

CHRONOLOGY

For the first twenty years the early clubs competed in the Biggleswade and District Junior and Senior Leagues, then in the twenties for a spell in the Letchworth and District League and in Beds. County League, and in the late thirties in the North Herts. League until 1951-52, when the present Stotfold Club entered the South Midlands League, followed three seasons later by their Reserve side.

The entry in 1951-52 in the South Midlands League had a meteoric start, for the club having won Division II in their first season, then two seasons in Division I before gaining promotion to the Premier Division (their present league).

Since then, although never having won the championship, are still regarded as the most consistent side in the league over the past ten years, having finished: 6th, 2nd, 5th, 2nd, 2nd, 2nd, 3rd, 3rd, 5th, and last season were again runners-up.

Most of these seasons have seen them dominating the top positions till over the half-way mark, then slip up, often to the more lowly placed sides, thus depriving them of the championship, which has often been said: "Should Stotfold win the title, they would be loudly acclaimed by all the teams in the League."

The reason behind this statement is mainly due to the high standard of sportsmanship which the Club has built up over the years, and, as all opponents will agree, "Stotfold always gives them a good, clean and hard-fought game—and in defeat—remain loyal to their code, in giving honour where honour is due."

CUP FIGHTERS SUPREME.

Yes, here is a title that befits the Stotfold Club, and, although having had a fair share of the trophies, always seem to put that little bit extra into a competition.

The first ever Trophy won by a Stotfold Club was in 1911-12 when they beat Potton for the Biggleswade & District League Championship, which was played at Potton, Stotfold winning 1-0, the goalscorer being Ernie Triplov.

The present Club have had one major regret, that is that they have never won the Beds. Senior Cup, and yet it was within their grasp just a season ago, 1962-63, when, after leading old rivals Biggleswade 3-1 at half-time, only to go down 4-5 to be deprived of the coveted trophy. The tie was played at Amptill, and a brilliant game was seen by a large crowd.

The Club has had a little more success in the North Beds. Charity Cup, having won it in 1955-56, 1956-57 and 1961-62. Another trophy which has also eluded the Club is the South Midlands League Knock-out Shield.

Stotfold Reserves have also a good name for their cup-fighting abilities and have won the Beds. Intermediate Cup in 1958-59, the Beds. Junior Cup, in which they now compete, in 1924-25, 1960-61; and the Biggleswade Knock-out Cup in 1954-55, 1958-59, 1960-61, 1961-62, 1962-63.

Another sphere where the Reserves have scored over the Premier side is in the number of times they have won their respective leagues. When the S.M.L. inaugurated a Reserve Section (Division I), it was the Reserves who won it in 1955, then four times in succession (1955, 1959, 1960 and 1961), were third in 1962, runners-up in 1963, but slumped badly to eighth place in 1964; the latter mainly due to never ever

having a settled side, due to many changes being made throughout the season, plus the important fact that young players were being persevered with to start re-building before all the old faithfuls hung up their boots, so it was not to be expected that they would finish in their customary high place.

1904-5: The first team to trace in print ("Biggleswade Chronicle") was September 29, 1905, Stotfold Reserves v. Garden City and was: A. Turner; B. Clarke, J. Reynolds; F. Sanderson, W. Rowley, J. Howard; J. Kent, W. Dean, Pitts, A. J. Howard, R. Sarll.

1905-6: Stotfold Reserves 7, Arlesey O.B. Reserves 0.
1906-7: Stotfold now competing in the Biggleswade & District League. On Christmas morning Stotfold lost at home to Baldock 0-3.

A return game was postponed because of snow, and later the result was a 0-0 draw.
In February Biggleswade v. Stotfold (Dean in Stotfold's goal saved at least 40 shots; only six found the net). Team: Dean; Seymour, Howard; Smith, Cooper, Rogers; King, Searle, Dear, Taylor, Pinnocks.
Church Lads Res. 1, Stotfold Juniors, 0.

1907-8: Garden City were defeated by Stotfold at Letchworth 4-1.

1908-9: Around this period Stotfold were not making much headway in the League table, and for a long spell about third bottom. However, in certain games they were making themselves a name against much stronger sides.

In a friendly, at Potton, Stotfold just lost by the odd goal in five. It was recorded in the League table that Langford had had to forfeit a point to Stotfold for playing ineligible men. Another item reported was that a Stotfold referee, Mr. Kitchener, was involved in a dispute about awarding a goal in a match between Meppershall and Biggleswade (which was the subject of inquest at League Executive Meeting).
November—Stotfold Jurs. 4, Langford 0 (match abandoned 13 mins. from time owing to darkness). Team: Austin; Reynolds, Sanderson; Pateman, Searle, Rogers; Childs, Chapman, Sarll, Howard, Dear.
Stotfold and Stotfold Juniors both 3rd bottom of respective leagues. The teams competing in the Biggleswade & District League at this time were:—Letchworth, Arlesey, Biggleswade, Hitchin Blue Cross, Baldock, Stotfold, St. Neots, Knebworth, and others. (Stotfold on many occasions were without the help of the Asylum players).
Stotfold visited Kimpton (who had only lost one game that season), proved too strong for the villagers, and won 3-0 after a fast game. Later Stotfold Juniors lost 4-0 away to Potton Reserves.

1908-09: On Christmas morning the local derby between Stotfold and Arlesey was abandoned when spectators invaded the pitch after Stotfold's "Brudgie" Bygraves had scored. (The late Tommy Ashwell was in this team.)

In the same morning Stotfold Juniors had beaten Baldock Juniors 7-0, then in the afternoon went on to defeat Letchworth Church Lads' Brigade 3-2 (some of the players were in the cup-winning side of 1912).

1909-10: Stotfold 0, Garden City 1 (all Stotfold first half; referee was Mr. Williams of Arlesey). In a second meeting with Kempston (at home) Stotfold drew 1-1, an exciting and fast game. (Proceeds of this match went for a Benefit to James Cox, a player who was injured at Baldock, Sept. II, 1909). Stotfold were now beginning to show that they are a side to be respected.