

## Professional Dream Comes True For One Former Met Police Youth FC Player, Lucas Ness

On any given weekend during the football season Imber Court, home to the Met Police Football Club and its vibrant youth section is jam packed with various footballing activities as far as the eye can see. Each Sunday, hundreds of youth players from both the boys' and girls' sections compete on behalf of the Met Police FC, whilst their army of supporter's cheer on their little hero's from behind the all-important FA respect barriers.

It's a common scene across the whole of Surrey but in recent years the East Mosley sports ground and the Met Police Youth section have become an integral part of the local community. Driven by the club's mantra, "football for all", the Met Police Football Club and its ever-growing youth section, Met Police Youth Football or MPYFC for short, is now regarded as one of the top grassroots youth sections in Surrey, attracting players and their families from across the county. A dedicated band of club volunteers and volunteer football coaches, mainly made up fiercely committed mums and dads who have thrown themselves feet first into The FA's coach education pathway to gain the necessary qualifications, are the bedrock of this FA Community Club; and the huge success they are seeing both on and off the pitch is not going unnoticed by the big boys.



Each weekend scouts from some of the biggest names in professional football can be seen scoping out the grassroots talent that is on show. The likes of Chelsea, Crystal Palace, Fulham, QPR, Reading and AFC Wimbledon would all consider the MPYFC as a breeding ground for raw and abundant footballing talent where the chance of spotting the next Trent Alexander-Arnold or Marcus Rashford is a real possibility.

And for one former MPYFC player, the impossible dream of landing that professional contract with one of these clubs has come true. In February this year, Lucas Ness, one of the very first 11 players to join MPYFC back in 2013, agreed a professional contract with pro-club Charlton Athletic and will switch to the championship side with immediate effect.

It's been an incredible few weeks for Lucas, his family and the club; and whilst everyone was aware of the youth players talent, it is especially pleasing to witness the hard work, dedication and sacrifice that Lucas, his coaches and his family have made in pursuit of this amazing dream, has finally paid off.

MPFYC spokesperson commented;

*“The MPYFC are especially proud of this young man’s achievement as whilst the club have seen many players progress into professional club via the Met Police FC academy, Lucas is the first one to go through the whole player pathway and sign a professional contract from playing through the age groups at the Met Police Youth section. As such, the current crop of MPYFC players have a new role model and hero to look up to for inspiration”*

Like many, Lucas’ pathway to the professional game wasn’t an easy one. Having spent his early youth years playing for MPYFC, Lucas was initially spotted by Fulham Football Club, where he spent 2 years attending their youth academy. However, Lucas returned full time to his MPYFC side, where undeterred by his experience at Fulham, he went on to help the MPYFC win the league and the Surrey Cup. After a brief stint for Leatherhead under 16s, Lucas returned to the MPYFC and progressed into the Met Police FC Academy playing for the U18 Bostik team managed by Donovan Chislett.

Donovan Chislett, U18 manager said;

*“He was a clear talent and his progression and development was mapped by the Academy Coaches ready for him to play 1<sup>st</sup> Team football”*

Season 19/20 was clearly a defining year for Lucas as Met Police FC 1<sup>st</sup> team coach, Gavin Macpherson continued;

*“At the start of this season at 17 Lucas became part of the 1st team squad. He took on the role of a modern centre-back, the progress he has made since making the step up can’t be understated. He’s worked hard at his game; I’m not surprised he has made this significant step”*

Chairman Des Flanders adds;

*“The successful transfer of Lucas to Charlton is tinged with sadness for our Club. Lucas has been with us over several years and has developed through our Junior, Youth Reserve and First teams. His success is further evidence of our ability to develop boys to a level making them ready for the professional game”*

However, whilst one grassroots player departs on his own amazing journey into the professional game, a gap is created for perhaps not one but a few more MPYFC to join Lucas Ness and the others before him make the jump to the next level.

One thing as certain as night following day, is that Imber Court will be buzzing again this weekend with MPYFC players falling in love with the beautiful game, being coached by some of the most dedicated grassroots coaches in Surrey and being supported by dedicated families and a local community that has embraced this amazing grassroots club and all of its members.

If you would like to know more about the Met Police Youth please get in touch via [LNess@mpyfc.co.uk](mailto:LNess@mpyfc.co.uk)

To register your interest in joining the Met Police Youth FC for season 20/21 please email [mpyfcrecruitment@gmail.com](mailto:mpyfcrecruitment@gmail.com)

