



**BAY OLYMPIC**



**PREMIER SEASON  
REVIEWS**

## PREMIER SEASON REVIEW 2021

Season 2020 had been a disaster for everyone associated with football. Just eight games were completed before Covid struck. Hopefully, 2021 would prove to be more durable. Paul Marshall and Liam Mulrooney were again at the helm for the Bay, ably assisted by Jon Gwin, Andy Phipps, Michelle Pravin and Aidan Lovelock.

Players not returning included Rhys Ruka, who was taking up a coaching position at Manurewa. Sam Burfoot returned to Birkenhead and Mario Bilen was retained by Auckland City after the National League season. Justin Biega returned to Australia, Matthew Palmer and Elliott Munford transferred out.

New players included Nick Draper (after a season away), Hongyyu Hann, Tom Doyle, Nico Bobadilla, Eric Konstandini, Tom Boss (after 11 seasons away!) and Darren White (after 6 seasons elsewhere). Later in the competition Calvin Opperman, Boon Ozawa and Connor Turton joined the squad.

The Premier League looked much the same except for the first time the top four teams, together with teams from the Central League and the South Island, would play off for the National League title. At last a promotion and relegation National League!

### Premier League

Our scheduled opening game against Auckland City was postponed so it was a week later on 2nd April that we kicked off against Auckland United at Keith Hay Pk. A blustery wind and a poor surface did not help this game. However, with a double whammy in the 29th and 30th mins the Bay led 2-0 and were looking good. Ak Utd did get one back just on HT. In the second-half we showed resilience and determination in defence and ran out winners. Good performances from youngsters McIntyre and Carr. Encouraging result. FT 1-2.

Three days later we played Eastern Suburbs on the Crum Pk artificial. The team looked a bit leg weary but we took the lead just on HT through Bobadilla. Eastern Suburbs had the edge in the second-half and brought on two subs who both scored! We did have our chances but a disappointing result. FT 1-2.

Match day 3 saw us at Olympic Pk for the first time in 2021 against Manukau Utd. A gale force wind blew straight down the ground from the railway end. Bay had it at their backs in the first-half. 1-0 down after 3 mins and not looking good. Then up steps Campbell McIntyre with a long distance rocket! Then Issa scores for the visitors, HT 1-2. In a fantastic second-half 10 min run



the Bay score through Quinn, Bobadilla and McIntyre! Although Issa gets another for Manukau, the Bay win this one. FT 4-3.

A trip to McFetridge Pk to play new team Northern Rovers saw the Bay start slowly. Very few shots on target, HT 0-0. The pace picked up in the second-half and there were some good individual battles and a great penalty save from Draper but a first goal never came. Nevertheless, a useful point. FT 0-0.

Match 5 and a lovely day at Olympic Pk for the visit of Hamilton Wanderers. However, this was a very poor performance from the Bay. 3 goals down in 20 mins was bad enough, and even though Doyle got one back we were still 4 down at HT. Doyle got another but the Bay didn't improve. FT 2-7.

Another new team, this time West Coast Rangers, were next up at Fred Taylor Pk. Very poor 1st half and no surprise it was 0-0 at HT. However, six second-half goals woke us all up! WCR got the first and we equalised 10 mins later. WCR seemed to seal victory with goals in the 59th and 85 mins. Then the Bay found their mojo and struck in the 87th and 93rd min. We were the better team but could not put WCR away. Interesting calls from the officials added to an exciting 2nd half. FT 3-3.

Western Springs came to Olympic Pk next, always tough opponents for the Bay. Tentative start until Hann put a penalty away and Boss scored with a great strike a minute later. Quinn got a third and it was 3-0. Springs came on strong in the second-half especially when they got to 3-2 after 82 mins. The Bay held on though and were worthy winners. FT 3-2.

Match 8 and a visit to North Shore. Hann put us ahead with a well taken penalty after 14 mins. NS equalised and then Hann missed a second penalty! HT 1-1. A great goal from Quinn and another penalty save from Draper won the game for the Bay. We rarely take 3 points from Allen Hill Stadium. FT 1-2.

Birkenhead United came to Olympic Pk for our next game and it turned out a disaster for the Bay. An early goal to BU led to us being down at the break. HT 0-1. Then we had Bowen and Nash sent off and that was the end of the contest. Credit to the Bay for not giving up and competing until the end. FT 0-3.

A trip to Melville United with two regulars suspended was always going to be hard but the Bay coped well and Sam Jasper stood in and did a great job. HT 0-0. A tough second-half saw the Bay put pressure on MU and we were rewarded when it led to a penalty and Hann slotted home. A well deserved three points. FT 0-1.

This next game should have been our first of the season but was postponed at Auckland City's request. Brilliant start for the Bay against the league leaders, a goal in the first minute! The game was played at a fast pace and the Bay controlled much of the first-half although we did miss a couple of chances that we would rue later. HT 1-0. AC equalised but more importantly Tom Boss, who was having a great game, had to go off injured and did not play again all season. AC went ahead a minute later. Bay go down 1-2 to the best team in the country. A game we could have won! FT 1-2.

Five days later and the two teams meet again. AC start with All Whites on the bench! That is how strong they are. A dubious penalty and a second goal after 32 mins gives AC a 2-0 lead. HT 2-0. The Bay seemed to gamble with a formation change in the second-half and it didn't work. AC ran away with it. Forget this one. FT 7-0.

Home to Auckland United was next up. The Bay played Konstandini up front and new boy Ozawa in mid-field. AU scored after 19 mins. The Bay make a change and brought on Opperman. The Bay are understandably a bit disjointed but get to HT with no further goals. HT 0-1. Bay need to score first in the second-half but that seems unlikely when we concede a penalty. Draper goes one way, the kick goes the other, everyone holds their breath but the penalty goes wide! The

game is stretched and in a sweeping move Harry Nash finishes for the equaliser in the 92nd minute. FT 1-1. A valuable point for the Bay - we are currently in 7th place but only 3 points off 3rd place at this stage of the competition.

To Madills Farm for this game against Eastern Suburbs. A very even first-half with both defences solid and few chances offered. Just when a draw seemed the most likely outcome, ES score an excellent goal and take the points. We deserved a point from this one. FT 1-0.

A visit to Manukau United is next and as usual it is a wet day. The Bay start well and are all over MU in the early exchanges. The returning Ryan Cain nets for the Bay and we look comfortable. Then Bobadilla (recently transferred out from the Bay) scores for MU. HT 1-1. The Referee's Assistant has a hand in awarding MU a penalty and they take the lead. Another former Bay player (Golding) comes on and scores with his first kick, a free kick! We were running this game and we lose. FT 3-1.

Northern Rovers are the next visitors to Olympic Pk. The Bay need to win this one to stay out of any relegation battle. An even start but it is NR who took the lead after 21 mins. For the Bay, Basiri, was playing well and he got the equaliser with his effort just before half-time. HT 1-1. Bay were getting on top and it was no surprise when they went ahead after a sweeping move was finished by Darren White. A late penalty from Callum McNeill completed the scoring. FT 3-1.

West Coast Rangers came to Olympic Park with their situation critical. By all accounts they deserved something out of the game as they played for over an hour with just nine men! However, it was Ryan Cain who got the second-half goal for the Bay. Three valuable points but commiserations to WCR who were valiant in defeat. FT 1-0.



Game 18 of the season and the Bay go to Seddon Pk for the usual evening game against Western Springs. A brilliant goal from Quinn after 37 secs sets the tone for a good close contest. The Bay withstand a lot of pressure but hold until half-time. HT 0-1. Eventually the WS pressure paid off and they equalised after 58 mins. WS continue to press but it is the Bay that create the best chance to win the game but then miss it! We did well to hang on for a point. The whole defence stood up brilliantly in this one. FT 1-1.

This game was played on the 13th August. On the 17th August the Country went into a level 4 lockdown due to a Covid outbreak. That eventually signalled the end of the football season for the Northern Premier League. Teams still had three or four games to play but that was not possible. Auckland City were declared Champions. Auckland United, Eastern Suburbs and Birkenhead United joined them in the new National League competition. Bay Olympic had finished in a satisfactory 6th place after an unsatisfactory end to the season. 2021 had not proved to be any more durable than 2020. Roll on 2022 and hopefully a full season of football.

### Chatham Cup

Our opening Chatham Cup game was against Western Springs. This was a classic cup tie! Hard and competitive and played in a good spirit. A great start for Bay with a penalty from Bonkovich opening the scoring after 5 mins. Bay were on top but no further goals in the 1st half. HT 1-0. WS equalised after 67 mins and we are getting on top. They get another after 74 mins and it looks as if it might be all over. Then Bonkovich gets another penalty and it is 2-2 after 90 mins. In extra time Hann scores with a great free-kick and Colligan puts the game out of WS reach. This game had everything, good crowd, atmosphere, goals and great saves from both keepers and the right result. FT 4-3.

Next round and we draw Manurewa at home. There was heavy overnight rain but the pitch was in good condition. Manurewa started the better of the two teams and it was no surprise when they went ahead after 32 mins. The Bay start to get into their stride and force an equaliser 5 mins later. HT 1-1. Just after the restart White puts the Bay ahead and six mins later Quinn seals it for the Bay. No real comeback from Manurewa and we are through to the next round. FT 3-1.

A trip to Melville was our reward. A very early goal to the home team seemed to upset the Bay's rhythm and we struggled to get into the game. Looked an even harder task when they scored again after 38 mins. However, Hann gets us back in the game and it's 1-2 at the break. In the second-half Bay look the stronger team and are getting on top. Then we win a penalty,



or do we? No, the referee decides to send Darren White off instead! Despite this and another definite penalty shout we get nothing. We were out of the Cup in a very disappointing manner. FT 2-1.

TONY ANDREWS

## PREMIER SEASON REVIEW 2020

The news, in December 2019, that a few people in China had been struck down by some mysterious illness seemed hardly noteworthy. Little did we know that within a matter of weeks it would spread rapidly, causing sickness and deaths throughout the world! Its impact on sport worldwide was huge and it had a massive impact on football in Auckland and New Zealand.

The 2020 season for Bay Olympic had looked promising. The Bay were back in the Premier Division after just one season in Div 1. Paul Marshall and Liam Mulrooney were back as the coaching team along with Michelle Pravin as the physio. In addition, Jon Gwin and Jake Piper were assisting with coaching duties while Aidan Lovelock took over the manager's duties. On the player front a few players left including Lebon Bulamba, Jimmy Banks, Matthew Hearn and a little later Ben Billings. Newcomers recruited included Matthew Palmer, Ryan Cain, Tomoki Sato and Adrian Gallo. Justin Biega returned to the club after trying his luck at Eastern Suburbs.

The season was due to start at the end of March, as usual, but New Zealand went into full lockdown on the 25th for four weeks! Under the NZ Covid restriction system four levels were introduced and the NRFL could only be played when we were in level 1. The Government announced we would go to level 1 on 8th June and the NRFL set the fixtures to start on 20th June.

The competition was to consist of a single round of eleven games with the top six playing a further round to decide the Championship winner. The bottom six would play a round to decide the relegation positions.

Saturday 20th June and Hamilton Wanderers were the visitors to Olympic Park. Everyone was thankful football was starting at last and hoping for some excitement, good football and some goals. We certainly got what we hoped for! Jono Quinn got the ball rolling after 15 mins with the first goal of the season (he got the first last year as well!). Then the Wanderers struck back with two penalties, (one of them very dubious) and then had the audacity to score a third goal after 25 mins.

Was it time to go back into lockdown and send Hamilton home! Referee Nick Waldron stepped in and decided to send one of them home at least, (Shaw) with a red card. H.T 1-3. The Hamilton keeper kindly decided to gift us a goal on the 51 min mark and the Bay were on the charge.

Two mins later Jared Colligan got the first of his two and then Rhys Ruka scored a cracker on the 65 min mark. Jared got his second after 76 mins and the Bay were leading 5-3. There was still time for Derek Tiekou to step up for Hamilton but it was too late. Final score Bay Olympic 5 Hamilton Wanderers 4.

A trip to Manukau Utd was our next game. In wet and windy conditions the Bay started slowly and conceded an early goal after just 4 mins. We struggled to get into the game but we did manage an equaliser after 17 min with a scrambled Harry Nash effort. Both teams were having trouble with the gusty wind. H.T. 1-1. Everything to play for in the second half but conditions deteriorated with an absolute downpour. Both teams had chances but the Bay looked more likely to score to me. F.T. 1-1. Perhaps a couple of points got away in this game.

Forrest-Hill Milford came to Olympic Park on 4th July - the Bay had beaten them 4-0 at Olympic in the previous season when both teams were in Div 1. Would it be 3 points again this time? Well, it was a tough game made harder when Jared Colligan was forced off injured after 20mins. It had 0-0 written all over it and then Ryan Cain stepped up and scored in the 86th min, surely the points were ours again. No, would you believe it, FHM sub Tutton equalised 2 mins later! F.T. 1-1.

Home again for round 4, this time fellow 'Westies' Waitakere City were the visitors. This was a good all round performance from the Bay with the defence outstanding. A Sam Burfoot goal after 23 mins put us 1-0 up at H.T. The Bay totally controlled the midfield with Mario Bilen and Jayden Rollinson in great form. Up front, Matthew Palmer crashed in two special goals for a comfortable win for the Bay. F.T 3-0.



Away games at Seddon Fields can bring unforgettable memories of games we would much rather forget! This was no exception. By half-time we were 3-0 down and when at last the nightmare was over it was 6-0. We were never in it. Add this one to the Seddon Field book of nightmares.

