

## **COUNTY REPRESENTATIVE TEAMS 2017/18**

Key: SEESFA - South-East England Schools FA Competition. ESFA - English Schools FA Inter-County Competition.

**Under 18s Boys** (Management Team: Graham Hall, Andy Tickner, John Brandon)

Squad: Ibrahim Ugrader (Barking Abbey), Jai Lewis (Colne), Kieran Gore (Shenfield), Olamiji Ayoola, Nathan Douglas, Sam Mvemba (Barking Abbey), Tom Dance, Reece Latimer (SEEVIC), Sam Adcock (Southend High), Toby Aromorolan, Jesse Amoh, Afo Moronkeji (Harris Academy), Harry Hart (Plume), Godfrey Kambuzza, Misha Djemali (Barking Abbey), Tyler Richardson (Shenfield), George Cox (King John), Jed Smith, Jake Wiggins (Appleton), Zack Ziloran (Cooper's Company & Coborn), Connor Malloy (Appleton), Neil McClean (Southend High), Rowan Newland, Darnell Bromfield (Barking Abbey), Solomon Ogunwomoju, Jayde Abraham, Warren Kayembe (Barking Abbey), Max Watters (Shenfield), Emille Acquah (Southend High), Kane Hearn (Havering Sixth Form College), Danny Hurford (Appleton).

Sunday 5th November: vs **Southern Independent Schools** (Home, Friendlies) A Team Lost 0-4, B Team Lost 1-3, C Team Lost 1-3 at Brentwood School, 2:00pm. Friday 11th November: vs **Sussex** (Home, ESFA1) Won 4-3 at Brentwood School, 1:30pm. Friday 2nd December: vs **Norfolk** (Home, ESFA2) P-P (Norfolk Failed to Raise a Team) at Lakeside Sports Ground, 7:45pm. Friday 16th December: vs **Hampshire** (Away, SEESFA) Lost 2-3 at Alton FC, 1:30pm. Friday 23rd December: vs **West Midlands** (Home, ESFAQF) Won 5-2 at Barking Abbey School, 12:30pm. Friday 3rd February: vs **Hampshire** (Away, ESFAF) Won 5-1 at Alton FC, 3:45pm. Friday 24th February: vs **Sussex** (Home, SEESFA) Drew 1-1 at Lakeside Sports Ground, 3:00pm. Monday 27th February: vs **Kent** (Away, SEESFA) Won 4-2 at Mapleden Noakes School, 7:30pm. Saturday 29th April: vs **Durham** (Neutral, ESFAF) Won 2-1 (aet) at Coventry City FC, 4:00pm.

**Another eventful season was completed with a National Cup win and numerous players being given the opportunity to develop and enjoy county representative football.**

In the SEESFA Competition, there were opportunities to give our squad players a chance to shine, which led to a narrow 3-2 loss against Hampshire, a high-quality draw at home to Sussex and a convincing 4-2 win at Kent. Disappointingly, Inner London and Surrey failed to complete their fixtures, rendering the table incomplete and qualification for the final a lottery.

In the ESFA National Trophy, an exciting First Round tie took place at Brentwood School. With Essex Schools behind three times during the match, it wasn't until the last minute that the side managed to overcome their opponents, Sussex, and end an enthralling match with a 4-3 win.

In Round Two, Norfolk disappointingly withdrew two hours before kick-off, leaving a Quarter-Final tie at home to West Midlands. Two defensive mistakes left a dominant Essex side trailing 2-1 at half time, but another explosive second-half performance gave Essex a comfortable 5-2 win to move into the Semi-Finals away to Hampshire. This was a tight game for 70 minutes before Essex's front line once again burst into action, with Solomon Ogunwomoju netting his second hat-trick of the competition to win 5-1.

Rather frustratingly, we then had a three-month wait for the final of this competition, played at the Ricoh Arena against Durham Schools. The first ten minutes included multiple chances for both sides, and only Solomon Ogunwomoju was again able to find the net to give Essex Schools a 1-0 lead. Essex were unable to find their fluent best form as Durham visibly grew in confidence and, with three minutes to go, Durham equalized to take the game into extra time.

