



Portishead Town FC Walking Football

1 Over 50s Development Strategy

In March 2025 we set out a strategy that this age group should come under the control of a manager. PT took on the role for the first year.

Guiding principles

1. Support the goals of the Portishead Town FC and the Walking Football section objectives.
2. There would be one manager that oversaw the age groups to manage the high level of interdependencies in the core pool of players in the squad.
3. The group would focus on developing our competitive capabilities and compete in tournaments.
4. We need to develop a consistent playing style that works across the teams to enable players to development to assist the squad when some of the core players are not available.
5. Developing players who do not want to play in competitions is outside of the scope of this strategy.

2 Recap on the first 12 months.

In March 2025 there was nothing in place, other than a friendly side which had played some midweek matches during the autumn of 2024. PTFC had entered a Clevedon Summer over 50s tournament (like in the past few years) and the Somerset FA Over 50s winter league.

The first phase was to fulfil these fixtures, focus on a small squad of about 10 players to establish a good understanding of each other.

2.1 Summer leagues.

We entered the Clevedon summer tournament.

We came 5th out of 6, which we were very close to finish 4th, if result had gone our way.

We unfortunately didn't have a consistent team during the 3 rounds, which made it hard to get organised and play the football we wanted to play. As you can see for the stats below, we found it hard to score.

Played – 15; Won – 4; Drew – 3; Lost 8.

Goals for – 11; Goals against 23.

2.2 Winter League

We joined the Somerset FA walking football league down at Street. This is a well-established league and most teams playing together for a few years as a squad, and we knew it gave us an opportunity to test ourselves against different opposition from around Somerset.

- **Round 1 (October)** – We started the campaign, without a recognised goalkeeper, so I had to take the helm in goal. We beat Frome who only lost 2 games over the 4 rounds and they went on to lift the trophy.
 - **Result that day**
 - **PTFC 1 Frome 0**
 - **PTFC 1 Weston 3**
 - **Keynsham 2 PTFC 0**
 - **PTFC 0 Clevedon Town 1**
- **Round 2 (December)** – Yet again I had to take the helm in goal, due to a late withdrawal. A better day for results too, even though I ended up in A&E and in plaster after making a save in the final moments of the Peasedown game.
 - **Result that day**
 - **Taunton 1 PTFC 1**
 - **Peasedown 1 PTFC 0**
 - **PTFC 4 Yeovil 0**
- **Round 3** – An eventful round of games, with Rick seeing the first red card of the tournament for us, which was against Clevedon.
 - **Result that day**
 - **PTFC 0 Frome 2**
 - **PTFC 0 Weston 0**
 - **Keynsham 2 PTFC 0**
 - **PTFC 1 Clevedon Town 1**
- **Round 4** – This round was during the Easter break, so due to players being suspended or away with their families this was a squad with had included so new players who had not played either at Street previous or competitively, and had experience of friendlies, that said the team came together.
 - **Result that day**
 - **Taunton 1 PTFC 2**
 - **Peasedown 3 PTFC 0**
 - **PTFC 0 Yeovil 2**

Played – 14; Won – 3; Drew – 3; Lost 8.

Goals for – 10; Goals against 19

2.3 What did we learn?

We have learned a lot over the last 12 months, about the strengths and weaknesses in our squad. Our decision to join the SFA paid off, as we learned a lot about ourselves, and we learned a lot about match play, and the best team of individuals do not win football matches.

In summary we have a very strong Over 50 squad that can compete with anyone at any level, however, we struggled getting a consistent team, so we should expect to start to compete to win

the leagues in the future, if we have a consistent team, who can play together regularly. We are lacking in an actual goalkeeper and not to rely on myself to take the gloves, when my preferred position is in defence stopping the shots coming into the keeper. We hadn't kept a consistent team or even a core spine to the team over the 4 rounds.