The last Saturday in July and Melville United came to Olympic Park. The Bay were looking, firstly for revenge for the previous seasons Chatham Cup semi-final defeat and secondly, for the 3 points needed to keep us in reach of a top six finish. In a tight and hard fought game, Bay hit the front when Ryan Cain scored a valuable goal just before half-time. H.T. 1-0. Melville came out determined to get back into the game but by the 84th min it looked as if the points were heading Bay's way. Then of course the inevitable happened and Melville equalised. Mario Bilen was outstanding in this game. Disappointing result though. FT 1-1.

Bay Olympic had not played North Shore at Allen Hill Stadium since 2007. The first thing to notice was that nothing has changed! The truncated season had turned into a mad scramble for points. A team could go from third to bottom to third from top in a week! Bay Olympic went behind after just 9 mins. One or two players were missing for this game and Adrian Gallo appeared to be playing a lone role up front. Eventually, in the 76th min, Callum McNeill equalised for the Bay. From then on it was all Bay except for one error at the back which cost us the game. FT. 2-1 loss.

Birkenhead travelled to Olympic Park in third place, 5 places above the Bay. This was a very good performance against a quality team. An early Matthew Palmer strike after 8 mins put us ahead - perhaps their keeper should have dealt better with this one. However, there was nothing he could do about Jared Colligans great header for the second. H.T 2-0. Birkenhead came out strong in the second half but some good defence and a couple of great saves from Justin Biega kept Birkenhead scoreless. FT. 2-0. At the end of the day Bay Olympic were in fourth place, three places above Birkenhead!

Our next game was due to be away to Central United and I am quite confident we would have beaten them. Unfortunately, the Birkenhead game was our last before Covid returned and wiped out the rest of the season. Roll on 2021!

T.A.



## PREMIER SEASON REVIEW 2019

The big question at the start of 2019 was how would Bay Olympic adjust to life in Division One after 17 consecutive seasons in the Premier Division? (Not forgetting that we were 'saved by the bell' in 2009 with the re-organisation following the re-introduction of the North Harbour teams). For a start, it was almost a complete change of personnel. Shane Knowles, our Premier Coach since 2010, took up the full time position of Director of Football at St Peters School in Cambridge. The Club had won two Premierships, reached the Chatham Cup Final, and in addition, had two other Chatham Cup semi-final appearances during Shane's tenure as Premier Coach. A great record by any standard and one Shane and Bay Olympic should be proud of. So the big question was who would replace him?

The answer came with the appointment of Paul Marshall as Premier Team Coach for 2019 - a very experienced coach with a proven track record - just the person to lead the battle to regain our Premier League position. Andy Phipps and David White remained with the management team and we welcomed back former player and Captain Liam Mulrooney as Assistant Coach. Michelle Pravin joined the group as the team Physio. As often happens with a new coaching team, many players from 2018 did not return. Some like Julian Collett and David Parkinson looked to go overseas. Others to leave included Dan Jones, Justin Biega, Al Taaf Sahib and Kaz Obata. Charlie Thomas and Dino Botica had injuries which would mean missing the 2019 season altogether.

New players to join the Club included Harrison and Mitchell Nash, Patrick Bowen, Rhys Ruka, Lebon Bulamba, Nick Draper, Jimmy Banks, Callum McNeill, Elliot Munford, Sam Burfoot and Jonathan Quinn. Those that did return from 2018 included Mario Bilen, Jared Colligan, Ben Billings, Antonio Bonkovich, Matthew Hearn and Jayden Rollinson.

It might be a different Division but the opposition for our first game was none other than Three Kings United our relegation brothers. The game at Seymour Park was only 3 mins old when Rhys Ruka scored his and the Bay's first goal of the season. The game was fairly even but when Bay scored again 3 mins into the second-half, courtesy of Jono Quinn, the result was never in doubt. A red card for Three Kings on the hour mark didn't help their cause. FT 0-2. A very satisfactory start to life in Div One. A trip to Lloyd Elsmore to play Bucklands Beach, newly promoted from Div 2, was next up and a comfortable afternoon it turned out to be. From the moment Lebon Bulamba put us ahead after 24 mins there was only one team in it. Even though Bucklands Beach got one back right on halftime, they never looked like causing us trouble. Goalkeeper Zane Green, playing in place of Nick Draper and also playing his first game

for the Bay since 2014, saved a penalty which helped the cause. In the second half Lebon Bulamba grabbed his second and Jono Quinn and Jayden Rollinson completed the scoring. FT 1-4. With Olympic Park not yet ready for games, after being completely renovated, it was at Crum Park that we welcomed Hibiscus Coast. It might have been on an artificial pitch but there was nothing artificial about the result! A 7-1 victory with hat-tricks from Matthew Hearn and Jono Quinn. The Bay totally outplayed them and deserved the win. FT 7-1.

Three from three and we were steaming! The form continued in the next round at Anderson Park against Mt Albert-Ponsonby, well, at least up until HT, at which point the Bay were 2-0 up. Then something like a hiatus occurred, the form disappeared out the back door and the Bay became apprehensive and anxious. Mt Albert sensed the change and came back with 3 second-half goals to take the game, the points and the local bragging rights. FT 3-2. Waitemata at Crum Park was next, a return to winning ways surely? It didn't look like it when Waitemata took an early lead but then Jimmy Banks got an equaliser and we started to get on top, then Waitemata scored again, in the 31st min, and it turned out to be the winner. Over the 90 mins a deserved win to Waitemata. FT 1-2.

The Bay's form had dipped; perhaps promotion was out of the question this season. A difficult trip to Forrest Hill-Milford followed. From the moment Harry Nash scored in the 24th min we controlled this game. Then a moment of uncertainty led to a FHM equaliser in the 85th min. However, in my mind, this was the game that showed Bay Olympic were good enough to challenge for promotion if they could maintain this sort of form. FT 1-1.

Home to Fencibles, on a fantastic new playing surface at Olympic Park, was our next fixture. A Lebon Bulamba goal on 31 mins, followed by a Mario Bilen penalty taking lesson and a Rhys Ruka goal on half-time put this game out of Fencibles' reach. They did manage a consolation goal in the 89th min but were outplayed in this game. FT 3-1. Our next game was a Chatham



Cup match but I will deal with the Cup games later. It was great to welcome Waiheke United to Olympic Park for the first time and they brought a colourful group of supporters with them. They also proved difficult on the pitch and despite taking the lead with a Jared Colligan goal we had to eventually settle for a draw. FT 1-1.

A night game at Michaels Ave against Ellerslie turned out to be an entertaining affair especially for the Bay. Goals from Lebon Bulamba, Jared Colligan and a fancy penalty from Mario Bilen was enough to see off Ellerslie. The Bay totally dominated in the second-half. FT 0-3.

Our next League fixture saw us welcome Tauranga City to Olympic Park. They proved to be a tough proposition. An early Lebon Bulamba goal and a second from Sam Burfoot (this was his first start in a League game for the Bay) seemed to put us in a comfortable position but Tauranga scored soon after and then it became a tight battle. It wasn't until the 66th min that an O/G restored the two goal lead.

FT 3-1. Bucklands Beach came to Olympic Park and proved a better team than in the 1st round. However, a Colligan penalty in the 1st half and a Burfoot strike in the second was enough to win the game. Poor finishing from Bucklands Beach cost them any chance. In goal Nick Draper was impressive and Sam Burfoot was proving to be a great addition to the squad. FT 2-0.



A trip to Hibiscus Coast proved fruitful with another three points but that was not the full story. HBC were bottom of the table and simply could not score goals. They decided to pull just about every player back in front of goal to defend. Not likely to win too many games that way but difficult to break down. It was with a certain amount of relief that we celebrated Lebon Bulamba's 62nd minute goal. FT 0-1.

An away trip to McLeod Rd to face Waitemata and hopefully revenge for that 1st round fiasco. Two first-half goals from Lebon Bulamba and the improving Antonio Bonkovich proved enough. Waitemata improved in the second-half but our defence looked comfortable with anything they could throw at us. FT 0-2. Forrest Hill-Milford were promotion rivals when they visited Olympic Park. With two goals in each half the Bay proved much the better team. This was the game that in retrospect proved that the Bay were the best team in the League. The goals came from Lebon Bulamba 2, Colligan and Burfoot. A great and complete victory. FT 4-0.

At this point, Bay Olympic was in a position to take one of the promotion positions but so were three or four other teams! The visit to Riverhills to play Fencibles appeared crucial for the Bay. A first-half, in which we totally dominated but produced just the one Jared Colligan goal was followed by a second-half in which we lost our way. We did go two goals up when Harry Nash scored but after that it was all downhill and a spirited Fencibles deserved their two goals in three minutes to share the points. FT 2-2. Would we live to regret letting Fencibles take two points off us at this crucial point of the season?

Takapuna came to Crum Park on a Tuesday night for their first visit in nine years. The Bay took charge of the game but a spirited Takapuna scored first 5 mins before HT. The second-half continued with Bay in control but it was not until the 74th min that Sam Burfoot hammered home a penalty. Jared Colligan got the winner 7 mins later. FT 2-1

We were well into August and there were still four teams, The Bay, Forrest Hill-Milford, Mt Albert-Ponsonby and Three Kings in the race for promotion. Four days later and the Bay were off to meet Waiheke on Waiheke Island. The weather was poor, the pitch was poor and a helicopter interrupted the game! The game was all but lost at 2-0 down after 80 mins but Jono Quinn came to the rescue with goals in the 81st and 84th minutes. Jono's record shows that if he gets one goal he will more than likely get another! FT 2-2.

Our big rivals Mt Albert-Ponsonby were next at Crum Park - we wanted revenge for that defeat in April. There was concern when Nick Draper, our keeper, was forced off early but in



Elliot Munford we have a more than adequate deputy. Antonio Bonkovich scored just before HT and from then on the Bay took control. A Jared Colligan goal on the 67th min sealed it for the Bay. Very sweet revenge and probably put Mt Albert out of the promotion race. FT 2-0.

Another big game followed on the Saturday at Olympic Park against another promotion rival Three Kings United. This was a great game for the supporters! A very competitive one that threatened to blow up and in fact did after 14mins with the issue of 3 yellow cards. The Bay were the most composed and Sam Burfoot put us ahead after 21 mins. The game was tight in the second-half but after Sam Burfoot's second goal in the 78th minute, the fight went out of Three Kings. FT 2-0.

Another rival was out of the promotion race. The 1st round catch-up game with Takapuna was played at North Harbour Stadium on a Tuesday night in torrential rain. The weather was atrocious but Bay Olympic's performance was sublime. The Bay played some great passing football which brought two goals from Antonio Bonkovich and another from Sam Burfoot. FT 0-3. The team had gone 20 games (15 League and 5 Chatham Cup) without a defeat and set a new Club record.

Ellerslie came to Crum Park on the Tuesday following our Chatham Cup exit - how would the team react? We should also remember that this was our eighth game so far in August! This turned out to be one of the easier victories of the season. Two first-half goals from Jared Colligan and Callum McNeill and with another coming from Jared just after half-time put paid to any realistic chance Ellerslie had. They did get a consolation goal in the 71st min. FT 3-1.

To Tauranga and the last game of the season. We still had an outside chance of winning the Championship but Forrest Hill-Milford would have to lose. Not many teams get points at Links Road but Bay Olympic started with a hiss and a roar and the ever popular Ben Billings scored his first and last goal for the season after 3 mins! The game turned into a scrappy affair, not helped by a strong wind and a less than perfect playing surface. FT 0-1.

Results from elsewhere brought news that Forrest Hill- Milford were Champions and that we would be promoted back to the Premiership as runners-up. Great news for the Club and supporters but I felt for the players and coaching staff as I think they had proved that they were the best team in the Division and the Championship medals would have been richly deserved. Congratulations to the Players and Coaching staff! Roll on 2020 and the Premier Division again!

### **The Chatham Cup!**

Co-incidental with the successful League campaign was an equally exciting Cup challenge. Bay Olympic started one round earlier than we had become accustomed to due to our 1st Division status.

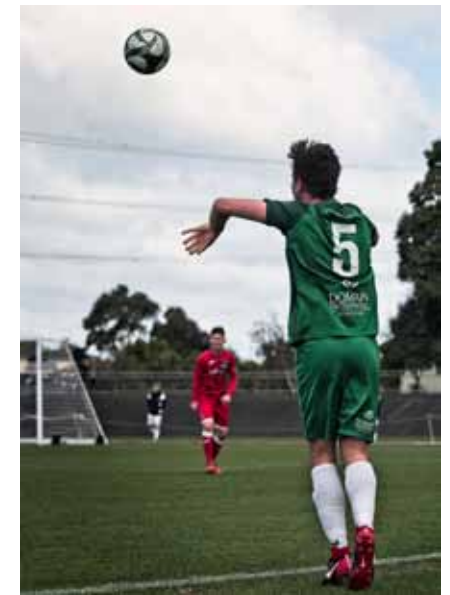
A local West Auckland team known as the West Auckland Kiwi True Blues were our first opponents and the game was played at Olympic Park. WAKTB's put on a spirited display without threatening to pull off an upset. Goals from Jono Quinn 3 (if he gets one he gets.....) and Antonio Bonkovich made it a comfortable win for the Bay. FT 4-0.

The next round saw Birkenhead United visit us at Olympic Park. Not only were they a Premiership team but they also happened to be the holders of the Chatham Cup! This was a tremendous game - Bay Olympic were starting to get on top when Birkenhead broke away and scored. Birkenhead came on hard but the Bay held on with great work from Nick Draper and the defence. In the second-half Jared Colligan equalised and then, in the 68th min, pressure from the Bay produced an O/G from Birkenhead! FT 2-1.

Central United was the Bay's reward in the next round. Again at Olympic Park. After a great save from Nick Draper, Lebon Bulamba put us ahead in the 25th min. Central equalised 10 mins later. Real tough battle from then on until the hour mark when Sam Burfoot scored with a great chip shot. The Bay held firm under pressure and Antonio Bonkovich wrapped it up in the 91st minute. FT 3-1.