Crucially, it was the Essex substitutes who helped Essex to secure the game and, in a move which started deep in their own half, Godfrey Kambuzza burst into the Durham penalty area to score into the corner of the net, allowing Essex to lift the trophy once again.

Representing the Essex County FA, in the East Anglian Counties Competition, an early win against Suffolk (3-1) was followed up with two disappointing results; a 2-2 draw against Hertfordshire and 3-2 loss against Bedfordshire. Despite this, our next game in this competition saw us travel to Cambridgeshire, and it was our best first-half performance of the season, leading 5-0 lead at the break.

The match predictably fizzled out in the second half, with Essex winning 5-1. This left the final game against Norfolk to set-up a three-way share of the title. Played in the week before the National Schools Final, it proved to be a shocker for Essex, with mistake after mistake and a hungry Norfolk side taking their chances well to secure the title outright with a 4-1 win.

The FA County Youth Cup started with a trip to Herefordshire and, despite dominating the game, Essex were unable to take their chances so it was left to Harry Hart to shin the ball into the ground with a couple of deflections on its way into the top corner of the net to win 1-0. Cambridgeshire were next at Histon FC in Round Two but, after early resistance, the pacy Essex forward line pulled away to take the tie 3-0.

Round Three was a home game at the Len Forge Centre against Sussex. This was a dogged cup tie, with Essex having difficulty finding their passes and having to defend for long periods of the game. A second-half free kick for Sussex allowed them the opportunity to head/shoulder into the Essex goal to go up 1-0.

A tremendous fightback led to Toby Aromolaran scoring in the final minutes to seemingly take the tie into extra time. With Essex finally in the ascendancy, a chance to win was missed at one end and Sussex broke out to create their own match winner, which was duly taken to win the game 2-1.

Kieran Gore and Olamiji Ayoola were almost ever-present at centre-back, as were Toby Aromolaran and Harry Hart in midfield. Max Watters, Solomon Ogunwomoju and Jayde Abraham made up a forward line with pace and goals that were the dread of opposition defenders. Ibrahim Ugrader, Sam Mvemba, Misha Djemali and Tyler Richardson all performed superbly whilst only under 17s, and they can now look forward to setting the standard for next year's incoming county players.

Congratulations to Max Watters on his selection for England Schools Under 18s in their winning campaign in the Victory Shield, an experience I am sure he will never forget and one that will help with his future development, both as a footballer and a young man. Finally, Andy and I would like to thank all players, parents, loyal supporters (Jeff, Fred and Graham) and office staff (Mark, Rob, Chris et al) for their help and support during the season.

**Under 16s Boys** (Management Team: Matt Double, Matt Hall and Paul Preston)

**Squad:** George Dugdale (Southend High School for Boys), Tom Burke (Emerson Park), Josh Hudson (Beauchamps), Denzel Adebij (Harris Academy Chafford Hundred), Taylor Turner (FitzWimarc), Kiah Froud (Eastwood), Temi Babalola (Caterham), Santana Porter (Caterham), Sidney Jethva (Roding Valley), Fergal Looney (Colchester Royal Grammar), Callum Nightingil (Marshalls Park), Billy Reed (Emerson Park), Charlie Munns (Emerson Park), George Ishmail (Emerson Park), Dantai Demontagnac (Eastlea), Ramzi Mahmoudi (Langdon Academy), Peter Oyetunji (Robert Clack), Samir Ali (Stewards), Furo Gogo-Ibiam (Harris Academy Chafford Hundred), JJ De Souza Quissa (Kingsford), Emmanuel Omolegen (St Bonaventure's), Isaac Chitole-Durand (Emerson Park), Mosope Oguntuga (Trinity), Brian Galach (Chingford), Billy Orpwood (Billericay).

