

PLYMOUTH ADMIRALS AMERICAN FOOTBALL CLUB



Home Ground :-

Parkway Sport Club, Ernesettle.

Past Venues:-

Stonehouse Creek, Plymouth Albion Rugby Club , The Rectory(Home of Devonport Services), Plymouth Sports Club, the College of St Mark & St John (Marjons) and Weston Mill Oak Villa

Colours:-

Green Shirts with Yellow & White facings/ Black Helmets and Pants /White Socks

Honours:-

BAFA Division Two runners up in 1995, BNLG Premier Division Champions in 1991 and Conference Champions in 1995, 1991, 1992 & 1986.

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Playing Record :-

2007 BAFL Division 2 Southwest 3-7-0

2006 BAFL Division 2 2-8-0

2005 BSL Division 2 2-8-0

2004 BSL Division Two South Western Conference 2-6-2

2003 BSL Division Two South Western Conference 0-10-0

2002 BSL Division Two Southern Conference 7-2-0 + (Play-offs)

2001 BSL Division Two Southern Conference 3-4-1

2000 BSL Division Two Southern Conference 0-7-1

1999 BSL Division Two Southern Conference 4-4-0 + (Play-offs)

1998 BSL Division One South Western Conference 0-10-0

1997 BSL Division One Southwest & Midlands Conference 5-5-0

1996 BSL Division One Southern Conference 4-6-0

1995 BAFA Division Two South Western Conference 8-1-0 + (Play-offs)

1994 BAFA Division Two South Western Conference 7-1-2 + (Play-offs)

1993 BNGL National Division Southern Conference 6-3-1 + (Play-offs)

1992 BNGL National Division South Western Conference 9-1-0 + (Play-offs)

1991 BNGL Premier Division South Western Conference 10-0-0 + (Play-offs)

1990 BNGL Premier Division South Western Conference 6-4-0

1989 BNGL Premier Division Southern C Conference 7-3-0

1988 SWAFL 7-4-0

1987 Budweiser League Premier Division South Western Conference 8-2-0

1986 Budweiser League Channel Division Two 10-0-0 + (Play-offs)

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Plymouth Admirals History

1986

Founded in October 1984 the Plymouth Admirals American Football Club played two games in their formation season, winning both against the Weston Stars and the Bristol Bombers. Coached by Dave Nelson, the Admirals entered league competition in 1986, winning Budweiser League Division Two with a conclusive 10-0 record.

1987

Plymouth played the next season at the Rectory. With local support growing, with American football fans eager to see the new British sport live, the stand proved lively and vocal. Promoted to the SW Division in 1987, the club made their mark as Divisional runners up to the Cotswold Bears with an 8-2 record.

1988

The Admirals moved once again, this time to the Plymouth Sports Club, playing on grass while they awaited a new Astroturf pitch being built. In an unsettled league situation after the demise of the Budweiser League, the team chose to join SWAFL (the South West American Football League). Coached by Jim Musgrave and Roger Martin the Admirals achieved a 6-4 record

1989

Re-joining national football in the B.N.G.L. Premier League, American High School coach Bill Benson, who was visiting Plymouth on a education exchange programme, worked with a reduced squad with many new players and guided them to a winning 7-3 season, achieving second in the conference and narrowly missing a wild card slot chance in the play offs.

1990

With Bill Benson returning to Boston, founder player Marty Shanks, who had assisted in coaching while injured the previous year, was elected Head Coach. In what would be their most competitive season yet, Plymouth were initially overwhelmed by larger squads. A new offensive system finally paid off as the club pulled back from a 1-4 start with five straight victories to maintain the club's stretch of winning seasons.

Plymouth's local support grew as the Club played their first season at the new astroturf field at the PSC. Surrounded by mesh fencing with tiered seating along one side, the field was soon to be nicknamed "The "Cage". Over the following years, the venue drew 200-300 regular fans to each home game, which doubled at play-off. It became almost legendary for its exciting games days with the entire atmosphere expected at American football games. Commentary, music, cheerleaders, mascots, ice cream, hot dogs and cool beer.

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1991

Right from the opening 55-6 win over Bath Gladiators, 1991 seemed to have that "special" quality, as the Admirals kept up their unbeaten record. Highlights included a hard fought game against Swindon Steelers in storm-soaked conditions and two tough games against the Gwent Mustangs. Following up their 10-0 regular season, Plymouth met Gwent Mustangs once again in an exciting play-off game which remained with the issue in doubt until the Admirals drew ahead in the final quarter for a 27-7 win. Earning home field advantage for the Southern Championship, the Plymouth Sports Club hosted Midlands Champions the LA Panthers. In a classic confrontation, the equally matched teams took turns to notch up scores. With only a narrow 34-30 advantage, a late game Admiral goal line stand, "the longest few minutes in Admiral History" won the Admirals their place at Saffron Lane Stadium in Leicester for the B.N.G.L Final. Inspired by several bus loads of supporters, Plymouth met the Sutton Coldfield Royals head on, finally taking the UK Premier Bowl Trophy with an exuberant 26-16 victory.

