

THERE'S ONLY ONE TEAM IN SIDCUP

New Crusaders FC, 1905 to 1922

By Ian Fordyce, Revised: 19 March 2010

Having monopolised football coverage in the local papers for several seasons, Cray Wanderers got minor billing after the formation of New Crusaders.

NEW CRUSADERS FC 1905-14

Founded in 1905, the club played at the College ground, Sidcup, Kent. The founding president was a Mr Samuel Farnfield whose seven sons were all football 'Blues' and played for the club for some time.

1905-06: Made a spectacular entry into the F A Cup, beating Woking 16-0, still a record for a debut match and also ninth biggest margin of victory of all time.

Three further rounds were negotiated before losing to Southern League Plymouth Argyle 3-6 in the First Round Proper.

Three Farnfield brothers had been Amateur Cup finalists with Clapton the previous season. They nearly reached the final this season, progressing through eight rounds before losing the semi-final to eventual winners Oxford City.

Success came in the London Senior Cup, having to win nine ties with a goal aggregate of 56-8.

Many friendlies were played, perhaps the most competitive being a challenge match between near neighbours Eltham who had just won the Kent Senior Cup. After a hard fought encounter, Crusaders won 2-1.

207 goals were scored in the season.

1906-07: After exemption to the fifth qualifying round of the F A Cup, lost to Hastings & St Leonards. A win in the Amateur

Cup was followed by a narrow defeat at holders Oxford City.

They did not defend the London Senior Cup, but did reach the semi-final of the London Charity Cup.

Surprisingly, for a Kent club, they won the Middlesex Senior Cup and also the prestigious Eastbourne Charity Cup.

At Easter, the club toured East Anglia, winning four games against amateur clubs and drawing with professional Norwich City.

104 goals were scored in the season. P H Farnfield played in England's first amateur international versus France, scoring a goal. Amongst the Friendly fixtures for this season was a 4-2 success away to Cray Wanderers.

1907-08: First champions of the Southern Amateur League with a scoring record of 5 goals a game – almost certainly still a league record. Retained the Eastbourne Charity Cup and also won the Kent AFA Senior Cup.

1908-09: First club to do the AFA Senior Cup and Southern Amateur League double. Also retained the Kent AFA Senior Cup and Eastbourne Charity Cup.

1909-10: Started the season by winning the Kent AFA Charity Cup, held over from the previous season. The club was still continuing to play at least half a dozen friendlies a season.

Having drawn at home, they lost 1-11 to Oxford University. The Dark Blues had inflicted their second heaviest defeat, 2-8, in the previous season.

The season finished with the club completing hat-tricks of successes in the Southern Amateur League and Kent AFA Senior Cups.

1910-11: Much the same as the previous season, with a fourth Southern Amateur League title, but defeat in the Kent AFA Final.

The Easter tour was memorable. Twelve players were selected, but only eleven made the train to the South of France. One had a septic foot but still played.

In a week, five games were won, against Olympic Marseilles, Star Helvetique (French champions), Nice and twice against Barcelona (Spanish champions).

1911-12: Recaptured the Kent AFA Cup and finally displaced from the top of the Southern Amateur League by old rivals, Civil Service.

Another Easter tour produced five more wins, including a double over Barcelona.

1912-13: Switched places with Civil Service at the top of the league. Retained the Kent AFA Cup and just failed to win the AFA Senior Cup, losing the final 2-3 to the Casuals.

Five more wins on the Easter tour to Portugal, including Sporting Lisbon and a double success against future European champions Benfica.

1913-14: Left the AFA to join the Isthmian League, finishing fifth. Made some progress in the F A and Amateur Cups but were still eliminated in the qualifying rounds.

Whilst the bulk of the regular team were touring Spain at Easter, those left behind (including two Farnfields) won the Kent Amateur Cup final. A remarkable feature of this success was winning all four ties 1-0.

1914-15: Only played one game, this being an F A Cup tie against Northfleet United.

New Crusaders never restarted after the Great War, but they did play one final game against old rivals the Kent AFA, scoring seven times. This match was played at Bickley Park School where one of the Farnfields had become Headmaster.

In 1920, E R H Farnfield played for England Amateurs v France whilst a Margate player.

The statistics below show that the club won 19 of 36 competitions entered and are one of the few clubs to have won three different County F A Cups.

| | E | P | W | D | L | F | A | Best | |
|------------------------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|-------------|-----------|
| F A Cup | 4 | 11 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 44 | 19 | =33rd | |
| F A Amateur Cup | 3 | 16 | 10 | 3 | 3 | 61 | 21 | =3rd | |
| Isthmian League | 1 | 20 | 10 | 3 | 7 | 40 | 28 | 5th | |
| Southern Amat League | 6 | 94 | 69 | 13 | 12 | 295 | 89 | 1st | (5) |
| AFA Senior Cup | 6 | 20 | 13 | 2 | 5 | 65 | 22 | 1st | (1) |
| Eastbourne Charity Cup | 3 | 11 | 9 | 2 | 0 | 35 | 3 | 1st | (3) |
| Kent Amateur Cup | 1 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 1st | (1) |
| Kent Senior Shield | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 6 | =5th | |
| Kent AFA Senior Cup | 6 | 20 | 17 | 2 | 1 | 97 | 16 | 1st | (5) |
| Kent AFA Charity Cup | 2 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 28 | 4 | 1st | (2) |
| London Charity Cup | 1 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 6 | =3rd | |
| London Senior Cup | 1 | 10 | 9 | 1 | 0 | 56 | 8 | 1st | (1) |
| Middlesex Senior Cup | 1 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 15 | 5 | 1st | (1) |
| | 36 | 220 | 155 | 31 | 34 | 747 | 227 | | 19 |