1. **Demographics** – We have a good number of players in the over 50 age group, as we can draw into the 60's squad for those who can't play in their own age groups due to work commitments.
2. **Commitment** – We have a core number of players who play regularly at Street and turned up in plenty of time for getting changed, general team talk and a warm up/ kickabout.
3. **Availability** – Due to some players having young families, injuries and suspensions, we didn't keep a consistent team especially in the important areas in midfield and defence.
4. **Training sessions** - We have tried to have a few friendlies against established and newly teams, over the season and this has helped some of the fringe players who have not been selected for Street but these session help in the development of all players at both end of the spectrum, experienced players and players either new to football or developing their skills.
5. **Game Management.** As the season has gone on, we've learned that too changes can leave momentary gaps that opponents are smart enough to exploit, as we in a few games over the 4 rounds.

Consequently, changes and rotations have been minimised whilst still making sure everyone gets plenty of game time. We are getting to the point where the players recognise that the team and result are more important than an individual's minutes. This one is very hard sometimes, but we are very grateful to those players that recognise this.

6. **Discipline** – In a few games, we have had a few strange refereeing decisions, and we have argued back to the officials, which has then in turn got a target on your back, and then they are looking at the small things.
We had no blue cards, but 1 red card, which was warranted, for the reaction by our player who was protecting his teammate. However, if the ref had actually seen the first foul, maybe the other player would have left the field, as the passion on both teams were high, as they were looking to get the win to keep them in the title race, but a dogged performance sealed the draw.
Over the 4 rounds, I felt our discipline for committing non-walking offences was good as we only had a few penalties conceded.
Eventually we knew who the stricter referees were and we stamped out the needless offences.
7. **Matchday management** - I have been taking on the match day responsibilities, sorting out kit, making sure balls and first aid kits are available, and providing the team sheets. So far, I have been at all the rounds so this has not been an issue.

2.4 Squad for 2025/26 season

As the manger, I am very grateful to the commitment and amazing performances of the following players.

	Street (number of rounds played)	Total goals
Alex Anderson	1	0
Andy Dillon	1	0
Andy Fairchild	2	0
Andy Sears	4	0
Darren Morgan	2	1
Dave Griffiths	1	0
James Wheatcroft	2	2
John McSweeney	2	0
Les Clarke	1	0
Neal Smith	3	1
Neil Lock	1	0
Paul Tucker	4	0
Ramiro De Sa Silva	2	1
Rick Green	3	5
Steve Woodland	1	0

3 Plan for 2026/7 seasons

The plan for the year is basically to continue the development, learn from the lessons of last season and establish us as one of the best teams in the regions.

3.1 General

Goalkeepers – We have been lucky to have had me in goal for all the rounds. However, this was detrimental to the structure of the team as we kept having different defenders every round and during different games in those rounds. I have approached 2 keepers who are both interested in playing which will obviously help alleviate this problem.

Discipline – We need to ensure that when questioning discussions with the referees, we do this constructively and not to the detriment to the whole team, as we have previous had an occasion 1 round last year, where it was obvious the ref was “picking” on certain players, so we just need to be better.

Captains – Rick has been captain who does the coin toss (when required). When Dills was available in round 3, he assisted from the side lines not only with tactics but sorted the subs. This worked well and the encouragement and tactical play from the side line too.

Squad Development – Over the next year, I will be looking to increase the 50s squad, which will allow us to compete in more tournaments. Also, some of the friendly tournaments we will try to have more than 1 squad available. There are a few from the Galacticos, who will be turning 50 over the next year so hopefully this will be a pathway to recruiting good players. We will be looking to secure more friendlies.

3.2 Squads

- **Over 50 –**
 - Slow start in the 1st game, need to be on it.
 - Attract 1 or more goalkeepers.

3.3 Structure

Rick is my assistant and for the squad choices I have been bouncing ideas off him.

3.4 Summer tournaments

For the summer of 2026 we have joined the Clevedon tournaments

3.5 Winter tournaments

We have re-entered the Somerset FA and requested to join the Gloucester FA and awaiting confirmation.