**Saturday 5th November:** vs **Middlesex** (Away, ESFA1) Won 4-1 at Brunel University, 10:30am. **Saturday 26th November:** vs **Norfolk** (Away, ESFA2) Lost 2-6 at City of Norwich School, 11:30am. **Saturday 3rd December:** vs **Bedfordshire** (Away, SEESFA) Won 1-0 (match expunged, Bedfordshire withdrawn) at Redbourne Upper School, 10:30am. **Saturday 17th December:** vs **Norfolk** (Home, SEESFA) Drew 4-4 at London Marathon Playing Fields, 11:00am. **Saturday 28th January:** vs **Inner London** (Away, SEESFA) Won 4-1 at Douglas Eyre Sports Centre, 11:00am. **Saturday 4th February:** vs **Hertfordshire** (Away, SEESFA) Lost 1-4 at Woollam Playing Fields, 12:30pm. **Match Awarded:** vs **Suffolk** (Home, SEESFA) Won '0-0' (Suffolk failed to raise a side).

**Over 80 boys turned up for trials in mid-October- an excellent number for the Under 16s age group. Many of the returning squad from the Under 15s were present and able to represent the county again this season, plus there were a few old faces from Under 14s level.**

From the trials we were able to pick a very strong squad, with a few additions to those in previous years in order to supplement playing the in the schools and County FA competitions. With the First Round of the National Cup at the end of October we were straight into action and the majority of the boys from the Under 15s were selected in what was a very strong squad.

The game, away to Middlesex, provided stiff competition for the boys, with a very well organised and athletic Middlesex taking the lead. Once we had the journey out of our legs, and the team had started to find some cohesion, the quality of football improved, leading to an equaliser. The rest of the game was very hard fought and the boys showed great patience, reaping rewards in the final ten minutes to run out as 4-1 winners.

On to Round Two and the hopes of a good run in the National Cup were brought down to earth by a very strong Norfolk side, who eventually reached the Semi-Finals. The game never got going for us after early three early Norfolk goals, although a goal before half-time did give us a small glimpse at a comeback, only to be shattered again as Norfolk went 5-1 up and then finishing the game winning 6-2. It was 'one' of those games that you put down to experience, learn from it and move on.

We knew we would have the opportunity to play Norfolk again later in the season and have a chance to put the performance right. But, in our first SEESFA performance of the season, we travelled away to Bedfordshire. It was a game that required a great deal of patience as, despite being on top for large periods, clear cut chances were few and far between.

Even more patience was required when a penalty was given away, but then excellently saved. In the end we turned the dominance into a win with a very well-taken goal with 15 minutes to go. The defence then held strong for the remainder of the game to earn a hard-fought and disciplined win. It was the second game where patience had proved to be a success.

Four games in, we finally enjoyed our first home game and had a chance to avenge our disappointing performance and result away to Norfolk in the National Cup. The boys went out with a clear message to start fast and be disciplined, so at 2-0 down things weren't looking good. Then, after 20 minutes of the first half, we saw the best football the team produced all season, possibly in their time with Essex as a team from Under 14s to Under 16s.

They played with pace, power, intelligence and, in the space of the next 20 minutes, had created the chances for Samir Ali to score a hat-trick so we got to half-time 3-2 up. The message was clear - to try and maintain that - but Norfolk came out with other ideas, got another two goals and were 4-3 up with a few minutes to go. The boys showed their grit and determination not to be beaten and, with a few minutes to go, got a well-earned equaliser to come out of a pulsating game with a 4-4 draw.

Our next game was a first visit to Inner London in a long while and, whilst the first half remained quite even, the Essex boys were always in control, Inner London's chances being limited to a few counter-attacks. We got 2-0 up before an Inner London free kick started to cause some concern, but some good football and hard work ensured we ended up easing to a 4-1 win, with the second hat-trick of the season being scored by Peter Oyetunji.

With our hopes very much still alive, we went to Hertfordshire for yet another away game. We were growing very accustomed to coach travel, having had three of our five County FA games also away from home. Hertfordshire were leading the SEESFA group stage, with an unbeaten record, so they were always going to be a tough proposition, and they proved to be again. Once more it was the inability to start a game well that caused a problem, and 3-0 down after 15 minutes is never a good way to start a football match.

From that point on, though, the team were organised, disciplined and played some good football, managing to pull one back mid-way through the second half. It was something to cling on to. If we could reduce the goal difference, or even push for a draw, we had every chance of qualification for the Semi-Finals. Unfortunately, we were unable to get a second and, in pushing for a goal, we allowed Hertfordshire back in on the counter-attack and lost 4-1.