Kevin Fallon and Manukau United were next to face the test of playing at Olympic Park. It was another Premier team and the Bay showed once again that they could compete against and beat these sides. An even game was suddenly blown apart in an eight minute spell, starting in the 71st minute, that saw Jimmy Banks, Jared Colligan and Sam Burfoot score for the Bay. Game over and another packed home crowd were delighted. FT 3-0.

Our prize was a visit to Dunedin to meet Caversham. Personally, I didn't make the trip down so had to make do with text messages. It looked good at half-time with a two goal advantage but when Caversham scored from a penalty in the 75th min it became a nightmare for txt message waiters! The game seemed to go on and on - what was happening down there? Eventually word came through that we had held on for the win. The defence had proved supreme again and Jono Quinn and Jared Colligan had done the rest. FT 1-2.



We were through to the Semi-Final! We certainly didn't complain when we got another home game. Melville United were the visitors and the Club made it a great occasion with hot-dog stalls and even a parade! It appeared that Melville came with a game plan to pressure early and go all out to score first. After 20 mins they were showing signs of frustration with this plan when they scored a somewhat fortunate goal. The Bay gave it everything but it was not to be our day. A second Melville goal in the 80th min put the game beyond reach. On the day, Melville deserved their victory. FT 0-2.

It was hard to believe that Bay Olympic's fantastic cup run was over. The team had provided us with some exciting football and had claimed some big scalps on a memorable journey.  
T.A.



## PREMIER SEASON REVIEW 2018

Shane Knowles again headed the coaching group with Julyan Collett as his assistant and Barry Williams as analyst. Andy Phipps was the manager, with David White as goalkeeper coach and Silas Bong as physio.

Players not returning from 2017 included: Niklas Ordenewitz, Luke Jorgensen, Nick Hindson, Chad Coombes, Sam Campbell, David Masters, James Pritchett, Cameron Brown and Nathan Rollinson.

New Players included: David Parkinson, Kyohei Kimura, Antonio Bonkovich, Kazuhiro Obata, Genki Nakamura, Frederico Costa, Matthew Hearn, Dan Jones (for his 3rd spell!), with Rossin Nkoy arriving later in the season.

There was a certain amount of optimism among club members prior to the commencement of the 2018 season. It was felt that with a good start, a top half finish would certainly be possible. Our first game was away to the 2017 Champions, Onehunga Sports. In fact, they were presented with their 2017 Championship trophy before the game and that obviously had an effect, as they turned in a confident 1st half performance to be 3-0 at HT. Although the Bay improved in the 2nd half, we were still well beaten, FT 4-0. Newly promoted Western Springs were the first visitors to Olympic Pk. The Bay needed to be quicker out of the blocks than in the 1st game and they were! 1-0 up after 10 mins thanks to a Jared Colligan goal. However, by HT we were 1-2 down and eventually we lost. FT 1-4.

Eight goals conceded in two games - not the start we were looking for. Central United came to Olympic Pk and surely this would get us started points wise, after all, we did the double over them in 2017. No such luck, a 0-4 home drubbing and everything looked rather grim. FT 0-4.

Twelve goals against in three games - we needed to stem the flow and we did in our third home game in a row against Eastern Suburbs. Kaz Obata put the Bay ahead after 29mins but Suburbs equalised just on HT. No further scoring and the Bay had their first point. FT 1-1. A much better performance and we should have taken all three points. Away at Glenfield Rovers the following week the improvement continued. A Julyan Collett strike put us ahead in the 65th minute but Glenfield then grabbed two, the winner coming in the 3rd min of added time. FT 2-1. The Bay again deserved at least a point from that one.



East Coast Bays came to Olympic Park and this game produced more red cards than goals! In fact there were no goals. FT 0-0. Another game that got away and no Julyan Collett next week but at least we doubled our points tally!

A trip to Porritt Stadium and Hamilton Wanderers was next up. Wanderers went 1-0 up after 17mins but after that the Bay looked the better side. It took until the hour mark before we equalised, and it was a first goal for the Club for Jayden Rollinson. Personally, I thought the Bay would go on and take this one but in the 75th min Hamilton got a second. FT 2-1. Round Eight saw us travel to Keith Hay Park to play Three Kings United. Surely a win was on the cards! Well, the only card that counts is the scorecard and that showed a FT 1-1. Ben Billings getting an equaliser right on the half-time whistle. After eight games we were in 11th place and had just three points, one more than Three Kings but 7 points adrift on any other team. We were not playing badly, our defence had tightened up but we were not scoring enough at the other end. 5 goals in eight games was a poor return on the effort being put in. I was convinced our position would improve.

Newly promoted Manukau United were the next visitors to Olympic Park. For a neutral spectator this was one of the games of the season. Manukau scored the only goal of an even 1st half. Roussin Nkoy equalised at around the hour mark. A draw looked on the cards when we

reached the 80th minute and no further goals. Then Manukau scored two in quick succession to make it 1-3. The Bay pulled one back at the 89min mark but with Manukau intent on time wasting that was the end of the scoring. FT 2-3. The points should have been shared and even the Manukau coach Kevin Fallon agreed (well, that is what he said) but for Bay it was another no pointer.

A trip to Birkenhead is usually a daunting prospect but Birkenhead were not having a great season, in fact they were only one place ahead of us when this game was played. David Parkinson had come from Birkenhead, Luke Jorgensen and Jack Anderson had played for the Bay, both Clubs were desperate for points and this could be a tough one to control for the referee. In fact, it was no such thing, just two yellow cards, one to each team and just one goal from Jared Colligan right on half-time. A nervous 2nd half for everyone before we could celebrate Bay Olympic's first win of the season! It was onwards (certainly) and upwards (hopefully) from now on. FT 0-1.

Waitakere City were visitors to Olympic Pk for the last game of the first half of the season. The Bay were 1-0 up after 30mins thanks to a Roussin Nkoy strike but from then on we didn't look like getting another. The Bay held on but just when it looked like another 3 points, Waitakere City equalised in the 88 min. Justice—probably, but we didn't want justice, we wanted points! FT 1-1.

A positive start to the second half of the season was required. The Bay were in 11th place, 5 points adrift of Birkenhead United.

The return fixture with Onehunga Sports was first up, they were top at the time but had been beaten (3 x). Could we do better than our 0-4 thumping at Waikaraka. We hadn't actually beaten them since 2014 when Darren White got the only goal of the game. This game was equally as tight and was, probably our best performance of the season so far ( In my opinion of course!). We didn't win, but a draw was encouraging and a great improvement on the 1st game. FT 0-0.

A trip to Western Springs on a Saturday evening saw the improvement continue but it was the Springs that got the only goal. Genuinely unlucky again! FT 1-0. In the 1st round we had conceded 8 in total against Onehunga Sports and Western Springs. In this second round we had conceded only 1 against them but only had one point to show for it. Huge improvement for scant reward.

Central United were the third team that had thumped at the start of the season, could we do better at Kiwitea St. Yes indeed! Goals from Mario Bilen. Al Taaf and Julyan Collett gave us the belief that we could get out of the relegation zone. FT 0-3.

A visit to Madills Farm and Eastern Suburbs was the next fixture. The Bay held them for over an hour, created more chances, but didn't take them. They (Suburbs) created two chances and took both of them. FT 2-0.

Glenfield Rovers came to Olympic Pk - we were now at the stage that points were more important than performance. We hadn't beaten Glenfield Rovers since the "heady days" of 2010! Could we do it now in these desperate times? Yes, and yes again! Thanks to an early Julyan Collett strike and a lovely second half own goal. FT 2-0. Optimism rising again!

A trip to East Coast Bays saw the Bay take an early lead after 23 mins thanks to a Julyan Collett effort. From then on we controlled the game, at least until the 84th min when the home team equalised. A soul destroyer. FT 1-1.

Hamilton Wanderers came to Olympic Pk, they still had eyes on the top spot, even though they were in 8th place. Only four points separated them from Eastern Suburbs who were on the top! The Bay were 2nd best in this one. Hamilton's Xavier Pratt got the first of his hat-trick in 9th min, Fred Coelho got his one and only goal for the Bay after 25mins. Had the fight back started? Yes, up until the 44th min when Hamilton went ahead again, right on HT, a game changer. The second half saw Hamilton take control and apart from a consolation goal from Antonio Bonkovich in the 93rd min, the Bay were well beaten FT 2-4.

The following game was Three Kings at Olympic Pk, they were the other team deep in relegation trouble. We had a four point lead over them at this stage but they had a game in hand. The Bay were 7 points behind Central United who were in 10th place. We had drawn with Three Kings away, surely we could beat them at home. There was a glimmer of hope if we won, none if we lost. The Bay started well enough, Antonio Bonkovich putting us ahead after just 5mins. Then just when it looked as if we would have a half-time advantage, came the start of the three most fatal minutes of the season. Three Kings equalised in the 44th min, took the lead in the 45th min HT 1-2. Three Kings then had the audacity to score in the first minute of the second-half. From 1-0 up at the 43rd min stage, we were 1-3 down after 46 mins. It was smash and grab and the Bay never recovered. FT 1-3.

A trip to Manukau United for a game we could and should have won. Jared Colligan put us in the lead after just 3 mins and from then on we were the better team. Manukau equalised in the 64th min and got the winner in the 81st min, both scored by Sanni Issa. The Bay had played well enough to win but had come away with nothing. The story of our season. Manukau remained in contention for the title at this stage. FT 2-1.

Birkenhead United were actually at the top of the table and also through to the semi-final of the Chatham Cup when this next game was played at Olympic Pk. The Bay were going down but at least at home, in this game, they did it with style. A 4-2 thumping of Birkenhead United! Goals from Mario Bilen, Jared Colligan (2) and a long distance effort from just inside his own half from Kyohei Kimura. This made everyone feel a little better, well, for a short while anyway. FT 4-2.

The final game was away to Waitakere City, a game with nothing on the line. Waitakere City took the lead through a penalty after 30 mins. 5 mins later Jared Colligan equalised and the game seemed to be heading for a draw when Waitakere City got the winner after 70 mins. FT 2-1.

The season was over, we would be a First Division team in 2019. The Bay had conceded 12 goals in the first three games, an average of 4 per game. In the next 19 they conceded 27, an average of 1.4 per game. We had 6 draws and 7 games were decided by an odd goal, with only one of them being in our favour. For most of the season we believed we were too good to go down but in the end the table never lies. The last time we were in the First Division was in 2001 and that was an exciting year for those of us who can remember it. Looking forward to next season already!

Chatham Cup: We did participate but not for very long. A trip to Papamoa saw us ousted 1-0 by the locals. A great day for them and a long trip back for the Bay.

TA

## PREMIER SEASON REVIEW 2017

Shane Knowles continued in the head coaching role and was assisted by James Pritchett, Jason Batty, Barry Williams, and Andy Phipps. Silas Bong took over the physio duties.

Players not returning from 2016 included Liam Anderson, Jack Caunter, Matt Cuneen, Dan Jones, Raphael Duyille and Jack Anderson.

New players welcomed to the Club included Niklas Ordenewitz, Nick Hindson, Charlie Thomas, David Masters, Haesung Jung, Sam Campbell, Mario Bilen, Cameron Brown and Nathan Rollinson.



2017 will be remembered for a wonderful Chatham Cup run that went as far as the semi-finals. However, a sixth place league finish was also a much improved position compared with the previous two seasons and included notable victories over Central United (2) and Birkenhead United.

### Northern League Competition

The season got underway at Olympic Park with a visit from newly promoted Manurewa AFC. A scrappy 1st half (1-1) was followed by a big improvement in the 2nd and the Bay ran out winners by 4-2 with goals from Soheb Sheik, Al Taaf Sahib, James Pritchett and Nick Hindson. A good start to the season and an optimistic feeling in the Clubrooms afterwards.

A trip to Forrest Hill-Milford followed and a game in which we dominated but somehow contrived to lose 2-1. Soheb Sheik was our scorer but there was a feeling that this was three points lost which should have been ours. A very clinical Onehunga Sports came to Olympic Park and proved too strong for us and went away deservedly winners by 3 clear goals.

A good start had been followed by two defeats and next up was Central United at Kiwitea St! Wow! Two goals up after 20mins - both from Nick Hindson, and Bay Olympic were humming! Another from Al Taaf Sahib just before HT put the result beyond doubt - a 3-1 victory was a good tonic!

Waitakere City came to Olympic Park and were unlucky not to take all three points - goals from Chad Coombes and Stephen Ashby earned us a draw 2-2 but it was not a good performance.

A visit to Keith Hay and a much better performance for a 2-1 win, with goals from Chad Coombes and a late, late, winning own goal from Three Kings. I just love those ones! Glenfield Rovers came to Olympic Park, scored a goal, and went home with 3 points. To be honest the Bay didn't look like scoring in this one.

Then came the most forgettable performance of the season but the trouble is, I can't quite forget it! A 4-1 loss to a poor East Coast Bays side with only a second-half goal from Julyan Collett to show for our efforts.

The Bay badly needed a boost and they got it! The following week we met Birkenhead United at Shepherds Park, where we hadn't won a game since 2007! Three 1st half goals from the C division, namely, Sam Campbell, Chad Coombes and Jared Colligan was enough for a nail biting 3-2 victory. Great performance, good win, everyone happy!

Eastern Suburbs came to Olympic Park and a good 1st half provided no goals and a scrappy 2nd produced 4. Goals from Niklas Ordenewitz and Sam Campbell earned us a point.

A visit to Hamilton Wanderers is always a good trip for spectators, especially when you win! On this occasion the Bay came away with all three points thanks to a classy finish from Chad Coombes for the only goal of the game.

The halfway point of the season had been reached with a 5win—2draw—4 loss record. The second-half of the season began, as did the first, with a 2-1 win over Manurewa AFC. Goals from Dino Botica and Soheb Sheik doing the trick on a poor surface.

