

Ask the coach July 2026

Earlier in July, we launched another “ask the coach” session in which members and non members of the club were free to post any questions they may have to Jordan in which the intention would then be to host a live or recorded session addressing these.

Only 4 questions were received as consequently, the questions asked have been addressed below instead:

Q1) Would you be setting up a league and if so would there be extra sessions for the team league to practice, due to the high numbers you have in training sessions? (Juniors)

This is absolutely the intention and I would have liked to have set this up much sooner and by now, have this up and running. One of the biggest issues at junior level is the age group splits, for example U12/U14/U16. One of the difficulties we have had is that we have not had enough numbers in one age group, for example having 10 x 12 year olds or 10 x 15 year olds for example or even mixed with 12-13 year olds and 14/15 year olds. We have instead been in a position where numbers have been heavily mixed across the age groups and equally, inconsistent. For example one week may see 4 x 11 year olds, 6 x 13 year olds and then 3 or 4 14/15 year olds, the following week may then see the opposite where more or less of each age attend. That said, it has been noted since starting back after our break over May and June that numbers have significantly increased which may now start accelerating plans to get a team together. This does however lead to the 2nd difficulty which most are well aware of... Venue availability. Tupton Hall has been particularly tricky to gain any long term momentum with due to exams, short notice cancellations and other issues too. Sadly, despite all efforts, we have rather exhausted any viable alternative that would not have a detrimental impact on the club so we are in some ways stuck with what we have at Tupton. The aim for Autumn/winter however, will be at least to start organising some friendlies where we may have some mixed groups, for example, 11-13 year olds and 13 – 15 year olds as 2 teams playing in some friendly matches against local clubs. It is absolutely the clubs longer term plan to put on more sessions and raise a competitive team amongst the junior set up but it is unfortunately constrained by a few things right now. One thing I will say is that if there is someone willing, there are opportunities for someone to come in and lead the junior set up moving forward and I would be happy to have some more formal discussions about that with anyone interested.

Q2) When is the second team being formed? As there's a lot of people who pay weekly and do not play for the team. (Seniors)

As you know, the first year has been all about building the club and getting the numbers up (which we now started to see more regularly at our recent sessions). We have had a year of playing friendlies against a few different teams and managed to play a total of 13 games which have featured 24 different players across those games in total. So whilst I agree not every single person has had the chance to play for the team yet, a lot have. Its also worth noting that we have had a surge in numbers attending our sessions since April, we have only played in a handful of games between then and now. That said, we are at a stage now where our core 1st team is starting to become established which will consist of 12 individuals. It is important to note that there are always going to be opportunities, there will be injuries, illness and general unavailability that will create chances for those not necessarily in the 1st team, to then step up and have a game with the team who will be in the league for 2026/27. We will then form a 2nd team (people who do not regularly play in the 1st team) who will then essentially repeat what we have done in our first year. The 1st team will be playing in the competitive league and associated cups etc whilst a 2nd team will then have a year playing friendlies. This, more than anything, will be heavily dependent on the interest and consistent availability. Priority has been and will continue to be given to those who regularly attend our sessions and put in the effort in training. Something which has always been the message since we started to get a team together, places are earned and not given. What I can say is that anyone who regularly attends sessions at our clubs will 100% be guaranteed to be playing in competitive matches from September onwards whether this be in our 1st team or in our 2nd team friendlies.

Q3) Will we be joining a league in autumn? If yes could you give us some details - which league, when will it start/end, how many teams competing, will it impact training sessions, any other changes?

100% we will be joining the league in September. It will be the local Sheffield league and whilst I cant give 100% confirmation what division we will be in yet, I would probably guess division 4 to start off as a new team finding our feet and we will then aim to work our way up. Only 1 team will be put into the league and we will have our core 1st team consisting of a 12 man squad but as in my answer to question 2 above, opportunities will come up for others who are not necessarily in that initial 12 man squad. There is usually about 8 – 10 teams in a division and the season runs September to May. My hope is that training is unaffected however, games do take place on Wednesday nights, Thursday nights and Friday nights so it cant be guaranteed that training wont be impacted from time to time. Of

course the preference would be we play our games Thursdays and Fridays. These are however in a neutral venue (in Sheffield) so if we did happen to have a game on Wednesday, our training sessions can still take place at Newbold as usual, it would just mean there would be likely reduced numbers that night as the 1st team are away playing in a fixture. There should be no other changes.

Q4) Could we look at a monthly direct debit for reduced price members, to save finding the payment link and paying £2 every week? My bank also doesnt like the sum up and blocks the payment so have to verify with the bank every time.

Firstly, apologies that you are having difficulties with sum up, we are looking into trialing something else but this wont come into effect until next year unfortunately whilst we look further into it and the logistics. With regards to the direct debit, this was something discussed at committee level when we discussed memberships for 2026/27 and whilst we have had these in place for our seniors, it is not yet viable for our juniors. The main reason of course being is that we often have quite big gaps in our schedule due to exams or cancellations by the school meaning we can have weeks (or even months such as May/June) where there is no training, essentially meaning then you would be paying a direct debit with no training or anything going on. This could result in people cancelling and then having to set back up which causes a massive amount of admin plus charges from the provider for what is a very little amount of money for our members. That said, we are looking into ways we may be able to incorporate a direct debit system in the future that then includes a kit or something else that then makes the monthly fee worth it, even when sessions are not going on.