All was not lost, however, as a convincing win at home over Suffolk would have cemented a semi-final spot. Unfortunately Suffolk were unable to field a side and the fixture was not played. It was a disappointing end to a very hard-fought campaign in which we finished third on goal difference in the group.

13 of the boys selected in the squad earned their county caps for ten or more county appearances over the three years, which is a fantastic achievement and a demonstration of their commitment to playing county football, even those who, on occasions, represented academy sides. A notable mention should go to George Ishmail, who played every Essex Schools game for three years from Under 14s through to Under 16s, an excellent display of commitment and consistency. Well done, George.

I would like to thank Paul Preston and Matt Hall for their help and support through the course of the season with trials, squad selection and matchday organisation and Andy Tickner for stepping in on a couple of occasions to provide the support on a matchday. Thanks to the Essex Schools Committee for their help and organisation and making sure that everything possible is done to keep a high level of county representative football going in Essex.

A final thank you goes to the players and their parents for all their efforts and support throughout the course of the season. I wish each and every player the best for their future in football, and hopefully some will continue through to represent Essex at Under 18s level.

**Under 15s Boys** (Management Team: Carl Papworth, Liam Saxton and Tom Harding)

Squad: Jacob Allen McCormack (Greensward Academy), Joseph Elliot (King John), Reggie Hubbard (Debden High), Lee Protain-Braithwaite (Seven Kings), Byron Humbles (Beauchamps), Tommy Dixon (Sweyne Park), Javran Rubio-Walker (Frederick Bremer), Harvey Schafer (St Martin's), Tyler Cavner (Gateway), Konna Joseph (Harris Academy Chafford Hundred), Donell Ofori (Canon Palmer), Owen Young (Shoebury High), Billy Collhurst (Redden Court), Thomas Duffy, Kakha Jojshelidza (William Edwards), Eniola Oyunjimi (Olive Academy).

Saturday 3rd December: vs **Bedfordshire** (Away, SEESFA) Lost 2-3 at Flitwick Community Football Centre, 10:30am. Saturday 17th December: vs **Norfolk** (Home, SEESFA) Won 2-1 at London Marathon Playing Fields, 10:30am. Saturday 25th February: vs **Suffolk** (Home, SEESFA) Drew 2-2 at London Marathon Playing Fields, 10:30am. Saturday 18th March: vs **Inner London** (Away, SEESFA) Lost 1-2 at Douglas Eyre Sports Centre, 10:30am.

**In the first weekend of October the first trials were held, seeing over 100 players from the inner and outer boroughs descend on the London Marathon Playing Fields, where the standard was exceptionally high. There were many difficult decisions to make for the management team but we eventually settled on our squad.**

The first game of the season saw us travel to Bedfordshire in the SEESFA Competition. After a dramatic journey to Bedford that saw the squad go down to eight players from the initial 16 who were picked, the boys thought they were going to be in for a long morning until the Management Team rung round and managed to call up five boys from the trials. The team started with eight players and fought gallantly for the first half of the game, creating some chances and defending exceptionally well.

However, we were out run on a couple of occasions and went into the break 2-0 down. We were happy with this performance and believed we could get back into the game once we had eleven players on the pitch. The second half saw us start with ten players and it gave Essex a lift. We started the half brightly and played some excellent football, a brilliantly-worked individual goal from Oyunjimi seeing us get back in the game at 2-1.

Essex continued their form and, mid-way through the second half, the team drew level with a goal from Hubbard. The game continued to be end-to-end, with both sides having good chances to win the match. With about ten minutes to go, Oyunjimi had a great chance to win the game but pressure from the pressing Bedfordshire defenders saw him put it just wide.

The home side then went on the attack and won a free kick out wide. From that, a whipped cross to the unmarked Bedfordshire striker was converted at the back post to win the game. The Essex side felt demoralised after the defeat, but only because of the efforts they had put in collectively. The management were extremely happy with the side's performance considering the issues before the game.

