a depleted squad for the match and their limited options began to take its toll as they began the second half with damage limitation in mind.

After a period of inactivity, Archie Lambert was called into action as he produced an acrobatic save to keep Swifts in with a chance.

But the shot-stopper was beaten in the 75th minute, before Swifts did get a consolation goal when the Fairlands captain put through his own net.

Meanwhile, everyone at the club would like to wish under-16 Archie Gallagher, who has been very poorly, a speedy recovery.

■ Louie Hollington got both goals as Sawbridgeworth Town under-15s drew 2-2 with Panshanger Lions to go top of Mid-Herts League, Division One.

Pat Lawrence and Nick Randall were on target as the under-17s lost 5-2 to Pymmes SFA in Division Four, while the under-eights were beaten 4-1 by Stotfold Junior Ambers in the Royston Crow League.

65
kids training at
Thorley Manor