Our next home game was transferred to Crum Park where we met Forrest Hill-Milford, who we were also due to meet two days later in the Chatham Cup. We will review the Chatham Cup games later. On this occasion at Crum, Mario Bilen scored his 1st for the Bay and Niklas Ordenewitz netted a penalty in the 86th minute for the winner.

The next League game was against the very good Onehunga Sports at Waikaraka Pk where they deservedly beat us 2-0. We have now lost 6 of the last 7 games with Onehunga Sports.

Central United came to Olympic Park and the question was, could we beat them for the second

time in the season? The answer was yes we could, with the help of an own goal! But that was all we needed for the win.

A poor performance saw the Bay go down 3-0 at Fred Taylor to a determined Waitakere City side - enough said I think.

Back to Crum Park for the return fixture with Three Kings. An 82nd min goal from sub Soheb Sheik saw us get a valuable point after Three Kings had gone ahead in the 1st half. Our visit to Glenfield Rovers produced our best (In my opinion of course!) losing performance, if such a thing exists, of the season. A second-half penalty from Jared Colligan was not enough and we went down 2-1 but we had played well.

We had played poorly at East Coast Bays earlier in the season, we would do much better at home surely? After scoring 1st we found ourselves 2-3 down at HT. East Coast Bays added another in the second for a comfortable win in the end. East Coast Bays were our bogey team in 2017.

Birkenhead United were determined to get revenge for their shock 1st round defeat, after a fairly even 1st half they ran out comfortable 4-1 winners. Only a Julyan Collett goal for the Bay to show for their efforts.

Eastern Suburbs at Madills has usually provided a tough fixture but on this occasion the Bay thrashed them 4-0! Very satisfying! Goals from Jared Colligan (2), Nick Hindson and Al Taaf Sahib.

Our last League game was played at Crum Park and we deservedly beat Hamilton Wanderers 2-0 with goals from Al Taaf Sahib and a stunner from Niklas Ordenewitz.

It had been a good campaign and the Bay finished comfortably mid-table. The second round record, of 5wins—1draw—5losses was very similar to the 1st round. Onehunga Sports won the competition and were the best team we played against (again in my opinion!).

### **Chatham Cup games**

Every football fan loves the tension and drama that cup competitions bring. In or out—winner take all—no 2nd place. The Bays Chatham Cup run was undoubtedly the highlight of the season. The 2017 campaign began away at Forrest Hill-Milford, two days after we had beaten them in the League at Crum Park. A Niklas Ordenewitz goal got us off to a great start and we

were 1-0 up at HT. Then Julyan Collett and later Jared Colligan, in stoppage time, saw the Bay come away with a 3-1 victory.

A trip to Hamilton Wanderers was our reward and a dramatic game it turned out to be. Two goals down by HT, supporters were fearing the worst, however, the Bay came back, although they kept us waiting until the 85th min to get the first from Al Taaf Sahib. Then two mins later Jared Colligan got the equaliser! No further scoring so it was into a penalty shoot out. I love shootouts when you win! And we did, with successful kicks from Sam Campbell, Chad Coombes, Jared Colligan and Ben Billings. A great comeback and a happy trip back to Auckland.

Next round and another away trip this time to Western Springs. (I still have nightmares when I think of our biggest ever defeat in 2015 at Seddon Field) It was another tough, tight, game with Julyan Collett getting one for the Bay and a 1-1 HT score. A nailbiting second-half saw Jared Colligan grab 2 more for an eventual 3-2 win.

Another away game was our reward and obviously, Hamilton hadn't been far enough because we were sent to Wellington to play Western Suburbs. Western Suburbs were hot favourites according to all the experts but what do they know anyway! A large number of supporters made the trip but unfortunately I wasn't one of them.

By all accounts, our supporters, maybe as many as a hundred, won the supporters battle under Andy Hancock's leadership and the team responded by winning 2-1! A superb strike from Niklas Ordenewitz and one from Julyan Collett did the trick and we were through to the semi-finals!

Away again, this time to Central United, absolute disbelief from the Bay when the draw was made. Five consecutive away draws, unbelievable, has that ever happened before? Well yes, last season, Miramar had five away games to reach the same stage of the Cup. Was it asking too much to take down Central United for the third game in a row. Well, possibly not if it had been the same side we met in the League, but this time they brought in their big guns and dispatched us 5-0. Our supporters were fantastic again and it was a great day but would it have been different at Olympic Park ?

Possibly, I'd like to think so anyway! However, this game should not distract from what had been an exciting and challenging Cup run. (By the way, Miramar also went out in the semi-final last year). Onehunga Sports were the winners of the Chatham Cup, beating Central United in the final in a penalty shoot-out.

Roll on next season!

T.A.



## PREMIER SEASON REVIEW 2016

Carl Jorgensen was retained as coach for 2016. Scott Mackay left to take over at Mt Albert and James Pritchett took over the assistant coaching role. Brent Harlock was again the manager. Ciaran Regan took on the Physio duties.

A number of players departed, some after just one season, including Stewart Mackay, Dylan Tate, Ken Yamamoto, Ian Hogg, Mackenzie Waite and Jordan Hunter. Michael Woud had departed during the 2015 season to pursue a football apprenticeship with Sunderland FC. These were replaced by a number of returning players, namely, Matt Cunneen (from injury), Jack Caunter, Dan Jones, Chad Coombes, and Julyan Collett. New players included Jack Anderson, Ben Billings and later on Raphael Duyile.

The season got underway with a home match against Melville. The team looked very tentative to start with and there was no score at half-time. It wasn't until the hour mark that the Bay took the lead through Chad Coombes, but from then on it was one-way traffic with additional goals from James Pritchett, Jack Anderson and Dino Botica. A 4-0 win and an excellent start to the season. Optimism went even higher the following week when a visit to Forrest Hill resulted in another 4-0 win with goals from Jack Anderson (2), Ben Billings and Jared Colligan.

It was back to Olympic Park for the visit of East Coast Bays and a really tight battle it turned out to be with Anderson getting our winner in the 92nd minute. It finished 2-1 to the Bay and made it three wins in a row.

Would it last? Well, it lasted until our next game, a visit to newly promoted Tauranga. We lost 2-1 with Billings scoring for the Bay and by all accounts we were very unlucky. Could we put this first defeat behind us and return to winning ways?

The answer came on the next Friday night at Crum Park under lights. Central were our visitors and we were beaten by half-time, Colligan was sent off, yellow cards were being flashed and we were down 3-1! More was to follow in the second half with red cards issued to Coombes and Caunter. By this time it was 8 v 10 and game over! Did I mention, Jack Caunter did get a great goal for the Bay and at least there was plenty to talk about after that one!

Three days later and we travelled to Eastern Suburbs to play the current Champions. A very even 1st half saw Suburbs 1-0 up but they eventually went on to win 4-0 and thoroughly deserved it. The Bay were still a little behind the best teams in the league. Hamilton

Wanderers came to Olympic Park and looked good for their 1-0 half-time lead but Dan Jones got an equaliser just at the start of the second and it finished up a draw. Dan is always good for a goal against Hamilton. A scratchy game with too many cards issued including a red for Chad Coombes but at least we got a point.

We played well over at Glenfield Rovers the following week but failed to score and went down 2-0. Injuries and cards were starting to cost us. A visit to Shepherds Park is always a difficult assignment and this proved to be the case when Birkenhead beat us 2-1 - Julyan Collett scoring for the Bay. Crum Park was the venue for our next game against Onehunga Sports. We played well enough but had no luck and went down 1-0. The Bay were playing reasonably well but having no luck at all. Western Springs were becoming a bit of a bogey team for us. Collett and Anderson scored for the Bay and there was little between the teams but the Springs ran out 4-2 winners at Olympic Park.

A trip to Keith Hay Park led to another defeat at the hands of Three Kings, 3-1 with Colligan getting our consolation goal. It was now 5 defeats in a row.

Maybe we would have better luck in the Chatham Cup which was next up. A trip to Tauranga and a 1-0 win in the Cup, courtesy of a goal from Altaaf Sahib, provided a much needed tonic for supporters and no doubt players and coaches as well! It seemed to work as we got a thrilling 3-3 draw down at Melville the following Saturday. Stephen Ashby, Soheb Sheik and Chad Coombes doing the honours.

Forrest Hill turned up at Olympic Park the following week with a completely different team than the one we played in the first round and trounced us 4-0! We were no match for them on the day. The next round of the Chatham Cup saw the Bay away again this time to Kevin Fallon's latest club Manukau. It took two goals from Altaaf, including an audacious back heel, to get past a battling Manukau side. The Cup was providing some relief from the league!

A visit from Tauranga was next and they were despatched by two goals from Collett with 2-1 the final score. We needed those points badly! A trip to Kiwitea St to take on Central, the eventual winners of the Championship, proved too difficult and although we kept them scoreless in the first half, they ran out winners 3-0. Chatham Cup time again but unfortunately it was to be our last appearance in the 2016 version with the Bay exiting 3-0 to the revamped Forrest Hill team.



Another year perhaps. At this point in the season, the Club made the decision to relieve Carl Jorgensen of his coaching duties and replace him with Shane Knowles. No doubt a difficult decision and an awkward situation for all concerned. However, football carries on and the next game was a trip to Hamilton. As I mentioned earlier Dan Jones always scores against the Wanderers and he did it again with the only goal of the game to give us a 1-0 win and three valuable points. The following week Glenfield Rovers came to Olympic Park and a Matt Cunneen goal saw us take our first point from Glenfield since they returned to the premiership in 2014.

The final score 1-1. East Coast Bays got the better of us by 1-0 over at Bay City Park in a game that could have gone either way. We were now in a relegation battle and needed every point. The next game didn't help the cause when we were spanked 7-1 by Birkenhead at Olympic Park with Botica getting our effort. Don't worry, people kept telling me, but sleepless night were the norm for some of us. Western Springs were up next and it was back to the site of our 2015 horror of horrors. The Springs won comfortably again, this time by 4-1, we just don't seem to have an answer to them on their artificial surface. We desperately needed points!

Back to Olympic Park for the visit of Three Kings and a great performance saw us beat them 5-1! Our biggest win over them since 2008! Onehunga Sports at Waikaraka is always a difficult task for us, so to come away with a valuable point seemed almost like winning. Soheb Sheik the scorer of a priceless goal. Last game time and we felt we were probably safe from relegation but a visit from Eastern Suburbs meant we probably wouldn't get any more points either.

How wrong can you be! We beat them 3-0 with goals from Colligan, Collett and Botica to get our first win over them since they returned to the league in 2015. The seven points from a possible nine over the last three games had proved invaluable. We would be a Premier team again in 2017. Central were the Champions and Tauranga, Melville and Western Springs were relegated.

Let's hope next season we are fighting at the other end of the table!

## PREMIER SEASON REVIEW 2015

Wholesale changes marked the start of the 2015 campaign. Shane Knowles was not retained as coach, which led to Andy Phipps and Barry Williams also departing. In came Carl Jorgensen as coach with Scott Mackay as his assistant and Brent Harlock taking on the Manager's job. Brandon Visser was the Physio. A new coaching staff led to massive changes in the player department!

Those departing included Dan Jones, Kyosake Kitano, Craig Wylie, Chad Coombes, Ryan Elder, Max Manko, Jack Caunter, Colin Gardyne and everyone's favourite goalkeeper Zane Green! They were replaced by a mainly younger group including Stewart Mackay, Stephen Ashby-Peckham, Dylan Tate, Jared Colligan, Luke Jorgensen, Ian Hogg, Matthew Thomas, Harrison Brown, Adam Barclay, and Soheb Sheik. Mackenzie Waite, Michael Woud and Liam Anderson shared the goalkeeping duties.

James Prichett and Ken Yamamoto were the only players that started in our last 2014 game with East Coast Bays that were in the team that travelled to Melville for the opening of the 2015 season. With supporters in the strange position of not knowing many of their own team, there was a deal of uncertainty before kick-off! There was no need to worry as Stewart Mackay scored his, and the Cub's first goal inside 12mins. When Jared Colligan added another before half-time, supporters breathed a little easier.

Dylan Tate got a brace in the second half and Mackay and Colligan added to their totals. We did let Melville in for a couple but a 6-2 away win was an encouraging start. The first home game was East Coast Bays and we led with a Colligan goal at half-time but we could not hold on for the win, with 1-1 the final score. The talk after the game was mainly around Matthew Thomas getting a red card after the final whistle. Three days later, another Colligan goal, gave us a 1-1 against Waitakere at Fred Taylor.

Three games and 5 points was not a bad start. However, Glenfield Rovers were our next opponents at Olympic Park and they taught us a bit of a lesson winning 3-1 - Adam Barclay scoring for Bay. If that was a bit of a lesson then we got certainly got a major one the following week at Shepperds Park when Birkenhead walloped us 6-0! Was this the start of a major decline?

Well, no actually, because the following week we downed the mighty Central 4-3 at Olympic Park! Goals from Pritchett 2, Colligan and Jordan Hunter did the trick in what was the best performance so far. When we beat Three Kings three days later at Keith Hay by 3-2 we were really starting to hum! Pritchett, Colligan and Harrison Brown got us home with the points! Western Springs came to Olympic Park next and were sent home pointless when we downed them 2-1 with Colligan and Alan Ferguson doing the scoring.

Three wins out of three and we were going places! Of course, when you start thinking like that, something comes along and puts you in your place. That certainly happened the following week at Madill's Farm when we were dumped 7-1! That was after Pritchett scored for us first. On the day, Eastern Suburbs were a class above us and looked potential competition winners. The following week we went down again to a good Onehunga Sports team at Waikaraka by 3-0.