The second game of the season saw the side host Norfolk, who had improved their squad from the previous season which meant another tough game was ahead. The hosts started exceptionally well, playing some free-flowing football from the back to the front. However, good chances were missed early on, which the Management Team hoped wouldn't come back to haunt them. Essex continued to dominate the first half and a well-worked move down the right saw Hubbard slot in, which he tucked away neatly.

Essex continued to push with the wind and managed to get a second before the break with a wonder strike from Oyunjimi. The second half saw Norfolk have the advantage of the wind behind them, which they used to good effect, moving the ball from back to front quickly in an attempt to catch the hosts off-guard.

The visitors continued to push, but resilient defending and squandered chances by the visitors maintained the hosts' 2-0 lead. However, a dangerous free kick out wide by the visitors caused to the hosts serious problems. It was only half cleared and Norfolk managed to scramble the ball home from this. The visitors continued to push hard, only for Essex to remain strong and come out 2-1 winners.

The third game saw Essex host a Suffolk side who were bottom of the table. The hosts needed a convincing win if they were to progress to the Semi-Finals. The Essex side started well, dominating the proceedings early on, and they were 2-0 up half-way through the first half with goals from Hubbard and Schafer. Essex continued to make chance after chance, only to be denied by the in-form Suffolk keeper.

The visitors snatched one back right before the half time whistle. Essex continued to create numerous chances in the second half, only to be prevented from extending their lead by the Suffolk goal keeper who was having the game of his life. A mix-up in the Essex defence presented a chance to the visitors, who took advantage of this mistake to make the scores level.

Essex had to go for the victory, so they changed formation and went all out attack to win the game. They continued to create chance after chance to win the match, but the Suffolk 'keeper stood strong and the contest finished level, which would set-up a showdown in the final game against Inner London.

The final SEESFA game saw Essex travel the short distance to Walthamstow, which would decide who finished second in the group and progress to the Semi-Finals. Essex started well, looking assured at the back and dangerous going forward. The visitors were just edging the game and they took the lead mid-way through the first half with a determined run and finish from Schafer. Essex went into the break with a slender 1 - 0 lead.

Inner London came out all guns blazing in the second half, putting the visitors under huge amounts of pressure. It was only a matter of time until the hosts got the equaliser. A mix-up between the Essex centre-back and the goalkeeper from a direct ball resulted in the game being level. Inner London took this momentum and drove on, looking dangerous with every attack. The hosts scored the winner with ten minutes left from an overload on the right-hand side.

Essex were out, and Inner London progressed to the Semi-Finals of the Under 15s SEESFA Competition. The Management Team would like to thank all players involved this season and a thanks to their parents and clubs who have supported their representation this year. After a difficult opening game at Bedfordshire due to selection difficulties, the squad have improved considerably, with lots of positives to be taken from the games that we can take into next season.

**Under 14s Boys** (Management Team: David Agass MBE, David Croker, Paul Hobbs, Keith Thwaites and James Williams)

**Squad:** Matthew Adekoya (Warren), Ben Murphy (Trinity), Jack Glenister (Marshall's Park), Ted Penn (Marshall's Park), Ernaldo Krasniqi (St Bonaventure's), Ange Mulula (Chingford Foundation), Jimmy Wallace (Emerson Park), Tom Stagg (Shenfield), Mason McCorkell (Heathcote), George Hatcher (Abbs Cross), Charlie Mackey (Billericay), Paul Prashanta (Brampton Manor), Bobby Unwin (Sydney Russell), Junior Agostinho (Rokeby), Luke May (Heathcote), Kai Corbett, Samuel Bayon (Brampton Manor), Alex Bragg (FitzWimarc), Marco Protic (Waltham Forest), Lukas Zabulionis (Anglo European), Nyan Mesuria (Highams Park), Lewis Duberry (Highams Park), Nathan Blythe (Kingsford), Tommy Ainsworth (Emerson Park), Sydney Morgan (Shenfield).

