# The start of season email template

Peter Drury, formerly the AGC of Raiders U16s (and part-time football commentator...) writes a decent start of season email to all of his parents. So, whether you're a manager or AGC, don't be afraid to copy Peter's style and approach.

Here is Peter's missive from a previous season.

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Good morning Raiders!

Late August Bank Holiday Monday...the morning sun streams through the kitchen window...and a new season is knocking at the door...

An especially warm **WELCOME** to the several new (and returning) members whom we (re-)embrace at the start of the new campaign. We hope that you will find our club warm and friendly...and a worthwhile part of the rhythm of your life.

This newsletter - sent weekly once the season is properly underway - is intended to keep everyone (RED, BLUE and GREEN) broadly informed about each other...and to hammer home the message that - whilst we represent 3 separate teams - we are ONE united age-group, playing in the colours of ONE ever-growing club.

In terms of "nuts and bolts" week-by-week, match-by-match information, please refer to the instructions of your own team manager who will always communicate the up-to-date details that you need.

On the subject of management...a formal **WELCOME** to our newest boss: Lucy Burdin has taken over the RED team and is already well into a rigorous pre-season regime. It's been terrific to watch the way the boys have engaged with their new manager (and vice-versa). We all hope that a happy (and successful) season lies ahead. Lucy is being administratively supported by Caroline Brode - to whom thanks also.

Our other two managers remain unchanged. Thanks (in advance and in retrospect) to the excellent pair, Tim Allen and Simon Ayles (BLUE and GREEN respectively). It's not been the most restful Raiders summer with a fair amount of membership "churn"...some disappointingly late pull-outs...as well as some (very welcome) last-minute applicants. The admin and organisation has never really relented...and both Tim and Simon have ploughed cheerfully through it. They both deserve the relief and joy (fingers crossed) of actually watching the lads play!

**Have you paid your subs yet??**

Our club admin maestro sent me a list last week of those who haven't yet paid their club subs. There were still quite a few on it. Please, please make the effort to go to the club website and pay as soon as you can.

I won't name and shame (yet!)...but I am instructed to remind you that the club asks us to impose a "No-compromise" policy of "No pay...no play"!

If you're not sure whether you're on the list, please drop me a line.

If - like many of us - you are perplexed/frustrated by the on-line payment system, please either ask a friend...or a manager...or me!

**When does the action start?**

If I'm not mistaken, the BLUES will play their first competitive fixture in the "Wycombe and South Bucks League" this coming Sunday - Sept 4th. Very good luck to Tim and his lads on their new venture.

REDS and GREENS get underway (competitively) the following Sunday. REDS start with an away tie in the preliminary round of the County Cup...GREENS embark on another season in the West Herts League.

**...and training?**

Although all 3 managers have been running (and may continue to run) their own pre-season sessions, the formal club sessions will begin on Tuesday September 6th on the Berko Astro, adjacent to the Paul Beard Centre at the back of Ashlyns School. Our time slot this season is 7 till 8.

(For the benefit of newcomers...please ensure that your son always arrives at training with shin-pads in...appropriately dressed for the weather conditions...and - on the artificial surface on Tuesdays - with appropriate "Astro" footwear. Any queries on that...please ask your manager).

**...Parking...**

Please remember (especially once school term has begun) that it is NEVER OK to park on the grass or around the "pitch fringes" at Ashlyns. Our relationship with the school is critical...and they insist - with good reason - that we ALWAYS (even for short-term pick-up/drop-off) use the (perfectly adequate) parking spaces provided. There are two fairly large parking areas at the back of the school close to the sports hall and Astro. In addition, there is limited space at the front.

**Ethos/behaviour...**

Our multi-award-winning club takes great pride in its reputation. It is a reputation based on parents and children buying into an ethos which promotes "participation for all" and the very highest standards of on-field and touchline behaviour. Please, please...take a moment to remind yourself and your son about this.

We ask of parents to be supportive of their own child...and - equally - other people's children...and to conduct themselves on the touchline in a manner which doesn't embarrass either themselves or the club.

Nobody is naive enough to think that we will get through a football season overseeing 50-odd 15/16-year-olds without the occasional "scrape". We want the boys to care...we enjoy their passion...and we relish it when they compete hard. However, we also expect restraint, manners, mutual respect...and the highest reasonable standard of on-field conduct.

Even the Premier League - at long, long last!! - is cracking down hard on abuse of referees etc this season. Hopefully, the "role models" which the lads see on TV are being obliged to set a rather more positive example from now on.

However, we are not really concerned with the "professional" example. We are better than that. Please let your son know that a dim view would be taken of any conduct which shames him, his team or his club. Managers are empowered swiftly to withdraw any player who threatens to let us down. The club is fined for any bookings and /or sendings-off...and that fine will be passed on to the parent!

**So good luck...and enjoy...**

All of those regular warnings aside...please let us never lose sight of the fact that we are doing this to enjoy ourselves. Between now and April, plenty will happen. Truthfully, many of us aren't quite sure what to expect! Will we go through the season unbeaten...or will we never win a game? Who knows? Regardless of all that, the point is to enjoy each other's company...to enjoy good, well-organised, purposeful, bonding exercise for the boys...and to enjoy the game itself.

Please make sure you support your manager - both practically and "emotionally". Matchday doesn't run itself! Always do your bit wherever you possibly can. We are all volunteers...and it needs ALL of us to make it work.

But...enjoy, enjoy, enjoy!!

Up the mighty, mighty, mighty Raiders U16s!! Come on!!

Best,

Peter D - Age Group Co-coordinator.

PS As ever, I am very happy to field any queries/concerns/ideas/suggestions about Raiders. Please feel free to get in touch on any (Raiders-related) topic at any time.

PPS I leave this annual paragraph till last...because it always seems so horribly self-indulgent...but it is genuine, so please tolerate it again:

I am very proud to have overseen our age-group from U7s - through countless twists and turns - up to the present day. There's been the odd bump in the road...but - on the whole - it's been a terrific ride so far. However, I never, never assume that it is my right to do this. Indeed, I know that there are plenty of others who could fill the role every bit as energetically and efficiently (if not more so). I am pleased to keep going if that's what you want...but - genuinely - if anyone else ever wants a crack at it, they are very welcome! No "coup" is required! Just give me a call...

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