Next came a great performance at Olympic Park against Hamilton Wanderers when we came out 4-0 winners. Mackay, Stephen Ashby and young Dino Botica with 2 made our day. It was turning out to be a topsy turvy season for sure. The following week came a chance to get some revenge on Onehunga Sports as we had drawn them in the Chatham Cup. Another trip to Waikaraka but with much the same result, this time a 5-1 drubbing. A fleeting run in the Cup to say the least. Back to the League and the second round. It opened with a trip to Central where, although we played well, Central got some revenge and beat us 1-0. Then it was off to East Coast Bays where a solitary Colligan goal was not enough and we lost 2-1. Next up was a trip to McFetridge to play Glenfield Rovers, they had beaten us at Olympic Park and they did so again by 2-1, but I rate this as one of our best performances of the season. Botica got the Bay's goal. Into July and we had lost 4 in a row, including the Cup game.

Waitakere came to Olympic Park needing a win to give themselves a chance of remaining in the Premiership. They really went for it but the Bay were better on the day and just edged it 2-1 - a sigh of relief from all concerned. Crum Park was the venue for our next home game against Birkenhead where a fabulous strike from Soheb Sheik saw us get a draw and some revenge for that walloping earlier in the season. Still six games to go and plenty of time to get a few points and make our position safe. That's what I thought at the time but I started to get nervous when we were beaten by Melville at home the following week.

A solitary Colligan goal was not enough and we went down 2-1 to a team we had beaten 6-2 in the first game of the season. Then Three Kings beat us 2-0, again at Olympic Park and we were starting to shake. Our next game at Western Springs was an absolute nightmare, an 11-1

spanking that became our heaviest ever defeat. It was hard for the supporters and players to front up in the opposing clubrooms after that one! They did, however, and all credit to them. The Bay were never going to beat the eventual Champions, Eastern Suburbs, but the 5-2 scoreline at Crum Park flattered them somewhat. Suburbs also went on to win the Chatham Cup. Next up was Onehunga Sports, who had already beaten us twice. This time we put up a great fight but eventually succumbed 1-0.

We travelled to Hamilton for the last game - we had beaten them 4-0 at Olympic Park in May, but since then Hamilton had come into some form and would eventually finish in second place. They spanked us 7-0 which is no way to end a season! Bay Olympic had fielded a very young and mainly inexperienced side over the course of the Championship and it told in the end. In the first half of the competition we had won 5, drawn 2 and lost 4. The second half brought us just 1 win, 1 draw and 9 defeats. We eventually finished in 9th place but the shenanigans over the Three Kings business and our own drop in form in the second half of the season left supporters hoping for much better in 2016!

The last weeks of the season had been an uncertain nightmare. Three Kings had fielded an ineligible player at some point during the season which had resulted in a protest and subsequent appeals involving up to seven Clubs. Results were affected and therefore points as well. It was eventually ruled that Three Kings would lose points for the games involved which meant they finished last in the competition. However, due to some misunderstanding between Three Kings and the AFF over the interpretation of a certain rule, Three Kings would not be relegated. Poor old Waitakere City, who finished one place above them, would be the only team relegated and the Premiership would have 13 teams for the 2016 season.

## PREMIER SEASON REVIEW 2014

For 2014 the coaching and support team remained the same, namely, Shane Knowles, Barry Williams and Andy Phipps. Chad Coombes and James Pritchett were appointed assistant coaches. Players not resigning included Roy Bell, Matt Cuneen, Shane Tanner and Joe Edwards. Joe had given great service to Bay Olympic since his first game in 2002, he is second only to Lee Judd in all time appearances with 166 games and is our all time leading goalscorer with 65 goals.

Never say never! Joe will be welcome back at Bay Olympic in the future in any capacity. A number of players returned to the the Club, including, Zane Green, Colin Gardyne and Richard and Jason Beeston. Among the new players were Jack and Louie Caunter and Takahiro Yokota. Expectations were that we would do reasonably well, hopefully, better than the previous season.

A strong team hit the road for our first game at Ngaruawahia. The first half ended before the Bay really got started! We played as if it were a pre-season warm up and were 1-0 down at the break. Much better second half in which we dominated but had wait until the 77th minute for Ken Yamamoto to equalize. My thoughts at the end were that the Bay would do well and that Ngaruawahia would have no trouble staying in the League. Well, I certainly got that last bit wrong, which goes to show how much I know about the game!

Second up was Three Kings at Olympic, we were after revenge because they had beaten us twice in 2013. However, we didn't get it and were soundly beaten 4-1. Ken Yamamoto was again our scorer. Surely, the result was just a slight blip and the season would get better? Central, at the Croation Club was next up. Always a difficult fixture, but Kyosake Kitano got a goal right on half-time to give us the lead and the momentum. Chad Coombes and Max Manko added goals in the second half and although Central pulled one back, we were comfortable winners. The only black marks were red cards (colourful language eh!) to Byron Paulus and Chad Coombes and that did take the shine off celebrations a little bit.

With that win, the feeling round the Club was all positive for the visit of East Coast Bays. Oh dear! We didn't score, which happens from time to time, but East Coast Bays had no trouble putting six past us in a nightmare of a game for the Bay. The less said the better! As our coach said afterwards, we just did not turn up for this one.

Would the team be able to recover for the trip to Hamilton Wanderers? The answer was a resounding yes! Comfortably ahead 2-0 at the break we ran out the winners by 3-1. The game will be remembered for the stunner of a goal from Daniel Jones, probably, the goal of the season. A season that was turning into a roller coaster for the supporters!

Our next game was against Glenfield Rovers at Olympic. Many football people were picking Glenfield Rovers for the Championship and they showed us why in demolishing the Bay 4-0, to rub salt in, they did it with the help of a couple of ex Bay players! In our previous two home games we had failed to score a goal and even I couldn't remember that happening before. (Actually, it was not that long ago, in 2010 in fact, the year of the re-organisation of the League and the teams were Forrest Hill and Central). Round 7 and the Bay were away to Waitakere City at Fred Taylor Park. It turned out to be a comfortable 3-0 win with Craig Wylie, Max Manko and Chad Coombes doing the damage. Another away game followed, this time against Onehunga Sports and again we won, with Craig Wylie and Chad Coombes on the scoresheet for the second week running.

At this point in the season we had won four of our away games and drawn the other! At home we had lost all three. What is this thing called "home advantage"!

The next team to visit Olympic Park was Birkenhead United, a team favoured to win the Championship by many. It was certainly the best game at the Park so far and resulted in our first home win, 3-2 to be exact. Max Manko was in top form and netted twice with Ken Yamamoto getting the other. The home "bogey" had been laid to rest.

The start of the second round began with the visit of Ngaruawahia. They had been difficult opponents away and proved just as hard on our turf. We did win 2-1 but it was not an easy victory and our visitors battled all the way. Again, it was Craig Wylie and Chad Coombes who did the damage. If one of them scores the other seems obliged to follow suit! Most teams had no trouble beating Ngaruawahia but we made hard work of it. A valuable three points though, and our second home win on the trot.

Three Kings at Keith Hay Park were beaten 1-0 with a Max Manko goal in the 24th minute but it should have been more as we dominated large parts of the game. The Bay were playing some good football around this time and were starting to look a good bet for a top two position in the League. (Well, I certainly thought that at the time)!

The Chatham Cup upset the rhythm of the League around this time and it was nearly a month before we played Hamilton Wanderers in our next home League game. It was a good game and a good win 2-0, with both our goals coming from Jack Caunter, who gives every impression of being a mature and experienced centre-back, but is in fact, still young enough for the Waitakere United youth team!

Game 13 and we were off to McFetridge Park. Glenfield Rovers had a really impressive team and supporters were fearing the worst, especially after that 4-0 drubbing at home. However, we gave them a real fright before going down 5-3.

An early James Pritchett goal got us in the game and Kyosake Kitano got another before half-time. The Bay were 3-2 down at the break and everything to play for.

Darren White got a great goal in the 84th minute but Glenfield were too strong and finally ran out winners by 5-3. It was no disgrace to get so close to an impressive side that eventually won the Championship by 16 points!

Next up was Waitakere City at Olympic Park and I'm still not sure how we managed lose this one, but lose it we did by 3-2. Darren White got a good one in the first half and there was just enough time at the end for Colin Gardyne to get his first for the season!

In between those goals, Waitakere City managed to get three! This was a game we should have won and the three points would have been very valuable.

The following Saturday we back at Olympic, this time our opponents were Onehunga Sports. A goal to Darren White right on half-time was the only goal of the game. Our visitors were always a threat and the result was on the line until the final whistle. A nailbiter for spectators! Birkenhead United at Shepherds Park were next. A very even game and a good first half from the Bay. A 1-0 lead at the break, courtesy of a James Pritchett goal. However, Birkenhead came on strongly in the second half and even after Jack Caunter grabbed a second they were too strong for us. We didn't help ourselves with a defensive error or two and we eventually went down 3-2. We left Shepherds Park thinking we should have got something out of the game.

By now, of course, Glenfield Rovers were assured of the title and the rest of us were fighting for the minor positions.

Our last game at Olympic Park saw a young Central side beat us by the odd goal in three. Max Manko got the goal, his eleventh of the season in all competitions. It was, though, our fifth home loss which was disappointing for our supporters but such is football. The final game was away to East Coast Bays on the artificial surface at QEB. I am aware that I am old fashioned because I am told I am often enough, but, I am not a fan of football on these surfaces. The football looks artificial and there is no atmosphere at those places. It might be alright for the players, and I know we are going to see more pitches like this, but, if there is a choice, give me a grass surface any day.

In the game itself we lost 3-1. Captain Craig Wylie got a double, that's a goal and a red card. Yuji Kitano made his debut and looked useful. Apart from that it was a typical last game of the season for two teams who finished fourth and fifth in the League.

The Chatham Cup provided some real entertainment, starting with an excellent 2-1 win over Three Kings United. With the scores tied at 1-1 at the break it was down to Max Manko to get the winner, and his second, in the 68th minute. A tight close game and a typical cup-tie. The next round was a Friday night game at Western Springs against a team challenging for promotion to the Premier Division. A difficult one for us as it was on artificial, something our opponents played on regularly. A tremendous performance from the Bay, goals from Dan Jones and Darren White and a good crowd in attendance. Loved it!

### **Was this going to be the year the Bay won the Cup?**

The draw came out and gave us a home game against Hamilton Wanderers. We started to dream. Five goals in the first half had the spectators on their toes. Trouble was that the Bay, namely Max Manko, only got two of them. Plenty of time to make up the deficit and go on to win. Would you believe it! No goals in the second half and we were out of the Cup. The players certainly tried hard enough but the goals would just not come. The dream was over, we woke up to reality. Next year, perhaps.

Summing up the season, I would have to say that it was certainly an improvement on the previous one. I don't think we could have headed Glenfield Rovers, they were a cut above the rest. At our absolute best we came very close to them but we were too inconsistent to seriously challenge them. A satisfactory season, I can't wait for the next one to begin!

## PREMIER SEASON REVIEW 2013

Coach Shane Knowles and Manager Andy Phipps got the season underway and were later joined by Barry Williams.

Michael Mayne left for a position at Glenfield Rovers. Chad Coombes and James Pritchett were appointed assistant coaches.

A strong group of players did not return for the season, including, Chris Marsh, Robbie Greenhalgh, Nathan Strom, Colin Gardyne, Michael Mayne and Steven Holloway. Four of them left the Auckland area and none of them went to another Premier Club.

On the other side of the ledger, in came goalkeeper Roy Bell, Daniel Jones, Kyosake Kitano, Ken Yamamoto, and Craig Squires. Byron Paulus and Maksim Manko returned to the Club. Bay Olympic had shown that the key to winning the Premiership was to get off to a great start.

We had stolen a march on the other Clubs in 2011 and 2012 - would we be able to do so again? Well, the answer came in the very first match when we were drawn against East Coast Bays at Olympic Park. Only five players started the game for Bay Olympic that had appeared in our last game in 2012, and it showed! We were beaten 2-4 and looked short of a run or two. Craig Squires and Shane Tanner got our goals but a "red" for Craig Wylie on the hour just added to the frustration.

Socially, the trip to Hamilton was, as usual, a success. However, on the field, although we looked the better team, the referee found a last minute penalty to gift the match to Hamilton Wanderers 2-1. The general feeling was that there had been times in the past when we had played a lot worse in Hamilton and come away with three points.

Central United were next to visit Olympic Park. Always a good side to measure yourself against and on this occasion we measured up and beat them 2—1 with goals from Craig Wylie and Byron Paulus.

Promoted Club Ellerslie AFC and a trip to the artificial turf at Michaels Avenue followed. Bay Olympic came out on top with a Craig Wylie penalty - the only goal. Artificial turf? The verdict was that not too many were in favour but we had better get used to it as more and more games are being decided on it.

Next up was Three Kings AFC, the weather was awful, the pitch was flooded in parts and the game was abandoned at half-time. The most disappointed was Ryan Elder who had scored his first ever goal for Bay Olympic only to see it wiped out!

The pre-season talk had all been about Birkenhead United and how good they were. Well they were too good for us at Shepherds Park, winning 2—1 but the experts reckon we were worth at least a point. Ryan Elder, no doubt still upset about his "abandoned" goal in the previous match, managed to get himself a straight red, most probably his first one of those as well!

We were again on the wrong end of 2—1 scoreline at home to Onehunga Sports with Dan Jones getting the one for Bay Olympic - this was definitely a game we should have won. The following week Manurewa AFC did the same to us, 2—1 at Memorial Park but hold on, there's more to come on this one. After drowning our sorrows over the weekend, the Association found an unregistered player on the Manurewa team card. The points are awarded to Bay Olympic! Time to celebrate!