**Saturday 19th November:** vs **Sussex** (Away, ESFA1) Lost 2-3 at Lancing FC, 11:30am. **Saturday 3rd December:** vs **Bedfordshire** (Away, SEESFA) Drew 2-2 at Shefford & Campton FC, 10:30am. **Saturday 17th December:** vs **Norfolk** (Home, SEESFA) Won 7-1 at London Marathon Playing Fields, 11:00am. **Saturday 28th January:** vs **Inner London** (Away, SEESFA) Won 5-3 at Douglas Eyre Sports Ground, 12:00pm. **Match Awarded:** vs **Suffolk** (Home, SEESFA) Won 0-0 (Suffolk failed to raise a side). **Saturday 22nd April:** vs **Kent** (Home, SEESFASF) Lost 3-5 at Brampton Manor School, 10:30am.

**Extensive trials were held at Fairlop over the October half term period, with over 100 boys attending. The trials culminated in a match against Newham's Under 15s side, which went very well, and resulted in a 7-2 victory for Essex.**

The next match was against Sussex away in the National Cup. Essex started off very well, and created a host of chances, but were unable to convert any of them. However, just before half time, Essex took a deserved lead. The second half saw a reversal of fortunes, and Sussex scored twice in a short period of time, to lead 2-1. Sussex then had a player sent off, and Essex equalised from a penalty. The match then went into extra time, with Essex well on top.

However, two minutes from the end of extra time, Sussex scored the winner. A very disappointed Essex team and management group made the long journey home, feeling they had lost a match they should have won easily. The next match was against Bedfordshire, in the SEESFA competition. With ten minutes to go Essex trailed 2-0, but two late goals achieved a creditable draw.

Essex then had a friendly against an experimental Spurs Under 14s Team, and were very impressive 8-1 winners. Then followed a long period without a match due to Suffolk being unable to raise a team and bad weather. Essex then played Norfolk and were again impressive in winning 7-1 in the SEESFA. We then played Inner London in the SEESFA and, although winning 5-3, we were not at our best. This result meant that Essex had to beat Suffolk in the final group match to qualify for the Semi-Finals.

Despite Mr Tickner's efforts, Suffolk could not agree a date for the match, and eventually conceded the match to Essex. Thus, Essex qualified for the Semi-Finals of the SEESFA competition and were drawn against Kent. The match was played at Brampton Manor School, East Ham. The first half was keenly contested, and finished goalless. However, the second half was full of goals, with Kent having the upper hand and running out 5-3 winners, despite Essex missing a penalty.

The final match summed-up the overall season. The team promised a great deal but, in the end, were unable to deliver at the important times. The potential is certainly within the squad to do well next season and, with some fine tuning, the Management Team hope for a successful season next year. The Under 14s Management Team would like to thank the Essex Schools committee for their unwavering support throughout the year.

In particular, Graham Hall, Jeff Saxton and Andy Tickner have been especially helpful. Also, the Essex County FA have been very helpful, with Phil Sammons always to the fore. The Under 14s Management Team would like to thank Phil for his tremendous support as the Essex County FA Chief Executive and are very pleased that, despite his retirement from the County FA, Phil will still be contributing to the Essex County Schools FA.

**Under 16s Girls** (Management Team: Jo Sibley, Sasha McDonald, Hannah Humphries)

**Squad:** Ellie Barra (Trinity Catholic High), Olivia Billson (Chelmer Valley), Eva Carvalho (Basildon Academy), Baileigh Cordice (St Angela's Ursuline), Yasmin Cowley (Great Baddow), Tilly Deacon (FitzWimarc), Lucy Edmeades (Shenfield), Lucy Egan (Philip Morant), Chloe Louise Fleming (William de Ferrers), Holly Foley (Harris Academy Chafford Hundred), Maizi Garwood (Shenfield), Suzy Hayes (Highams Park), Beau Parker (Barking & Dagenham College), Courtney Parsons (Caterham), Hannah Smith (Plume Academy), Grace Staunton (Sacred Heart).