1992

Promoted to the National Division, the Admirals continued with several more victories until the Delonghi Knights at Camberley finally broke the Admirals 21 game-winning streak. Later in the season, at the return match, the Knights still remained with a clean sheet of wins but in the last 22 seconds a Plymouth last-chance drive took revenge. The Admirals hosted the Kent Cougars for the Quarter Finals; the Cougars demonstrating they also knew how to play through to the final whistle with a score in the last five minutes, the 22-21 scoreboard ending Plymouth's hopes of doing a double.

1993

A year of close, tense games. Plymouth's 6-3-1 record earned a "Wildcard" playoff slot, but the conference leaders, Bournemouth Buccaneers ended Admiral hopes.

1994

Proved another tense season for the club. The team played 2 inter-conference games meeting the London Rockets and Milton Keynes Pioneers. Remarkable in Britball history, the results also included 2 tied games against the Southern Seminoles. The Admirals went on to achieve a second place in the South West conference with a 7-1-2 season. Travelling on to Milton Keynes for the Quarter Finals, a close, hard fought game finally gave the Pioneers the honours at 12-0.

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1995

The Admirals won the Division Two South West Conference with an 8-1 regular season, gaining home field advantage for the playoffs. In the Quarter Finals, the squad overcame the London Olympians II in a battling contest with a narrow 28-20 margin. Plymouth went on to one of the most exciting games in their history, as they overcame Crawley Raiders 25-14 in the Semi Finals. However, at the Bowl Game at Birmingham, attended by numerous West Country supporters and TV film crew, Plymouth were finally forced to console themselves with the Divisional runner-up Trophy as the Cambridge Cats prevailed with a 26-13 final result. Marty Shanks, having made a decision in the previous off season, announced his retirement after 12 years with the Club.

1996

Changes for the Admirals as new Head Coach Simon Nash took over the reins, as well as a change of home venue. Due to field rulings that unfortunately forced Plymouth to leave their long established home at the Plymouth Sports Club, the Admirals moved to another Astro turf pitch at Marjons. The Admirals steeled themselves for Division One, in which they would battle against some of the toughest teams in the country. This proved to be the teams first losing season in its 10-year history, although they still stayed competitive with a 4-6 record. At the end of this season, many of the longest serving players who had stayed an extra year to help in the top division finally retired. Some had been with the Admirals from the very beginning..

1997

A beginning of a new era for the Admirals, as the team began to rebuild. Remaining in Division One, Plymouth maintained a competitive force, with a 5-5 season.

1998

Plymouth moved to a new home ground at Western Mill Oak Villa but hard times found the Admirals as they suffered the impact of playing football at the highest level with an almost all-new team. With the remaining veterans retired, the squad now consisted largely of rookies and players from the Commodores youth team. Veteran player Steve Howard took over as Head Coach, using his years of experience to adapt an inherited system. Despite the difficulties the Admirals fought through a valiant season in Division One. The almost inevitable 0-10-0 season did not reflect the determination and spirit within the club and many new players earned rapid experience and respect in several close games

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1999

With the Admirals back in Division Two; Steve Howard devised a new Offensive and Defensive system to develop the young side and build upon the skills and experience earned by playing against top-flight teams. The shortened season ended with a 4-4 record, two of the games lost in the last minutes of time. The highlight of the season proved to be overturning the unbeaten Tiger Bay Warriors in the final regular season game. A wild card slot pitted them against the Welsh side for the third time in the season; With the Warriors determined to avenge their only loss in the season to the Admirals, the battling quarter-final ended with the Admirals losing 23-16 in a great game.

2000

2000 season proved another consolidation year for Plymouth, with many close games in which a win proved elusive, including a tie against Hertfordshire Stags. A first season without a win, and a 0-7-1 record for the Admirals. It could have been so different with 4 of the losing games going to the wire. However many of the new players gained valuable experience and the squad's team spirit and determination was growing.

2001

Plymouth moved to Plymouth Albion's home ground at Beacon Park for a year, giving the Admirals a stadium to play in once again. The year started with new talent joining the Admirals, including players from the Plymouth Blitz University team, newly founded in the off-season by several Admirals, including Steve Perry as Head Coach and assistant coaches Ken Tucker on defense and QB Mark Tanner on offense. The additional coaching staff, who were now involved year-round with developing football in Plymouth, and the return of several Admiral veterans including Glen Harling and Pete McGurk aided Coach Howard in building up the team strength. Plymouth fought through to the playoffs, aided by the narrowest of wild card tie-breaks. Based on points conceded on defense, 0.08 of a point enabled the Admirals to revisit respected rivals, the Oxford Saints in the quarter-finals. The 24-14 Oxford win ended Plymouth's hopes but reflected a much improved season.