Home to Waitakere City was next and the pitch was covered with NZFC players. Roy Krishna touched the ball twice and scored on both occasions! The final score was 3—3 and had been the best game on Olympic so far. James Pritchett got two and Chad Coombes the other. Two days later we comfortably beat Papakura in our first Chatham Cup match 4—0 on a rather 'bumpy' pitch at McClennan Park. Byron Paulus, Shane Tanner and Jono Key with two were our scorers.

East Coast Bays at Bay City were next in the league and we were comfortable 3—1 winners with goals from Max Manko 2, and Kyosake Kitano. I say comfortable, but Willy Gerdson ( ECB Coach) didn't agree! Officials, I think, were the problem. We had drawn East Coast Bays in the next round of the Chatham Cup, so we faced them again the following week at Olympic Park. This time Willy could have no complaints as Bay Olympic really played one of their best games of the season in winning 5—1. Max Manko and Kyosake Kitano got two each and Chad Coombes got the other. Willy Gerdson was very complimentary after this one and later in the season we would repay him for his kind words!

Hamilton Wanderers at home followed - they were better than they were in Hamilton and were 2—1 up at half-time. It didn't look good for the Bay but an inspired substitution after 70 minutes brought on Yoji Tanabe and he duly delivered with a goal four minutes from the end for a 2—2 draw.

Our next Chatham Cup opponents were Waitakere City at Fred Taylor Park. Waitakere really won it in the first half and were 3—0 up at half-time. Bay Olympic made a better game of it in the second half and pulled one back in the 85th minute but it was all too late. Cup dreams over for another year. Waitakere City went on to reach the final but they were beaten by Cashmere Tech 3—1.

Back to the league and Central United at Kiwitea St . On the day they were too good for us. We got a goal in each half, where as they got two in each half and that was about the difference between the two teams. It finished 4—2 and realistically we had no complaints.

Ellerslie AFC were next to visit Olympic Park. We had beaten them away, so surely, we would have no trouble at home. Funny game football! We did manage a 3—3 draw but our equalizer came in the 94th minute from a penalty! Wow, too close for comfort. Although we were not in a desperate situation a few more points at this time would not go astray.

However, astray they went, when Three Kings United downed us 2—0 at Keith Hay Park. To Waikaraka Park next and Onehunga Sports. They had beaten us at Olympic so it was going to be close. It was tight and we thought we had won when we scored in the 80th minute, but not to be as they managed an equalizer and it finished 1-1. Ken Yamamoto scored for the Bay.

Those of us that were just a little worried about our position felt that if we could take three points off Manurewa AFC at Olympic Park then all would be fine in the world and sleep would come more easily! After all, although going down to them at Memorial Park (but getting the points anyway) we had outplayed them that day and since then Manurewa had been having a really bad run. It looked good for three points, trouble is, you have to score at least one goal to win a game and we could not do it. Manurewa AFC had one attack in the second half and scored. Unreal! Even their coach, Nathan Christie couldn't believe it.



We faced much harder opponents the following week with a visit to Fred

Taylor Park. Waitakere City were gearing up for a Chatham Cup semi-final to be played the following week. They would want to go into that on a positive note. Bay Olympic turned on one of their best performances and won with a goal in each half, even if we were down to 10 men after Matt Cunneen got his marching orders in the 81st minute. Kyosake Kitano and Shane Tanner were the scorers.

No more sleepless nights, the Bay were safe! Well, they probably had been anyway but some of the crowd I mix with take a bit of convincing. The rescheduled Three Kings United home game followed, and they did the double on us by winning 3—2. A little unsporting I thought, as we had been ahead in the abandoned game! James Pritchett and Craig Wylie got our goals and Ali Hulameh was called on for the last 10 mins, as goalkeeper Roy Bell was injured.

We were now down to the final game. At the other end of the table it had been quite a dog fight for the title between North Shore neighbours Birkenhead United and East Coast Bays. East Coast Bays had won the local derby on the 24th August 1—0 at Shepherds Park.

Bay Olympic's last game was against Birkenhead United at Olympic Park. Birkenhead United had to win the game to win the title. Bay Olympic were playing for pride and for stopping another Club from winning the title on our ground! East Coast Bay's coach and supporters were there to see what happened! The result was a hard fought and dramatic 2-2 draw. The Birkenhead supporters were celebrating when they went ahead but it was the East Coast Bays supporters that celebrated when the Bay got the equalizer. There was even a little bit of "biff" at the end to keep everyone happy.

East Coast Bays were the Champions on goal difference. It had been a difficult season for Bay Olympic. We did not get the start we wanted and struggled to score goals when we needed them. Manurewa AFC were relegated but had beaten us on the field on two occasions. We had beaten East Coast Bays twice in three outings and they won the title! Funny game football !

Roll on 2014!

Tony Andrews

## PREMIER SEASON REVIEW 2012

Shane Knowles, Barry Williams and Andy Phipps were back for the 2012 season. Dene McKay departed and Michael Mayne and Chad Coombes were appointed to replace him as joint assistant coaches. A popular appointment was that of Rachel Horsey as the new Physio. On the player front, Danny Robinson, Julyan Collett, Byron Paulus and Jake Butler departed. New players included Jono Key, Mark Waitzer and Danny Rattray. Joe Edwards and Chris Marsh returned to the Club and Craig Wylie was back from an injury that caused him to miss the 2011 season.

On paper, the Premier Division looked a little stronger than 2011. It doesn't come any tougher than a first up game away to Central at Kiwitea St. In fact, the Bay won comfortably 3-0, with goals from Steve Holloway and Yoji Tanabe in the first half, and, after a period of pressure from Central at the start of the second, Jono Key stepped up and put the result beyond doubt. Melville were our opponents for our first home game and they were a young side that included Tyler Boyd and Adam Thomas. They played a good passing game but offered little in front of goal. Not surprisingly, the Bay won 3-1 with goals from Robbie Greenhalgh(2) and Colin Gardyne.

Three days later and we were off to Fred Taylor Park to play Waitakere City, where, although we were two goals up at the break, we seemed to struggle a little in the second half, eventually winning 2-1. Onehunga Sports at home was next and although Onehunga Sports never looked like winning, if there is such a thing as "the rub of the green". it went Bay Olympic's way. Goalkeeper Chris Marsh could (should) have been sent off in one incident and we were awarded a rather "dubious" penalty in another (just my opinion, of course!). However, 3-1 was a convincing enough result.

Then it was Three Kings at Keith Hay Park. We have had the edge over the Kings in recent seasons and this time we triumphed 2-0. The game was memorable for the second-half "rocket" from Craig Wylie which was a contender for goal of the season. We had won the League in 2011 at their ground and now we had beaten them again. We were undoubtedly starting to upset them, how much so we would find out later in the season! Kevin Fallon's Eastern Suburbs were our next opponents at Madills Farm. A tight first-half, 1-1 at the break, then the game really came to life in the second spell. The Bay eventually got home 4-3, with two goals each from Nathan Strom and Robbie Greenhalgh.

East Coast Bays were downed 2-0 at Bay City Park with Craig Wylie repeating his Three Kings effort and Michael Mayne getting something similar. Hamilton Wanderers visited Olympic Park and went home losing 2-0 to goals from Colin Gardyne and Robbie Greenhalgh. Manurewa proved to be tough opponents at Memorial Park before we scored with a penalty in the 75th minute and followed it up with a Ross McKenzie effort in the 83rd. Final score 2-0 to the Bay.

We were now at the halfway stage of the Premier competition and had won every game! Central came seeking revenge for their early season loss and gave us a real stir! Eventually, we got home by 3-2 with the winner from Steve Holloway coming in the second minute of added time. Melville were beaten at Gower Park by a Chad Coombes goal. A typical day for Chad, got the only goal of the game, then got sent off, and this was his first appearance of the season for us!

The Chatham Cup was next and wouldn't you know it, the top two teams in the Premiership were drawn against each other. East Coast Bays came to Olympic Park and it looked comfortable for the home team with a 2-0 half-time lead. Things are never that easy though and East Coast Bays certainly never gave up. The home team eventually prevailed 4-3 with the goals coming from Robbie Greenhalgh, Nathan Strom, Joe Edwards and Jono Key. Waitakere City came to Olympic Park for the next League game and it was a real nail-biter. The Bay eventually won 4-3 after being ahead 3-2 at the break. Goals from Steve Holloway, Michael Mayne, Colin Gardyne and, as usual, Robbie Greenhalgh.

Onehunga Sports at Waikaraka Park saw the end of the unbeaten run with the Bay losing 2-1. The team had set a new Club record of 14 straight wins in all competitions - a record that will be very difficult to beat! As often happens in these situations, one loss was followed by another when Three Kings ended our Chatham Cup hopes by beating us 2-0 at Keith Hay Park. Then six days later they beat us again, in the League, this time by 2-1 at Olympic Park. Three Kings had got their revenge! That was our first defeat at Olympic Park since the Wairarapa, Chatham Cup, defeat in 2011 and the first home League defeat since the Hamilton Wanderers game on 28th May 2011.

Three consecutive defeats - was this the start of a slide? Definitely not! Eastern Suburbs were well beaten 3-1 with goals from Yoji Tanabe, Craig Wylie and Jono Key. East Coast Bays were downed for the third time in the season, this time by 3-0. Yoji Tanabe, Steve Holloway and Chad Coombes doing the damage and that was enough to secure the Championship for the second year running!



Back to Back Championships for Bay Olympic!! The season concluded with a 1-0 victory at Hamilton Wanderers and finally a 2-1 win over Manurewa at Olympic Park. The title had been won by a margin of 12 points, with 16 wins and just 2 defeats in the 18 games. Robbie Greenhalgh topped the goalscorers with 9 goals. 22 players were used in the League and Cup games and 14 different players got on the scoresheet. Another tremendous season for Bay Olympic! James Prichett went off to play for Auckland City and Chad Coombes and Matt Cunneen went to Waitakere United for the NZFC season.

To top the season off, Shane Knowles won the prestigious "Coach of the Year" in the Unitec Sport Waitakere Annual Awards.

Roll on 2013 !

Tony Andrews

## PREMIER REVIEW 2011

After the re-organising that had gone on with the Northern League in 2010, we were left with a ten team Premier Division to contest the 2011 Championship. A lot more straightforward but a lot less games. We played 24 league games in 2010 but we would only get 18 in 2011.

Coaches and players seemed to agree that this was OK, but greedy sideliners, like myself, would have preferred a 12 team competition.

The management and coaching team was retained from 2010, namely Shane Knowles, Dene McKay, Barry Williams and Andrew Phipps. Before the season got underway, we learnt that Craig Wylie needed an operation and would miss the season. Joe Edwards was off to Dublin with the IRB. Leighton Wills was to act as physio only and Tristan McCormick was out injured as well. All four had played in the Chatham Cup Final in 2010. Daniel Markham, Peter Norris, Quadhah Ragueed, Robbie Graham and Richard Beeston (after just one game) left the club. They were ably replaced by Matt Cunneen, Robbie Greenhalgh, Maksim Manko, Steven Holloway and Byron Paulus, among others. Later in the season, Chad Coombes returned from overseas and Jake Butler re-joined.

The fixture list showed Bay Olympic away to East Coast Bays first up. ECB said their ground wasn't ready and there were no others available on the Shore. We said, rightly so, that Olympic Park wasn't ready either. Result, game postponed. Politics had started early in election year! We got underway the following week against Central at Olympic Park. Two nil down at half-time and it looked as if we were in for a tough year. We eventually won 3-2 and wondered if we could win the Championship! Bay Olympic won the first eight games of the season, scoring 28 goals and conceding just 6. The ninth game was home to Hamilton Wanderers and we did the majority of the attacking but could not score to save ourselves! Hamilton nicked one and held on for the victory - never mind, we would take them in the return (we thought!). The following week we were home again, this time to East Coast Bays. A Ross McKenzie hat-trick and two from Chad Coombes and a goal for Aresh Sadeghi saw us take it 6-2 and Bay Olympic were motoring again.

The most satisfying result of the season, for me at least, came in the next game, a 1-0 away win over Central at KIWITEA ST, by way of a Chad Coombes goal. Over the years Central have set the standard for the Premier League and it is always an achievement to beat them at their Headquarters. The next league game was on a shocker of a pitch at Waikaraka Park but we came out on top 2-1 with goals from Ross McKenzie and Robbie Greenhalgh. Then came a wobble at Melville when we could only get three of the seven goals scored. A very poor Metro outfit were dispatched 5-0 before we met Three Kings United at Keith Hay Park, who, by then, were the only team that could stop us winning the Championship. Two first half goals from Chad Coombes and, later, two more from Steven Holloway, saw Bay Olympic home by 4-2. Auckland Football were on the ball and the trophy was presented to Michael Mayne at the end of the game.



Bay Olympic were The Northern Region Football League Premier Champions! The league season wasn't over though, as we still had three games to play! Waitakere City were beaten 3-2 at Olympic Park before the team travelled to Hamilton Wanderers to get revenge for that first round loss. It would have been sweet but it didn't happen. Hamilton Wanderers cruised to a 5-2 win and became the only team to do the double over us in 2011. Strangely, the three defeats suffered in the League were all inflicted by Waikato Clubs! One for the conspiracy theorists perhaps!

The last game at Forrest Hill Milford saw the Bay win 6-1 with Colin Gardyne getting the 4 goals that gave him the "Golden Boot" for the Premier Division.

In 2010 the Bay reached the final of the Chatham Cup and it was the goal in 2011 to go one better and win it. The Cup run started back in June with a visit to Fencibles, a club we hadn't played since 2003. We won 2-1 and most supporters seemed to think afterwards that we were never in any danger. However, for a Second Division side, I thought they gave us a really tough game. Ross McKenzie and Chad Coombes were the scorers.