**Saturday 8th October:** vs **Hertfordshire** (Home, SEESFA) Won 7-0 at Marconi Leisure, 10:30am. **Saturday 12th November:** vs **Bedfordshire** (Home, SEESFA) Won 10-2 at Marconi Leisure, 10:30am. **Saturday 10th December:** vs **Suffolk** (Home, SEESFA) Won 16-0 at Marconi Leisure, 10:30am. **Saturday 11th February:** vs **Wiltshire** (Away, ESFAQF) Won 4-1 at Kingsdown School, 1:30pm. **Thursday 16th March:** vs **Sussex** (Away, ESFASF) Lost 1-1 (aet, 3-4 pens) at Eastbourne Borough FC, 3:00pm. **Friday 22nd April:** vs **Kent** (Home, SEESFASF) Won 3-1 at Shenfield High School, 7:00pm. **Saturday 27th May:** vs **Bedfordshire** (Neutral, SEESFAF) Won 2-2 (4-3 pens) at Rowley Park, 1:00pm.

**It has been another successful season for the Essex Under 16s Girls Schools squad, demonstrating the strength of female football in our historically talented football county.**

Perhaps the pinnacle of the season arrived on Saturday 27th May when we took on Bedfordshire at a neutral Rowley Park venue in the final of the South-East England Schools FA Victoria Dodds Trophy for the tenth time. It was a thrilling 4-3 win at St Neots Town FC.

Goals from Kelly Wealthall and Yasmin Cowley took the tie all the way to penalties where Essex triumphed to add to their previous wins in 2006, 2007, 2008, 2011, 2012, 2014 and 2016. They started strongly, with Tilly Deacon and Courtney Parsons enjoying an influence on the tie before Bromfords' Wealthall handed her county a deserved lead.

Essex continued to enjoy the better of the first quarter of the game, but Bedfordshire began to settle into the contest and levelled mid-way through the first period after a lapse of concentration in the Essex rearguard. The goal gave Bedfordshire extra confidence and they went on to dominate the closing stages of the opening half, grabbing the lead before the interval and leaving Essex with much to do after the break.

But Essex re-grouped in the second half and a renewed confidence, Great Baddow's Cowley swiftly levelling the scores at 2-2. The game continued to provide entertainment, but ultimately remained level at the end of 80 minutes, drifting into a penalty shootout. Having been defeated in national finals on penalties in each of the previous two campaigns, Essex cast aside those memories, with goalkeeper Grace Staunton of Sacred Heart School saving twice to seal a 4-3 shootout win.

**Under 14s Girls** (Management Team: Danielle Warnes, Jack Thurlow, Niamh Gamble)

Squad: Rebecca Alderton (Tabor Academy), Maddie Biggs (Frances Bardsley Academy), Maria Boswell (Emerson Park Academy), Freya Fuller (Billericay), Ellie Gregg (Helena Romanes), Lilly Hadrava (Marshalls Park), Lauren Hart (Gable Hall), Stephanie Hart (Coopers, Company & Coborn), Mae Hughes (Tendring Technology College), Abbie Jackson (FitzWimarc), Melia La (Ockendon Academy), Emilia Parsons (Bancroft), Rosie Richards (Moulsham), Millie Stacey (Brentwood School), Mya Turner (Emerson Park Academy).

Saturday 8th October: vs **Hertfordshire** (Home, SEESFA) Won 3-1 at Marconi Leisure, 10:30am. Saturday 12th November: vs **Berkshire** (Home, ESFA1) Lost 3-4 at Marconi Leisure, 10:30am. Saturday 10th December: vs **Suffolk** (Home, SEESFA) Won 7-1 at Marconi Leisure, 10:30am. Match Awarded: vs **Bedfordshire** (Home, SEESFA) Won '0-0' (Bedfordshire failed to raise a side). Saturday 6th May: vs **Inner London** (Home, SEESFASF) Lost 4-7 at Moulsham High School, 11:30am.

**Once more it's been a progressive and challenging season for Essex's Under 14s Girls Schools Representative Team, with plenty of highs and lows as we represent the county on a national and regional level.**

It was disappointing to be knocked out of the English Schools FA competition at the first hurdle against Berkshire, but we reached the final of the South-East England Schools FA Competition and only lost out in a high-scoring clash against a talented Inner London side at Moulsham High School in Chelmsford. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of the players for their efforts this season, to all the people who assist the squad on matchdays and to everyone who supports us off the field, too.