2002

Back at Oak Villa and playing in a restructured Division II South, Plymouth maintained their complete record with a 7-2-1 season against a variety of teams, not only regular opponents SW Warriors & Oxford Saints but travelling even further afield with fixtures against Essex Spartans, Kent Exiles and Cambridge Cats. With 2nd place in the conference the Admirals hosted Cambridge in the quarter finals, Plymouth's 36-25 victory taking the club to the Southern Championship. The longest bus journeys of any season so far in Admiral provided good practice for the trip to far away Norfolk for the Semi-Final clash with the Norwich Devils. The Plymouth Admirals' chance at the Division Two Bowl Final were dashed as they fell to a 23-0 shut-out from the league leaders. Nevertheless, playing in a thunderstorm with stoppages

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for lightning and torrential rain, the all-important clash still remained an tense affair as both squads battled at full pace to the final whistle. Plymouth took consolation in their best season for several years. Steve Howard , due to work commitments and having given his university assistant coaches, Steve Perry, Ken Tucker, Mark Tanner and Jon Wyse, full rein throughout the season, announced his retirement after 19 years in the sport. Several other players, including the returning vets, hung up their boots for the last time.

2003

With the pitches at Weston Mill being renovated after water-board work, The Admirals found a warm welcome at the brand new facilities built at Stonehouse Creek. Steve Perry took over as Head Coach with his team of assistants, but unfortunately it was to be a punishing year for Plymouth. Although re-inforced by a contingent of University Blitz players, Plymouth's reduced young squad faced some tough opposition, in a conference containing three ex-Division one teams including the Bristol Aztecs. Injuries thinned the ranks and the Admirals proved unable to win a regular season game. However, their perseverance showed though as they ended the year on a high with a battling performance against Redditch Arrows. With a squad of only 19 some carrying minor injuries, the Admirals scored twice, although the Arrows stayed firm for a 28-12 finish

2004

The South West Conference hosted most of the old favourites while adding Nene Valley Hybrids and new club Coventry Jaguars. Plymouth demonstrated improvement with a 2-6-2 season, including a first time draw against Oxford Saints. Many of the younger players of the last few seasons shone though with excellent performances, while the Admirals benefited by the joining of several USA players, one of whom, Montrell Turner, won the BSL Top Tackler of Division Two award. The Admirals celebrated their 20th Anniversary Season with a reunion night that brought together many past players at Plymouth Albion at Brickfields. A good time was had by all as archive games day film played in the background, with many a football (tall?) tale was told and a glass raised as the old boys met the new generation. In the off season, a change within the club structure brought an expanded group of players & members who volunteered as new officers who take over aspects of the Club`s substantial workload. Activities of the club such as publicity, promotions, sponsorship and recruitment have already benefited as already evident with the Admirals Festival of American Football that gave opportunity for all ages to become involved with the sport, attendance at events such as the annual Lord Mayors Parade, and an already increased interest in sponsorship and sports funding.

2005

It was a case of near misses in 2005, as the Admirals finished in 4th place in BSL Division 2 South West. New team the Andover Thrashers provided the only two victories; an opening day 22-0 triumph in Hampshire was followed with a 30-6 demolition at home. The 2-8 record could have been much different if narrow losses had been turned round. Loss margins included 5 points at home against Sussex, 6 points against Redditch at home, and 14 away to Redditch. Off the pitch, the first Plymouth Festival of American Football generated much interest, and built links with local radio station Plymouth Sound that have remained strong ever since.

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2006

This season proved to be a particularly difficult one, with small numbers and lack of experience showing through regularly. 2005's record of 2-8 could only be equalled with wins home and away against expansion team Reading Renegades. This, however, was enough to keep the Admirals from bottom place in the South West division.

2007

With Stonehouse Creek ruled out-of-bounds just weeks before the start of the season, a move to Parkway Social Club was the first of several changes in 2007. A new logo was unveiled and used widely on helmets, merchandise and publicity, and the purchase of spare game shirts meant the appearance of the team was far more professional than in previous seasons.

After a slow start of 4 losses, including a last-minute nail-biter against Reading, eventually 2007 was the most successful campaign since the semi-final year of 2002. The 3-7 record was only slightly better than the previous 3 seasons, but it was the most wins and highest points scored since 2002, lowest points conceded since 2004, and the first win against a non-expansion team for 5 years also. Overall the Admirals showed considerable improvement, only made possible thanks to a core of graduate youth players and a good crop of rookies.

Highlight of the year was the first win of the season, a 32-23 victory against the Andover Thrashers who were sitting pretty in 2nd place at the time. The 500 yards offence included an astonishing 389 yards rushing from running back Nick Copley, the 8th highest single-game total in Britball history. Unsurprisingly, it earned Copley the honor of BAFL Player of the Week.