Hibiscus Coast were next up and they were also from the NRFL 2nd Division. They fought hard at Olympic Park but there was an obvious gap in class between the teams and the Bay



won 8-0. Nathan Strom got a hat-trick, Steven Holloway got two and Ross McKenzie, Chad Coombes and Colin Gardyne got the others. Waitemata AFC visited Olympic Park in the next round and gave us a bit of a shake up in the first half which ended with just a 1-0 lead to the Bay. Eventually though, the Bay dominated and ran out 5-0 winners. Although, we should mention that three goals came in the last 5 minutes.

The next round was the Quarter Final and would you believe it, we were off to Dunedin for the second year running. This time our opponent was to be Dunedin Technical. The game was played at the same ground as the previous year, The Caledonian, and again, a number of supporters travelled South. The game was on the Sunday and the weather was awful. Snow, sleet and driving winds. The match followed a similar pattern to the previous year. At full-time the score was 1-1 thanks to a Ross McKenzie penalty. At the end of extra time it was 3-3 with Matt Cunneen and Julyan Collett doing it for the Bay. Into the penalty shoot out and here it became no contest, with the Bay getting five from five and Dunedin Tech managing three from four, with Danny Robinson pulling off some great saves. The Bay were through to the semi-final again but with the airport closed, would they ever get out of Dunedin in time to play it? Three days later they returned and it was with relief that we learnt we were drawn at home to Wairarapa United in the Semi-Final.

Originally down to be played on Saturday 13th August, the game was postponed at the last minute, in fact on the Saturday morning, to the following day, due to Wairarapa United having travelling problems, due to weather conditions! The game itself was agonizing for the Bay. Did we outplay them? Yes, I think we did. Did we deserve to lose? No, we didn't. The problem was, we couldn't score with all our attacking play and they got the breakaway. Wairarapa United did defend well and they took their chance brilliantly, so we musn't take anything from them, and of course, they did go on to win the Chatham Cup! For the Bay, it was a bitter pill to swallow, but, there is always next year!!

In addition to Colin Gardyne winning the Golden Boot, the Coach Of the Year deservedly went to Shane Knowles. Ryan Elder, Michael Mayne, Colin Gardyne and Julyan Collett were selected for the AFF All Stars team. Jake Butler, Ross McKenzie and Danny Robinson went to the WaitakereUnited NZFC squad for the summer. Julyan Collett was selected for the Canterbury NZFC team. 2011 was another successful season for Bay Olympic with the Club winning the NRFL Premiership for the third time in its history.

Roll on 2012!  
Tony Andrews.

## PREMIER REVIEW 2010

At the end of the 2009 season Bay Olympic were faced with two major concerns. Firstly, the Club had been relegated to the First Division, and, secondly, we needed to find a new coach. Peter Ockleston, who took over for the last few games, indicated that he was not applying to take the team in 2010.

In a way, the first concern was partly resolved for us when the US1 clubs were given permission, by their Federation, to join or ( re-join) the Northern Region Football League. Initially, a sixteen team, one round competition for the new Premier Division was tabled, but, after some lobbying by one or two Clubs, this was expanded to eighteen teams that now included Bay Olympic! The top eight teams, after this round, would form the basis for the 2011 Premier competition as well as playing another round to decide on the 2010 Champions. The eight teams would be joined by two more to make a ten team competition in 2011.

While all this was being sorted, applications for the coaching position had been received and a decision made. Bay Olympic were pleased to appoint Shane Knowles to the position of Premier Coach. Both major concerns had now been resolved.

Shane brought with him an Assistant, Dene McKay, a Technical Adviser, Barry Williams and a Manager, Andrew Phipps (Yes, from the same Phipps family of BHB!).

There were big changes to the playing squad by the start of the new season. Joe Edwards, Colin Gardyne and Richard Beeston returned, and a number of players came with Shane Knowles from Lynn Avon including Craig Wylie, Yoji Tanabe, Peter Norris, Andrew Campbell and Nathan Strom. Also, Danny Robinson and Chad Coombes joined after the NZFC season finished. Other newcomers were Ross McKenzie, Robbie Graham and later Tristan McCormick and Michael Mayne. Only Leighton Wills and Julyan Collett remained from the 2009 team.

The targets for the season were to firstly finish in the top eight of the Premier section, then to win the Premiership and, finally, to have a decent Chatham Cup run. The first target was achieved in style with an 11 win, 3 draw, 3 loss record, that saw us finish in second place to East Coast Bays.

The second target proved to be a step too far and East Coast Bays were worthy winners of the 2010 Championship. The third target, the Chatham Cup, turned out to be the highlight of the season.

Over the year the Bay played 30 league and Cup games with 16 of them at Olympic Park. When you consider we only played 9 at home in 2009 you can see why the season seemed to last so long!

In the League, from a supporter's point of view ( well, mine actually) the most satisfying result was the 8-3 hiding given to Waitakere City at Fred Taylor Park (pay-off for the Chatham Cup result of 2009!). The most nail-biting result was the 4-3 win at Melville after we had been 4-0 up! The most frustrating was the 1-1 with Takapuna at Olympic Park, chance after chance going begging! Probably, the most exciting was the 3-3 draw at Forrest Hill Milford with goals from Yoji Tanabe, Chad Coombes and a great O/G from their keeper who somehow touched a long throw from Nathan Strom into his own net!

The Chatham Cup was the highlight of the season. It started with two comfortable wins over Lynn Avon United and Takapuna. Then came a good performance to down Waitakere City 3-1 at Olympic Park with goals from Yoji Tanabe, Craig Wylie and Joe Edwards The quarter-final draw saw us travel to Forrest Hill and this time we beat them 2-0, although it was never easy and Robbie Graham had to make some outstanding saves. Both goals, that day, came from Ross McKenzie.

Bay Olympic were in the semi-final for the first time, and all we wanted now was a home draw but of course that didn't happen and a trip to Dunedin to play Caversham was our prize. For the supporters that went down to Dunedin and for those that had to make do with updates from cell phones the semi-final was tension all the way! It was probably the same for the coaching staff and players but at least they had something to do!

Briefly, the game went something like this. We score early through Yoji but Caversham equalize 11 HT. We get Craig Wylie sent off but go ahead anyway with another strike from Yoji, we are looking good but Caversham equalize again 2-2 FT. Into Extra time and Caversham score, we are behind for the first time, can ten men get back into this ? Oh yes! Richard Beeston gets the equalizer and its 3-3 AET. The penalty shoot out was all about Bay Olympic getting theirs (Ross McKenzie, Andrew Campbell, Peter Norris and Nathan Strom) and Caversham getting just one. A 4-1 penalty shoot out win for the Bay.

Chatham Cup Final day, the 12 September 2010, goes down as the biggest day yet in Bay Olympic's thirteen year history. Supporters were treated well with a breakfast and transport to and from North Harbour Stadium and they responded by turning out in large numbers. Members of the Blockhouse Bay winning team of 1970 sent their best wishes. There was great publicity for the Club in the local and daily papers and Shane Knowles was interviewed by

Radio Sport. Only one thing spoiled the day and that was Miramar Rangers. They didn't read our script!.

Miramar opened the scoring and then just as Bay Olympic seemed to be getting on top Miramar went and scored again! Bay Olympic turned up the heat at this point and only some excellent saves from goalkeeper Imray, who went on to win the "Man of the Match", kept us out.

Then Nathan Strom pulled one back for the Bay to make it 2-1 at half-time. It was much the same story in the second half with Bay Olympic coming close on a number of occasions but then Miramar scored another. The Bay then failed to convert a penalty and Miramar ran out worthy winners by 3-1. The team that performed so creditably that day was Danny Robinson, Ross McKenzie, Leighton Wills, Joe Edwards, Colin Gardyne, Craig Wylie, Tristan McCormick, Nathan Strom, Yoji Tanabe, Michael Mayne and Richard Beeston. Julyan Collett and Andrew Campbell came on as subs.

Overall, a very good season that will wet everyones appetite for 2011!

TA



## PREMIER REVIEW 2009

The NRFL competition was reduced to just 10 teams so that a top four play-off could be accommodated. Ours is not to reason why..... ? Apparently, most Clubs like the end of season play-off formulae. Whatever, it meant that those teams not in the top four would have only 18 league games, which is a long way from the 26 games played in 2004!

Kim Beale was retained as Bay Olympic Coach. Those leaving the Club included Liam Mulrooney after 6 years, Richard Beeston, James Pritchett, Paul Rhodes and Jake Butler. In came Julyan Collett, Aresh Sadeghi, Jarred Colligan and a number of young players from the youth and reserve ranks. With only 18 games to play a good start was essential but the Bay only managed one win in the first four games. The first game home loss to Central by 9-2 was Bay Olympic's biggest Northern League defeat ever and set a sombre mood that was to remain with us all year.

By the halfway mark we had 3 wins, 2 draws, and 4 losses. Not a good first round, but as things turned out, much better than the second round! Bay Olympic lost every game in round two and finished bottom of the table. Kim Beale had been replaced towards the end of the season by Peter Ockleston but all was in vain. Bay Olympic, as far as we knew at the time, were relegated to the First Division. If there was a highlight then the 5-2 win over Melville away and the 4-1 home win over Onehunga Sports were decent performances.

Elliot Dye played 17 games with Ned Chappell, Leighton Wills, Julyan Collett and Aresh Sadeghi among other regulars. Julyan Collett top scored with seven goals. Marty Miller played 13 games which brought his first team appearance record to 402 games for Blockhouse Bay and Bay Olympic combined. Has he finished yet? Hmmmmm!

Not only did we record our biggest ever league defeat in 2009 but we managed to do even worse in the Chatham Cup! The 9-0 loss to Waitakere City was another 'biggest ever' although we did have the excuse that it was virtually an NZFC team that we played!

T.A.

## PREMIER REVIEW 2008

The main talking point of the summer was the withdrawal of all the United Soccer One Clubs from the Northern League. This effectively brought to an end a regional wide competition that embraced the North Shore, Auckland and the Waikato. It was a bitter blow to those who believe that the best players and teams should play in the top competition. Auckland and Waikato teams formed the NRFL as a replacement, to be run by the Auckland Federation.

Kim Beale, who had previously been coaching the Bay Olympic reserve squad, took over as the Premier coach in place of Sean Hird. Goalkeeper James Bryce left, after just one season, and was replaced by Chris Marsh. Joe Edwards departed as did Aaron Root, Ben Hall and Prince Quansah. In came Andrew Dixon, Issac Bright and Van Lindsay and a number of young players from the reserve team. The season started well with maximum points from the first three games and with 15 goals for and 3 against. In fact the Bay won 5 and drew 5 of the first ten games and it wasn't until the last game of the first round that we were beaten, by Lynn Avon 4-2. The second half of the season was a different story and six games were lost, including the last three, and one was drawn.

It really was a season of two halves, although the Bay scored a respectable total of 45 goals, only 10 came in the second round. The eventual winners, Central United again, finished 21 points ahead of us and the Bay finished in fifth place. Colin Gardyne top scored with 17 goals and Adrian Peihopa got 9. At least we had the satisfaction of beating Central 3-1 away from home! Only Chris Marsh played every game and NZFC commitments again limited some of the players' appearances.

Marty Miller impressed with an appearance in the last game of the season! Meanwhile, a slightly younger Lee Judd decided to step down after over 200 first team games.

Our Chatham Cup run was again short, but not at all sweet, as we were beaten at home by Melville United 0-1, although this may well have been the best game at Olympic Park all season.

## PREMIER REVIEW 2007

At the start of the season we found that Jason Thompson had retired after four years at the Bay and 94 games. Reg Davani had departed for Australia after three seasons and 39 goals. Our two Japanese players, Takura Muro and Ryota Imuro had left as had Daniel Aliaga and Malcolm Wakefield. Among those joining us were James Bryce (goalkeeper), Paul Rhodes, Aaron Root and Colin Gardyne. For the first time in Sean Hird's reign as coach, Bay Olympic lost its first game of the season. In fact we lost three of the first six, not a good start if we were going to retain our title.

One of the problems was that Olympic Park was closed for the first half of the season! Ten of our first eleven games were away and although it was the reverse in the second half it seemed to have an adverse effect on the Club in general. A third Championship in a row was not to be and we finished in fourth place. Richard Beeston, Joe Edwards and James Bryce played in every game.

Joe Edwards and Jake Butler top scored with 8 goals each. The outstanding performance was the 3-1 victory over the eventual winners Central United. In 2005, as Champions, we had won 12 out of 22 games. In 2007, winning 11 out of 22 only got us fourth place.

Over the years, Bay Olympic have had a number of poor performances when it comes to the Chatham Cup, none more so than this seasons disappointing 2-1 loss to Papatoetoe. Take nothing away from Papatoetoe, they were a division below and deserved to win, but that day Bay Olympic were awful.

At the end of the season Sean Hird announced he was standing down as coach. In seven years with the Club he had taken the team from the First Division in 2001 through to winning the Premier Division in 2005 and again in 2006. His team were also runners-up in the Premier Division twice and never finished below fourth position in any season. Sean was in charge for a total of 178 League and Cup games of which he won 110, drew another 31, and lost only 37. A great record and one that any future Bay Olympic coach will find hard to equal.

## PREMIER REVIEW 2006

One thing was certain, it would be a slightly different team to defend the title 2006 from the team that won it in 2005. With the NZFC now in full swing, some players had commitments that affected the number of club games they could appear in. Sakdy Phommahaxy, who had played 120 games for Bay Olympic since joining us in the First Division team of 2001, left to go overseas. A new goalkeeper in Takura Muro took over from Jon Gwin. Also coming in to boost the numbers were Daniel Aliaga, Prince Quansah, Ben Hall, Malcolm Wakefield and Ryota Imuro.

