

# 2002

## Grass Roots

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### **2002 @ City Grounds vs Olympiakos Nicosia 17/12/2011**

Arsenal were far from their best on Saturday against a combative Olympiakos side. It took a second half hat-trick from Kyriakos Florides to secure a hard fought 4-2 win for the Gooners!

### **2002 @ City Grounds vs Brazilian 3/12/2011**

The last affair of the day for Arsenal was more comfortable as they came out 8-4 winners in their opening match of a very difficult group. Although the score was 1-1 very early on, Arsenal showed their quality and came through the match relatively easily and Coach Pete felt that with some better defending and better finishing the score line could have been a lot more flattering towards Arsenal.

### **PRE-SEASON FRIENDLIES**

#### **2002 27/11/2011**

The 2002's continued their fine form ahead of the beginning of Grass Roots by exacting revenge on Young Stars, who had beaten them in their first friendly of the season. In another fine performance the 2002's came out 5-2 winners, which coach Peter believes is the perfect tonic ahead of the upcoming competitive matches.

#### **2002 24/11/2011**

The other tie of the evening wasn't such a close affair as the 2002 team came out triumphant victors 7-1 against the home side. Special mention goes to all the players that showed up, as there were only 6 present and therefore no substitutes.

#### **2002 5/11/2011**

In the first of the weekend's clashes, the 2002 team with some help from the 2001B team took on the Apoel 2001B team and were very competitive for large portions of the match, even though there was an age difference. The half-time score of 0-0 showed that the team were definitely up for the challenge, but unfortunately two quick goals from Apoel in the 2nd half meant that it was an uphill task for the Arsenal youngsters. A more attacking formation was then adopted by coach Ara, which saw Demetris Finiris pull one back for Arsenal, and some late efforts from Kyriakos Florides were well saved by the Apoel goalkeeper, when it appeared Arsenal would be drawing equal. With more bodies being pushed forward, it meant that Nikolas Philipou's goal was left exposed, and in a swift counter attack in the final minutes Apoel managed to restore their 2 goal lead to end the match 3-1.

### **2002 vs Apoel @ Archangelos 28/10/11**

Coming off a disappointing tournament at Farma, the 2002 were pitted against the eventual winners of that tournament. Coach Peter was determined his team were going to give a respectable account for themselves and changed the formation to make the team more combative in defensive areas. After three 12 and half minute periods, the score remained goalless with Arsenal really holding their own finding the Apoel keeper in good form.

Unfortunately in the final period Arsenal's defence was penetrated and the home team took a 1-0 lead. This was short lived when the superb Andreas Ioannou battled his way through the Apoel defence and levelled up the scores. The game appeared to be ending in a draw, when Apoel decided to use tactics they must have picked up from watching Stoke, a long throw into the area Rory Delap-style was headed into Arsenal's net. The game might have ended in defeat, but the 2002s did the academy proud with a very respectable showing which they should feel they could have taken more from!

### **2002 Farma Tournament 8/10/2011**

A new look 2002 team began their first tournament of the season at Farma. The previous week they had done well in a closely fought defeat to Young Stars Soccer Academy and were looking to improve. Their first game was against Campeone, after a goalless first half the introduction of Andreas Ioannou for Arsenal saw the games complex change completely, which saw Arsenal dominate and deservedly take the lead through the excellent Andreas. Arsenal were then awarded a controversial penalty but unfortunately Andreas struck it directly at the keeper. Things got worse for Arsenal as Campeone who hadn't had a shot on target for the whole second half took advantage of a mix-up at the back to equalise in the last minute of the game. 1-1 was the final score and Arsenal were rightly feeling hard done by, but it was a promising start for a team that struggled a lot last year. In the 2nd game against Anorthosis the team was strengthened by the appearance of Panagiotis Theodotou, but unfortunately another mix up at the back saw Anorthosis take an undeserved lead. Arsenal could have equalised with a couple of guilt-edged opportunities, but found Anorthosis keeper in fine form. The 2nd half was a different story all together and Anorthosis were much stronger than Arsenal scoring 3-0 more goals. In the final game of the group, Arsenal came up against Apoel, with the winning team likely to qualify to the next round. Unfortunately for Arsenal, Apoel seemed to have more desire to win, coupled with some baffling decisions by the referee the first half ended a disappointing 2-0 to Apoel. It appeared that Arsenal had given everything in the first two games and could not keep up with the stronger Apoel team with 2 more goals coming in the 2nd half for Apoel without reply. Although the scorelines may not indicate it, Arsenal were indebted to the super performance between the sticks of their new goalkeeper Emiliou Economou.