

Delabole United FC – Season 2023/24 Report

Delabole United has successfully completed its first season in the newly extended St Piran League, playing in Division 4 East of that league structure. The St Piran league merged with the previous Duchy League, which was effectively taken over by the larger St Piran League. The merger and the first season have passed largely untroubled by the changes.

The club has secured full affiliation with the FA, which brings both benefits but also a level of rigor in the way that it is run.

At the start of the 2023/4 season the club reverted to Delabole United having spent the 2022/3 season as Delabole & Tintagel United. The season long adoption of 'Delabole & Tintagel' followed a merging with Tintagel, where the teams, finances and players merged into one single club. In reality there was very little actual involvement from the old Tintagel, and a motion was carried at last year's AGM to once again become Delabole United.

The season is all but complete and the club has now played its last game of the season. The wet winter led to a number of match postponements that affected most clubs in Cornwall. Whilst the home pitch did suffer from some wet conditions it was mostly away games that were affected by the weather, and a number of clubs still have some games to play in May.

Regardless of these games the club is now guaranteed to finish in 3rd place. This is one place outside the automatic promotion spots and is the best standing for a number of years. The club appointed a new manager, Mark Luxton, at the start of the season, and the success this year is in no small way down to his energy and enthusiasm. There is some chance that promotion may well still be achieved as traditionally there have been one or two clubs from higher divisions fold, allowing additional clubs to be promoted through the lower leagues.

The club had over 30 players registered to play, ranging from teenagers to a couple in their 50s. This enabled a reasonably strong list of players to be picked from each week, and whilst in some weeks only a very limited number of substitutes were available, the position was healthier than in recent seasons. The healthier position for the club is aided by a number of younger players registering, who have not only brought enthusiasm and energy to the club but also provide optimism for the future. The club has robust safeguarding measures with a responsible officer appointed for all players under the age of 18.

The playing field and clubhouse have been maintained in good order, but some additional maintenance is required, with funding being sought to carry this work out.

The club remains in a stable financial position, thanks to fundraising events including a New Year's Day Sea Dip, newly started monthly bingo and some external funding applications that are still underway. As with many clubs playing at this level of the football pyramid, Delabole United remains reliant on the external funding partners and events to remain in a healthy financial position.

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