Although we were held to a draw at home by East Coast Bays in the first game, we then won nine games in a row. We beat Waitakere City at Fred Taylor thanks to a Graham Green goal and had notable victories over Glenfield Rovers 6-1 away, Birkenhead United 6-3 and Mangere United 5-0 both at Olympic Park. Joe Edwards top scored with 13 goals, Daniel Aliaga got 8 and Ben Hall, Prince Quansah and Reg Davani chipped in with 6 each.

There could be no denying us a second triumph, we were the best team and in the end Bay Olympic won the title by a margin of 8 points and scored 52 goals in doing it. Great credit should go to Sean Hird for these back to back Championships. He got top players, got them fit and played attacking, winning, football. What more could you want? Well--- one or two of us thought three Championships in a row would be good!

The Chatham Cup proved to be another disaster. After spanking Warkworth 5-0 at Warkworth, we ourselves received a 4-1 hiding from Central at Kiwitea St.

## PREMIER REVIEW 2005

Sean Hird fielded much the same team as 2004 with the exception of Scott Bishop. Jon Gwin resumed the goalkeeping duties. It was back to a twelve team Premier Division. This was one of the most competitive seasons on record, less than 10 points separated the top nine teams at the end.

Bay Olympic won just 12 of its 22 games and scored its fewest total of goals since returning to the Premier League. In the finish, of course, none of this mattered because Bay Olympic were the Champions!!

Jon Gwin and Sakdy Phommahaxy played every game and the other main players were Nick Farac, Jason Thompson, James Pritchett, Jake Butler, Reg Davani, Elliot Dye, Lee Judd, Liam Mulrooney, Jason Beeston and Joe Edwards. Arek Kubicki, Graham Green, Leighton Wills, Richard Beeston, Geoff Chapman and Chris Gage played their parts as well. Marcel Isakowitz, one of the classiest players to ever turn out for the Bay, managed two games before being snaffled by Waitakere United for their NZFC team and he was never seen by us again!

Reg Davani top scored with 13 goals and James Pritchett and Jake Butler got 8 each. The title wasn't decided until the final round. Bay Olympic were two points ahead of Eastern Suburbs at the start of the day and were to play Waitakere City at Fred Taylor Park. They were confident as they had beaten them 5-1 at Olympic Park. In the first half of that 5-1 win Bay Olympic had played probably the best football seen at Olympic Park to this day. It started when Joe Edwards was brought down in the area, penalty to the Bay, Liam Mulrooney scores.

Waitakere City equalise within two minutes. Next a great dribble into the box by Joe Edwards and this time he scores. Then Reg Davani got into the picture scoring with a twenty-five yard drive. 3-1 and the game had only been going 20mins! A Davani header on the far post just before half-time finished off Waitakere City.

The second half was a bit of an anti-climax but Reg Davani got his hat-trick with another header. In the return game at Fred Taylor Park, a draw would be sufficient for Bay to win the League. Eastern Suburbs had to win, and hope Bay Olympic lost, to take the title. Well, Bay Olympic played their part by losing 2-1!

It wasn't until the result came through that Eastern Suburbs had also lost that we knew Bay Olympic were the Champions!! Celebrations were held at Fred Taylor Park and again at Olympic Park. It was a great time for all the players, coaches and supporters. In eight years the Club had gone from a lowly Premier team, being relegated to the first division, winning promotion back to the top division and were now Champions. It was heady stuff and everyone wondered " Was it a flash in the pan or could they do it again the following season?"

In the Chatham Cup we beat Otahuhu 6-0, got revenge over Western Springs for our 2003 defeat by beating them 3-0, and downed Glenfield Rovers 2-0 before going out rather tamely at Papakura 2-1.

## PREMIER REVIEW 2004

Ray Spick joined Sean Hird as his manager and a successful partnership was forged. Newcomers included Nathan Christie, Scott Bishop (GK), Reg Davani, James Pritchett and Nick Farac. Eddie Kennedy departed after just one game. Fourteen teams made up the Premier Division and at the end we finished well above twelve of them, but unfortunately, Central United finished 10 points above us. We beat every team at least once, including Central at home.

Andrew Dixon and Liam Mulrooney played every game and ten players played 20 or more league games that year. One memorable game was the 6-4 win over at Glenfield Rovers in which Liam Mulrooney got 4.

After being beaten 3-0 by Waitakere City early in the season and being knocked out of the Chatham Cup by them 4-0 just three weeks before, the return league game at Olympic Park was an absolute nail-biter as we downed them 3-2. At that point we felt entitled to be called "The Best in the West".

In all we won 18 games and scored 68 goals. Reg Davani got 17, with Elliot Dye and Liam Mulrooney getting 14 each. As in 2002 we finished runners-up, but this time to a very good Central team that won 22 of its 26 games.

In the Chatham Cup we started well by thrashing Onehunga-Mangere 9-1 at home with Elliot Dye grabbing 4. However, in the next round we ourselves were thrashed 4-0 by Waitakere City and another Chatham Cup adventure was over.

2004 saw the last appearance of Neil Woodhams in the Premier team. Neil started playing Northern League football for Green Bay-Titirangi as a fifteen year old in Division 4 North. He went on to play for many years in the National League for Waitakere City.

He returned to play for Bay Olympic with Bob Sova in 2000. According to an article in the 2004 New Zealand Soccer Annual, Neil played over 662 first team games for his various clubs at Regional and National League level !

## PREMIER REVIEW 2003

Judging by the surnames, there was an exodus of Celts before the start of the season, with Danny McHenery, Rab McNeil, Danny Donegan and Noel Kilkenny leaving for other pastures. In came Liam Mulrooney, Eddie Kennedy, Jason Thompson, Andrew Dixon and Mark Elrick. The same Mark Elrick who had been a thorn in our sides in 2001. Also, a certain Jake Butler made his first appearances after coming through the Junior and Youth grades and Elliot Dye played his first season for Bay Olympic.

It was our home form that let us down this season. Bay Olympic won more games away than at home and also had four home draws. At times they played really well, as in the 5-0 win at Central in which Joe Edwards got a couple. The most bizarre being the 6-4 home win over Ellerslie. It must have been a bit unusual because Lee Judd got two that day! Elliot Dye top scored for the season with 14 goals, Joe Edwards got 12 and Liam Mulrooney 10.

Mark Elrick came in for some criticism from some supporters but 6 goals in 10 games was not a bad return. Jon Gwin and Zane Green again shared the keeping duties. Marty Miller made just two starts and departed for the social grades at the end of the season, or so we thought at the time. Despite playing well at times we were not close to Glenfield Rovers, who only lost one game all season. We were, possibly, better than Waitakere, but in the end had to settle for third place.

Our Chatham Cup run proved to be no more than a short jog. After beating Albany at home we lost at Western Springs 2-1 in what was easily the worst performance of the season. Ken Wheeler, manager of the Premier team, sadly passed away during the season. Ken was a well-known local sports personality with strong links to Metro, Green Bay- Titirangi and Bay Olympic.

The Ken Wheeler trophy game was instigated by Sean Hird and is played for annually between Bay Olympic and Metro.

## PREMIER REVIEW 2002

Back in Premier League, playing at Olympic Park, with the new Clubrooms open it was a positive start to the season. The main transfer in was Joe Edwards, with Stuart Mair and Willie Thompson leaving us. After beating Melville away, the first home game was played at Olympic Park on 6th April 2002. Eastern Suburbs were the opponents and it just had to be a 0-0 draw!

It was five years before there was another one at Olympic Park! Only four games were lost all season. We had sweet revenge over Onehunga Sports for 2001 by scoring two goals in the last few minutes to come from behind and win 3-2. Hamish Carmody took a liking to the Manukau City defence by scoring seven goals against them over the two games!

In the end we finished runners-up, equal on points but with a better goal difference than Fencibles, to a very good Glenfield Rovers side. Hamish Carmody topped the scoring with 13 and Rab McNeil got 10. Jon Gwin did the bulk of the goalkeeping with Zane Green stepping up for six games. Winning the Northern League Premier Division was starting to look a distinct possibility. Stacey Howell made six appearances in what was to be his last season at Premier level. He first played for Blockhouse Bay in 1989 and played a total of 209 games for Blockhouse Bay and Bay Olympic.

A good Chatham Cup run saw us reach the quarter finals again. Eastern Suburbs, Forrest Hill-Milford, Ellerslie and Mangere United were dispatched before it all fell apart at Tauranga City United where we were beaten 3-0. All in all a good season for our first year in our new Clubrooms.

## PREMIER REVIEW 2001

Bob Sova left Bay Olympic for a spell at Metro and Sean Hird came the other way to become the third Bay Olympic coach. Greg Clark, Andrew Campbell and Aaron Day left and Sean brought in Rab McNeil, Noel Kilkenny, Danny McHenery, Michael Imre, Stuart Mair and of course Sakdy Phommahaxy. Sakdy was to play an important defensive role for the Bay for the next five seasons.

Marty Miller played every game and Lee Judd, Neil Woodhams, Jon Gwin and Stacey Howell were among the regulars. We should mention that Sean Hird also played in 21 games! With players like this we were always going to be there or thereabouts at the end of the season.

There were a number of highlights throughout the year, a 7-0 win over Lynn Avon United among them but our three meetings with Onehunga Sports were the most memorable. Goals from Woodhams and Howell had got us a well-earned point in the first game.

We then beat them 2-1 in the Chatham Cup. Bay Olympic were unbeaten and a point behind Onehunga, but with a game in hand, when we played the return league fixture and there were just two more games remaining. Over 200 (some say 300) spectators crowded round the Crum Park pitch. Bay led 1-0 at half-time (Woodhams). Then Elrick scored from the spot for Onehunga (was Elrick tripped or did he dive? Ask Lee Judd!). McHenery made it 2-1 to the Bay and then McClennan equalised. McHenery scored and Bay were back in front.

A great turn and shot from Elrick made it 3-3. Then 5 minutes into stoppage time Onehunga Sports, through Chris Morris, got the winner. Onehunga Sports went on to win the League with Bay Olympic runners-up. Both teams were promoted to the Premier League for 2002. In the Chatham Cup, as well as beating Onehunga Sports, we beat Auckland Grammar and Greerton Rovers before going down, once again, to Central United, this time by 3-2.

## PREMIER REVIEW 2000

Bob Sova was in charge when we started the new Millennium. With twenty six league games to play, Greg Clark, Neil Woodhams, Andrew Campbell and Aaron Day, along with one or two others, were added to the squad. In fact, Greg Clark played a total of 30 League and Cup games for the Bay that season. The Bay started slowly with just two wins and nine goals in the first eight games. After that the season started to take off with big wins over Lynn Avon United (5-0 both home and away!), Northland United 6-0 and Waitakere City 7-0!

However, these results were not good enough to win promotion, and we paid for that slow start to the season by finishing in fourth place. Of the 62 goals Andrew Campbell and Aaron Day with 14 each led the way. Neil Woodhams with 5 and Stacey Howell, Greg Clark and Hamish Carmody all got four. Even Peter Wallis chipped in with 2 (sorry, private joke).

In the Chatham Cup we had another good run and reached the last 16. We started by drawing Waikato-Unicol for the second year running and beat them 2-0. After 1-0 wins over Mt Albert Ponsonby and North Shore United we were drawn against Ellerslie at home. The score was 3-3 which led to a penalty shoot-out which the Bay won 5-4! Was this going to be the Bay's year for the Cup?

No, afraid not, it all ended rather sadly at Kiwitea St when we went down 2-1 to Central United. If it's any consolation they didn't win it either. The winner that year was Napier City Rovers. A much brighter season all round even if we still finished up in Division One.

## **PREMIER REVIEW 1999**

As in the previous year, Bay Olympic began by winning two of its first three games, but again could not maintain that form. Bob Sova was the new coach and Hamish Carmody, clearly our best player in 98, had joined Waitakere City's National League squad. Tim Davis, Chris and Jon Gwin, Marty Miller and Lee Judd made the most appearances.

However, it really didn't matter what team we put on the field, we just couldn't score goals! Fifteen goals in eighteen games is not a winning formula! Josh Carmody took over from his brother as leading scorer with a grand total of only three goals, which must be some sort of a record! In seven games we failed to score at all and we never got more than two in any game. With only ten teams in the competition our ninth place finish meant relegation to the Northern League First Division.

The Chatham Cup again provided the highlight and we scored almost as many goals (13) in the cup as we did in the league! Starting with a 6-1 win over Waikato-Unicol, we then beat South Auckland Rangers, Mt Albert Grammar and Auckland Grammar (5-0) before getting well and truly spanked by Takapuna 4-0. A dark overcast season with an occasional bright spot would sum up 1999.

## **PREMIER REVIEW 1998**

The first official game played by the new Bay Olympic Club was held on the 22nd March 1998 at Whitney St. With Bill de Graaf installed as coach, we played our close neighbours Lynn Avon United in the Northern Premier League and won 5-2. Hamish Carmody 2, Jason Root, Craig Smith and Stacey Howell were the scorers and everything looked rosy for the new Club. Although we lost the next game to Onehunga Sports, the team returned to Whitney St and thumped Central United 5-1 with Hamish Carmody getting a hat trick, brother Josh also scoring along with Jason Root.

When this was followed by an away win at Glenfield Rovers a number of followers were hinting that we could be Champions in our first year! There was, however, to be no fat lady singing at Whitney St that year. With only two more victories throughout the season Bay Olympic finished tenth in the twelve team league. A disappointing position after such a positive start but the great thing about football is that there is always another season round the corner.

Jon Gwin and Triss Clark shared the goalkeeping duties. Marty Miller made most appearances 21, and Hamish Carmody led the goalscorers with 9.

In the Chatham Cup we reached the quarter-finals. After eliminating Dispensary Bar, Papatoetoe and Glenfield Rovers we travelled to Ngaruawahia and got beaten 2-1! The biggest victory in Ngaruawahia's history. The tyre marks left by Bill de Graaf's wheelspin as he left the clubrooms are still visible today!